



REQUIREMENTS:

SELF ISOLATION PLANS FOR SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS (TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS) RESIDING AND WORKING IN HALDIMAND AND NORFOLK COUNTY

**Health and
Social Services**
Haldimand and Norfolk

Background

COVID-19 is a public health emergency. This disease has affected all the residents of Haldimand and Norfolk Counties in some manner. One of the fundamental strategies to control the transmission of COVID-19 is the self-isolation of all individuals who are returning to from travel outside of Canada for a period of 14 days. This approach is key to “break the chain of transmission”.

In the context of seasonal agricultural workers (migrant farm workers), there are some unique items that must be addressed. Every agricultural enterprise (employers) must submit a farm specific plan to effectuate a self-isolation plan for every seasonal agricultural worker to the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU). This plan must be reviewed and approved by the HNHU prior to workers embarking from their home county. This document provides direction to the employers of seasonal workers, and the workers themselves, to meet self-isolation requirements.

In formulating a farm specific individual level plan, agricultural enterprises must provide seasonal agricultural worker the supplies, services and amenities to effectuate a successful plan. This includes food, water, personal care supplies and medications. The plan should recognize and affirm the cultural and religious preferences of the workers. These farm specific plans should also be compliant with all applicable statutes, rules and regulations.

Arrival at the Airport

The airport is a higher risk area for transmitting COVID-19. The farm specific plan must include steps to achieve physical and social distancing (all persons should keep 6 feet apart) from the time of departure, processing at immigration, reception by employer and/or representative at terminal as well as to transport to the location where the worker will self-isolate.

Hand hygiene should be practiced. This includes, providing an approved hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) to workers.

Transportation

The worker must be transported to the isolation residence in a manner that effectuates physical distancing. Public transportation is not permitted. If a bus or similar vehicle is utilized, the workers must be separated by two rows. If a private car is used, the workers should be in the back seat. If at all possible, the windows should be open and masks should be worn by all persons in the vehicle.

Arrival at the farm or alternative accommodation

Employers or their representatives should greet the worker in a manner that is consistent with physical and social distancing; people should remain be at least 2 meters (6 feet) apart. As such, handshakes and hugs are not permitted. All communication must be in a language that the workers understands. An information package must be provided at their time of arrival. This package should include COVID-19 related factsheets, hand hygiene factsheets, environmental cleaning and disinfection factsheets. If available, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette signs should be provided. This may require hiring a translator as well as providing written documents in a language that the worker understands.

Requirements

Upon arrival at the isolation location, the following information must be forwarded to the HNHU:

- 1. names of the workers,
- 2. arrival date,
- 3. country of origin and
- 4. location where the workers are staying

Standards for Self-Isolation Residence

The self-isolation residence may be a “bunkhouse” trailer, hotel or motel. The agricultural enterprise may formulate a plan utilizing one or multiple types of residences. These residences can be located at the agricultural enterprise or at remote location.

Notwithstanding the location or type of self-isolation residence, the farm specific plan must achieve the following objectives:

- A maximum of three workers are assigned to any self-isolation residence that is a bunkhouse.
- Where a farmer wishes to physically partition off an existing bunkhouse so that two independent units are created, the units must each contain a separate entrance, washroom, kitchen and sleeping space. The partition should prevent workers in these separate units from interacting with one another. These proposals must be included in your isolation plan, and will be reviewed by a Public Health Inspector prior to providing approval for use.
- One worker assigned to any self-isolation residence that is a hotel room.
- All the supplies required to meet human needs for three days should be stocked at the self-isolation residence. This includes food, water, medicines and other personal items.
- Each worker must be provided with food consumption supplies such as plates, cups and utensils. These supplies must not be shared with others.
- Workers must be provided with household cleaning and hand hygiene supplies. For cleaning and disinfecting, see factsheet for COVID- 19 Environmental Cleaning, Disinfecting and Ventilation for Migrant Workers provided by the Health Unit.

Required Practices During Period of Self-Isolation

The employer shall ensure:

- The workers remain in self-isolation for a 14 day period in a bunkhouse or alternative accommodation. The self-isolation period is from the date of arrival at the residence.

- All workers must remain in the residence. The worker cannot leave the residence except for medical treatment.
- A residence may include an outdoor area that is proximate to the bunkhouse, hotel room or trailer. However, departure and arrival to this place must be consistent with self-isolation. This includes identifying a clearly defined area. Travel to and from this outdoor area must ensure that there is no contact with any other person (except an individual(s) who is sharing the self-isolation residence).
- If a self-isolation residence is a “bunkhouse”, all the other regulatory requirements remain in effect. Please see the Seasonal Farmer Worker Guidelines for reference.
- If a self-isolation residence is a trailer, the amenities and accommodation standards, should be similar to that of a bunkhouse.
- During the self-isolation period, the worker should have access to laundry services in the self-solation residence. If this not possible, a commercial laundry service must be available. This must be arranged by the employer.
- The interaction between service providers (i.e., food, laundry, personal supplies, and delivery, among others) should maintain physical distancing.
- If the self-isolation location is a hotel, there should be disclosure and dialogue between the agricultural enterprise and the hotel management. In-room housekeeping services cannot be provided. However, linens, towels and other supplies must be provided.
- Workers must be provided access to the internet and telephone.
- Each worker must be provided a thermometer. Workers must clean and sanitize their thermometer before and after use, and must not share their thermometers with others.

Monitoring for Adherence

The agricultural enterprise is responsible for monitoring for adherence. An adherence monitoring plan must be articulated. This includes a daily communication with the workers. If any workers are emergency ill, they should be instructed to call 911 be transported to the hospital. If the worker illness is less serious, the employer must arrange for medical care. This must be completed in a manner that maintains physical and social distancing.

The must health unit must be informed immediately if a worker becomes ill. Please contact us by calling the COVID-19 Hotline at 519-426-6170 ext. 9999

Determination of Conclusion of Self-Isolation Period

At the end of the 14 day period, the employer must contact the HNHU. The health unit will make a determination if the self-isolation period was satisfactory

Enforcement

The HNHU is committed to working with employers to maintain adherence. Consistent with law and regulations, enforcement actions will be initiated to address non-compliance. All locations will be subjected to random checks and audits by HNHU or Norfolk County and Haldimand County staff.

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