

Members of our Agricultural Community:

On January 27, 2022, the Ministry of Health issued new farm-specific guidance for owners/operators of farms who provide any form of housing for Seasonal Agriculture Workers: *COVID-19 Guidance: Workplace and Living Settings for Seasonal International Agriculture Workers (SAWs)*. The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU) would like to highlight one of the changes related to the role of the Employer.

Employers must establish a process to access available health services, through a third-party health provider. The third party must be a regulated health care professional (e.g.: Registered Nurse, Registered Practical Nurse) qualified to perform health assessments on SAWs who develop symptoms and/or those who are in isolation outside of Federal quarantine. The third party may also include employer-provided health personnel provided they comply with the criteria outlined in the guidance document including providing information directly to the HNHU. Employers are encouraged to secure third party providers in advance to ensure quick access should the need arrive.

Please share this document when onboarding a third party provider who meets the criteria described above. The expectations for the role, frequency of health assessments, and reporting requirements are summarized in Appendix A: COVID-19 Guidance at a Glance for Third-Party Health Providers in Agri-food Settings.

Please note daily active screening and passive screening measures continue to be required and remain the responsibility of the person responsible for the business.

Kind regards,



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APPENDIX A: COVID-19 GUIDANCE AT A GLANCE FOR THIRD-PARTY HEALTH PROVIDERS IN AGRI-FOOD SETTING

What do I do if a SAW(s) reports symptoms?

ONE or more of the		TWO or more of the
Fever/chills Cough Shortness of breath Decrease/loss of smell and taste	OR	Muscle aches/joint pain Sore throat Extreme fatigue Headache Runny or stuffy/congested nose Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
Highly indicative of COVID-19.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the employer that the individual must not attend work or stop work and self-isolate immediately away from the cohort. • Recommend PCR testing and work with employer to arrange testing. • Complete health checks as required. See '<i>When and how often do I need to conduct health assessments?</i>' 		

** If a SAW reports one symptom from the TWO or more list:

- Inform them not to attend work/stops work and self-isolate immediately away from the cohort.
- Inform them to remain in isolation until 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.

When and how often do I need to conduct health assessments?

- **Upon identification of a case:** Conduct an initial assessment to assess the health status of the SAW (physical and general mental well-being status).
- **For cases and symptomatic individuals:** Conduct an in-person health check daily followed by a phone or text check-in later in the day.
- **For asymptomatic close contacts:** Conduct at a minimum a health check twice daily by phone or text. Should a SAW report feeling unwell or symptomatic, begin in-person assessments followed by phone or text.

- **For the purposes of return to work after isolation:** Conduct an exit assessment and report to the PHU the health status of the IAW to ensure any symptoms have cleared.

When and what type of testing should be recommended/ implemented?

- SAWs with symptoms of COVID-19 are eligible for publicly funded PCR testing. To find a testing location near you, visit the Ministry website: covid-19.ontario.ca/assessment-centre-locations.
 - If timely PCR testing cannot be accessed, a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) is acceptable.
- **Where RATs are performed, the third party must be used and ensure that translation supports are available.**
- Employers should notify HNHU of individuals who test positive on a RAT and did not receive PCR confirmatory testing if they are associated with a suspect or confirmed outbreak in the setting.
 - Two negative RATs collected 24-48 hours apart are required for confirmation of a negative result.
- For fully-vaccinated asymptomatic close contacts isolating together (cohorting) the following is recommended:
 - Daily RAT testing.
 - PCR testing on/after Day 3 from last exposure to the case.
 - If PCR test is declined or cannot be done in a timely manner, it is strongly encouraged that RATs are performed on Day 4 and Day 5 to clear workers from isolation.

When and how should I report updates to the HNHU?

- The employer or third-party must notify the HNHU of SAWs with any new symptoms, and/or positive test results (RAT or PCR).
- Provide information related to a change in health status (mental, physical), worsening of symptoms and/or newly symptomatic individuals **involved in an outbreak** directly to the HNHU via the COVID-19 hotline (519-426-6170 Ext 9999) or the EHT Hotline ehthotline@hnhss.ca. Both are monitored Monday-Friday from 8:30am-4:30pm.
- If you become aware of a **symptomatic worker and/or a positive test result** for a SAW on a farm **not yet in outbreak**, after hours, on weekends, or stat holidays you must notify the On-Call Public Health Inspector at 1-877-298-5888.