



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	March 21, 2022
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Letter of Instructions for Infection Prevention and Control Measures for High-Rise Apartment Buildings and High-Rise Condominiums with 12 or More Storeys (BOH21007(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Dr. Ninh Tran (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7113 Jordan Walker (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7365
SUBMITTED BY:	Dr. Ninh Tran, MD, MSc, CCFP, FRCPC Acting Medical Officer of Health On behalf of Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

At its June 14, 2021 meeting, the Board of Health directed staff to report back on the implementation of the following COVID-19 related requirements regarding Multiple Residential Apartment Buildings – Highrise 1 and 2 Buildings:

- Proper personal protective equipment (PPE) given to building staff while working in the building;
- Signage in common areas encouraging social distancing and handwashing;
- Placement of hand sanitizer in common areas;
- Disinfection of high contact surfaces twice a day;
- Posting a cleaning schedule;
- Regular updates to tenants on COVID-19 measures; and,
- Provide free PPE in common areas.

Following this, and as endorsed by the Board of Health at its July 9, 2021 meeting, the Medical Officer of Health issued a Letter of Instruction (LOI) requiring all persons responsible for high-rise apartment buildings and high-rise condominium buildings, with

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12 or more storeys in the City of Hamilton to adhere to outlined COVID-19 safety requirements to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

INFORMATION

The Letter of Instruction pursuant to the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020, S.O. 2020, c.17* (the “*Reopening Ontario Act*”) and its regulations issued July 9, 2021 (effective July 12, 2021) required that persons responsible for high-rise apartment and condominium buildings adopt certain COVID-19 safety requirements that, at the time, were also mandated provincially for other settings throughout Ontario.

In response to key public health and health care indicators showing signs of improvement, the Government of Ontario eased COVID-19 public health measures effective March 1, 2022, at 12:01 a.m. With the revised *Ontario Regulation 364/20: Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step*, the direction provided in the Letter of Instruction, effective July 12, 2021, no longer aligns with provincial public health measures mandated for other settings. Specific direction and restrictions have been lifted for other businesses, organizations and community settings, including active screening, physical distancing, and cleaning and disinfection. Direction on masking in the Letter of Instruction is redundant with direction provided in the *Reopening Ontario Act* and City of Hamilton By-law 20-155.

Under the revisions to *Ontario Regulation 364/20* existing Letters of Instruction issued under the *Reopening Ontario Act* prior to February 25, 2022 are still in effect but cannot be amended. Further instructions under the *Reopening Ontario Act* can only be issued by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health for the province of Ontario.

COVID-19 severity indicators continue to be lower than they have been during this wave, indicating Hamilton is now in the post-peak phase of the Omicron wave. Given the current epidemiology, and as Ontario enters the Province’s *Roadmap Exit Step of the Reopening Ontario Act*, current public health measures in Hamilton related to high-rise apartment and condominium buildings should align with provincial measures. The Letter of Instruction is therefore no longer necessary and shall be revoked by Hamilton’s Medical Officer of Health, effective March 21, 2022. There will be no additional requirements for persons responsible for high-rise apartment buildings and high-rise condominium buildings beyond the provincial regulations. The City of Hamilton continues to align itself with the direction of the provincial government. We will continue to monitor our situation to determine if additional measures are required based on local context.

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APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Not Applicable.

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