



2022 SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS COVID-19 PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

**Health and
Social Services**
Haldimand and Norfolk

Summary of Changes for 2022

- The Section 22 Order issued to agricultural employers has been rescinded effective December 23, 2021.
- It is the responsibility of all agricultural employers to stay up-to-date with federal requirements regarding the need to isolate any incoming worker and follow the Federal Quarantine Act accordingly.
- Isolation plans **are no longer required** to be submitted or approved by the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU).
- The letter of instruction pertaining to travel from the airport to the farm has been revoked.
- Where a farmer is employing Seasonal Agricultural Workers (SAW) who are required to quarantine, following travel, the former "3-person rule" to an isolation unit has been lifted. Instead, farmers must follow all federal requirements for quarantine.
- All isolation residences, will require an inspection by a Public Health Inspector prior to SAWs arriving if it has not already been inspected for the 2022 season.
- An extra 'back-up' unit in the event there is a sick and/or positive worker is no longer a requirement, but a strong recommendation.
- Employers are no longer required to submit arrival information to the HNHU.
- Employers are no longer required to submit wellness checks upon SAWs completing their quarantine, as any isolated SAWs will be followed by the federal government accordingly.
- Employers are required to have a third-party provider available to perform health assessments anytime SAWs are required to isolate outside of federal quarantine.
- Employers do not have to submit incoming transfer information to the HNHU.
- Outside of the federal quarantine period, where there is more than one bed in a sleeping area, the **2m rule between beds is no longer required but still strongly recommended.**

Arrival at the Airport & Transportation to the Isolation Residence or Farm

- The 2021 letter of instruction regarding travel from airport to isolation locations has been **revoked**.
- There are **no longer** any specific restrictions on travel from airport to the farm for any group of arrivals (i.e., use of the CanAg buses are appropriate for everyone).
- SAWs should keep their physical distance from others upon arrival at the airport and during transport, where possible.
- Well-fitted masks (non-medical or medical) must be worn by all individuals at all times while in the airport and in vehicles during transportation to their place of residence.

Federal Quarantine Requirements

Isolation plans must adhere to all current federal requirements at the time the SAWs are isolating. It is the responsibility of the employer to keep up-to-date on all the requirements for isolation upon entry to Canada.

Agricultural employers must be prepared to quarantine any incoming arrival when entering Canada as they could:

- be selected for an arrival test
be required to quarantine for 14 days if they don't meet the requirements of a fully vaccinated traveller

A suitable quarantine plan must be entered into ArriveCAN. SAWs may be asked to explain their quarantine plan at the border.

Consider the following when developing isolation plans:

- SAWs subject to quarantine may isolate together in a bunkhouse or trailer as long as physical distancing (at least 2 metres) can be maintained at all times (in bedrooms, kitchen, washrooms, and common areas), and the permitted occupancy for the isolation unit is not exceeded.

- Keeping cohorts as small as possible is strongly recommended. If an individual tests positive in the isolation unit, **ALL** workers residing with the positive individual will be impacted. This may prolong isolation and delay the start of work.
- Where there is more than one bed in a bedroom, 2 metres between beds (frame-to-frame) is required as per federal rules. Physical markings should be used to visually indicate this 2 metres space requirement has been achieved. Inform SAWs not to move beds during this time.
- As per federal rules, bunk beds must **not** be used during the quarantine period.
- Where a hotel room is used as an isolation residence, one individual per room is permitted as the 2 metre required spacing as per federal rules cannot be achieved in this setting.
- Isolation plans should include how the farm will ensure all required supplies such as food, water, medicine and other personal items will be provided to EACH SAW during their mandatory quarantine period.
- Each SAW must be provided with food consumption supplies such as plates, cups and utensils. These supplies must not be shared with others.
- SAWs must be provided with household cleaning and hand hygiene supplies.
- SAWs must have the means to contact a member of the farm at any hour if there is an urgent matter.
- Signage should be posted in all applicable languages with contact information for the appointed farm contact and 911.
- SAWs must be informed on how to report COVID-19 symptoms to the appointed farm contact and signage should be available in the isolation unit explaining the most current signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

COVID Recommendations Outside of Federal Quarantine

Outside of all federal quarantine requirements, consider the following COVID-19 recommendations:

- The 2021 requirement to have all beds spaced at least 2 metres apart frame-to-frame with no exceptions has been removed, however it is still **strongly** recommended.
 - Decreasing the space between beds may increase the risk of viral transmission between SAWs.
 - Consider the current pandemic situation when evaluating sleeping arrangements. For example, the Omicron variant is more transmissible therefore you may want to keep beds spaced as far apart as possible and limit use of bunkbeds then re-evaluate later in the season.
- If the 2 metres of spacing between beds is not possible, **consider** different measures to reduce the risk of transmission such as:
 - Placing beds head to foot or foot to foot
 - Using temporary barriers between beds
 - Avoiding the use of bunkbeds as much as possible
 - Maximizing air ventilation and filtration, to the extent possible
- Employers must have a process for daily active screening of anyone entering an agri-food facility (i.e. office, greenhouse, pack barn, etc.).
- Employers must also have a process for daily active screening of all SAWs residing in employer-provided living setting, including temperature checks and symptom monitoring regardless of whether they are working that day.
- Consider having a 'back-up' unit available to immediately move a sick and/or positive SAW to. If one is not available on-farm, the farm should include within their COVID-19 safety plan how a sick and/or positive SAW will be separated immediately from others (i.e. moved to a hotel).

- Encourage SAWs to practice hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and physical distancing.
- SAWs should avoid sharing household items (e.g. utensils, cups, bedding, and towels), cigarettes, vaping products, and other items exposed to saliva/respiratory droplets.
- Stagger meal, shower, and laundry times to reduce the number of individuals in a room.
- Ensure SAWs have the supplies (e.g. toiletries, cleaning products) and direction needed to frequently clean and disinfect surfaces. High touch surfaces such as door handles, light switches, faucets, TV remotes, phones, and counters should be frequently cleaned and disinfected.
- SAWs should travel in individual vehicles or within cohorts. If that's not possible, physical distancing should be maximized between cohorts. Windows should be open if weather permits.
- Ensure SAWs are aware of any COVID-19 restrictions in the community.
- Keep SAWs informed of the changing situation.

Use of a Third-Party Health Provider

Anytime SAWs are in isolation (outside of federal quarantine), employers must have a process in place for accessing available health services through a third-party health provider (i.e., RPN, RN, etc.). The third party will perform twice daily health assessments on the SAWs and provide information directly to the HNHU.

What if a Seasonal Agricultural Worker (SAW) has symptoms of COVID-19?

ONE or more of the following symptoms		TWO or more of the following symptoms**
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fever/chillsCoughShortness of breathDecrease/loss of smell and taste	OR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Muscle aches/joint painSore throatExtreme fatigueHeadacheRunny or stuffy/congested noseNausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
Highly indicative the individual has COVID-19. The third-party should:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Inform the employer that the individual must stop work/not attend work and needs to self-isolate immediately away from the cohort.Recommend PCR testing and work with the employer to arrange testing.Complete an in-person health check daily, followed by a phone or text check-in later in the day.		

**** If a SAW reports **one symptom from the TWO or more** list above, inform them to:**

- not attend work/stop work and self-isolate immediately away from the cohort.
- remain in isolation until the symptom is improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea) and as long as they do not develop any additional symptoms.

What if a SAW tests positive for COVID-19?

If a positive COVID-19 result is received the farm operator must;

- Ensure the individual does not attend work or stops work and self-isolates immediately away from the cohort.
- Notify the HNHU hotline (519-426-6170 ext. 9999 or 1-877-298-5888 after hours/on weekends).
- Arrange for close contacts (workers residing with the positive case) to self-isolate.
- Provide HNHU a list of close contacts and their contact information upon request.
- Have a process in place for a third-party provider to complete an **in-person** health check daily, followed by a phone or text check-in later in the day while the positive case and any symptomatic close contacts are in isolation.
- Establish a process for the third-party provider to complete twice daily phone or text health assessment while any asymptomatic close contacts are in isolation.
- Arrange for the third-party provider to conduct an exit assessment and report status to HNHU prior to the case and close contacts returning to work after isolation.

Isolation Scenarios

Scenario/Activity		Fully Vaccinated*	Not vaccinated or partially vaccinated
Scenario 1	Federal requirements for travelers/new arrivals	<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not subject to 14-day mandatory quarantine</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not subject to arrival test unless randomly selected. If individuals are randomly selected it is recommended they are grouped together in their own accommodations until test results are received.</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May travel to destination, begin work immediately and reside with others who were not selected for testing</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not subject to day 8 test</div></div>	<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14-day mandatory quarantine</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergo arrival test</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergo day 8 test</div></div>
Scenario 2	Test positive on Day 1 or Day 8 test (related to travel)	<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10-day self-isolation from symptom onset or date of test whichever came first</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May isolate together in shared accommodation if multiple positives.</div></div>	<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10-day self-isolation from symptom onset or date of test whichever came first</div></div>
	Close contact residing with positive case (related to travel)	<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5-day self-isolation from date of last exposure followed by an additional 5 days of strict masking and physical distancing when outside the residents and in shared areas inside</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May isolate together in shared accommodation provided they remain asymptomatic. HNHU recommends cohorts no larger than 10 individuals.</div></div>	<div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14-day self-isolation from date of arrival with negative Day 1 and Day 8 tests, and remaining asymptomatic</div><div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May not isolate multiple close contacts together. Require own bedroom, bathroom, and no shared spaces</div></div>

Scenario/Activity		Fully Vaccinated*	Not vaccinated or partially vaccinated
Scenario 3	Test positive (not related to travel)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5-day self-isolation from symptom onset or date of test, whichever came first followed by an additional 5 days of strict masking and physical distancing when outside the residents and in shared areas inside <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May isolate together in shared accommodations if multiple positives.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10-day self-isolation from symptom onset or date of test, whichever came first <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May isolate together in shared accommodations if multiple positives
	Close contacts residing with positive case (not related to travel)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5-day self-isolation from dates of last exposure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommend PCR test on/after Day 3 from last exposure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May isolate together in shared accommodation provided they remain asymptomatic. HNHU recommends cohorts no larger than 10 individuals.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10-day self-isolation from date of last exposure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> May not isolate multiple close contacts together. Require own bedroom, bathroom, and no shared spaces

Note: For all isolation scenarios described above symptoms must be improving for 24 hours (or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) and no fever present prior to ending self-isolation.

Websites of Importance

- COVID-19: A guide for temporary foreign workers travelling to Canada
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/foreign-worker-rights/covid19-guide.html>
- Government of Canada: COVID-19 vaccinated travellers entering Canada
<https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid/travel-restrictions/covid-vaccinated-travellers-entering-canada>
- Government of Canada: Compliance inspections for Employers of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program during a pandemic
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/employer-compliance/covid-inspections.html>
- Ministry of Health. COVID-19 Guidance: Workplace and Living Settings for Seasonal International Agricultural Workers (IAWs):
<https://hnhu.org/wp-content/uploads/iaw-living-setting-guidance.pdf>
- Covid-19: Farmer Toolkit (Provincial):
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-farmer-toolkit>
- Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit – COVID-19 information for Farmers and Seasonal Agriculture Workers:
www.hnhu.org/health-topic/coronavirus-covid19/covid-19-farms/

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