Socializing safely during COVID-19:
Be a safe and responsible host or guest

Are you planning to host or attend a social gathering? Will there be other people there who are not part of your immediate household or exclusive social circle of 10?

Here's how to be a safe and responsible host or guest during COVID-19.

Before the event

Host

- **Invite only the number of guests that are safe for your space.** Your space should allow everyone to be comfortable socializing, while staying 2 metres apart from others outside their household or social circle. For example, set up different tables or picnic blankets for groups from different households or social circles.
- **Asks guests who is in their social circle, so you know which small groups can be seated at the same table together without physical distancing.** While you're at it, asking about allergies or dietary restrictions is a great way to show that you care about people's health as their host.
- **Tell guests to expect physical distancing and to stay home if they have any symptoms.** This helps protect you and your own family, and can reassure those who are worried about possible exposures. Also, it lets everyone know that they must do their part as responsible guests.
- **Make a guest list with up-to-date contact information.** This is important for quick notification and public health contact tracing, just in case someone becomes ill after the event.
- **Consider options for people to join in virtually** if they prefer to do so for personal health reasons.
- **Wash hands before preparing food, cook food thoroughly and follow safe food handling tips.** Serve food in ways that limit cross-contamination and avoid sharing utensils. For example, plate individual portions of food ahead of time, instead of serving buffet-style.

Guests

- **RSVP ahead of time.** This helps your host know how many people are attending, so that they can prepare the space for a safe and physically distanced gathering.
- **Plan your transportation.** Avoid carpooling with people outside your household or exclusive social circle. Have a designated driver.
- **If you have any symptoms, stay home.** Don't risk exposing other people if you might be sick. Let your host know you won't attend in person, and ask if there's an option to join in virtually.

During the event

Host

- **Invite guests to sit with their household or social circle** and remind everyone to practice physical distancing with others who are not a part of their household or social circle.
- **Show guests where they can wash their hands.** Make sure you are well stocked with hand soap or hand sanitizer.
- **Consider wearing a mask when serving food to guests**, especially if this will bring you closer than 2 metres with others.

Guests

- **Sit at the same table as members of your household or social circle**. Practice physical distancing and stay 2 metres apart from everyone else.
- **Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before eating**. Remind any children to do the same.
- **Give others their comfort space.** Stay 2 metres apart from others who are not part of your household or social circle.

After the event

Everyone

- **Write down details of any close contact.** Sometimes people get too close. If you spent more than 15 minutes together with someone outside your household or social circle, and you were less than 2 metres apart, that is considered a close contact. Write down the person, place and time. Any close contact could be a possible exposure to the coronavirus.
- **Monitor yourself for any symptoms.** If you get sick, stay home and call for testing. If someone at the event does test positive for COVID-19, Algoma Public Health will notify and call you, if you are considered a close contact.

Safe Food Handling Tips for BBQs

- Wash your hands before cooking and in between tasks
- Do not cross contaminate cooked food with raw meat. Use a designated flipper for raw meat, and use different utensils for cooked food.
- Prevent foodborne illness by cooking food to the correct internal temperature. Use a probe thermometer to make sure your food is fully cooked; clean and sanitize the thermometer before use.
- Do not leave food sitting out in the "danger zone" at temperatures between 4C and 60 C. Bacteria can grow and multiply on food left out at room temperature, which can make people sick.

July 30, 2020