



PUBLIC HEALTH AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

99 Regina Street South
P.O. Box 1633
Waterloo Ontario N2J 4V3 Canada
Telephone: 519-575-4400
TTY: 519-575-4608
Fax: 519-883-2241
www.regionofwaterloo.ca

September 3, 2020

Dear returning college and university students,

Welcome back to those of you who are returning to campus and for those of you who are entering first year, welcome to Waterloo Region! This will be a very different start to the school year for us all which is why I am reaching out to you.

COVID-19 remains a reality and as the pandemic continues we have had to look for ways to include public health measures as part of our “new normal.” We continue to learn more about COVID-19 with each phase of reopening and one lesson that has remained throughout the pandemic is the reality that the choices we make can have a direct impact on transmission rates in our community.

For those of you who are returning to Waterloo Region for the school year, you are already aware that we are a caring community that has a history of collaboration and innovation – we are very good at coming together to work towards a common goal.

As a community member, your cooperation and adherence to public health guidelines will ultimately influence whether our local businesses and services can stay open and prevent our health care system from becoming overwhelmed.

Locally, our Regional Council has implemented face covering by-laws for all residents of Waterloo Region. Should you be travelling on transit or visiting a local business, it is expected that you will wear a mask unless you are medically unable to do so. For more information about the by-laws, please visit regionofwaterloo.ca/MaskBylaw

These bylaws will help slow the spread of COVID-19 especially when combined with other effective Public Health measures such as frequent hand washing, physical distancing, avoiding large gatherings, getting tested when you feel unwell and staying home when sick.

Public Health, along with various leaders within the community, are taking your safety very seriously. Large parties will not be tolerated. Indoor public or social gatherings over a maximum of 50 people, and outdoor over a maximum of 100 people, will be enforced under the Reopening Ontario Act by Municipal By-law or Waterloo Region Police Services. We encourage you to keep to a small social circle of ≤ 10 people as per the provincial guidelines and, if living in residences, to follow any additional recommendations that are in place. During this current time, it's just the safest choice.

Currently, people 20 to 29 years of age are becoming more frequently diagnosed with COVID-19. Common risk factors have included large social gatherings or attending at crowded bars or parties.

Although cases in younger adults can often present with milder versions of the COVID-19 illness, you can still unknowingly spread the virus (e.g. before you realize you're sick), especially if people are gathering in larger groups and without sufficient physical distancing. The infection can then easily spread to family, loved ones and friends, including those who may be at high risk of serious illness.

Region of Waterloo Public Health is working with your post-secondary institution to support a safe school experience. We want you to have a successful year and, with your help, together we will navigate this new normal to keep our infection rates low and help our community and economy to recover.

Our post-secondary institutions and the students who attend them are an important part of what makes our community great. Each one of you, individually, can make a difference. Thank you for doing what you can to help keep our community safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang'.

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner, Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services