

June 2020

Guidelines for Boarding Schools (K–12) and University/College Residences in Manitoba

The transmission risk of respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19 is higher in group living settings (also called congregate living settings), such as those associated with boarding schools and university/college residences. While each facility is unique and will have different issues, there are a number of common measures that can be put in place to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.

The following guidelines should be followed by administrators, facility staff, boarders (K–12), and university/college students living in residence:



General Guidance

- Staff and administrators should consult current public health advice and orders on COVID-19, and revise or adjust procedures and protocols as required.
- Facilities should undertake a facility-specific risk assessment, analysis, and mitigation process and develop a site-specific risk management plan. These plans should consider scenarios with individual or multiple COVID-19 cases among both boarders/students and staff. Plan details should consider the following:
 - Procedures to deal with boarders/students who become ill, or those who require self-isolation due to travel or other exposure
 - Accommodations and sleeping arrangements
 - Use of indoor/outdoor recreation areas
 - Use of common areas, including study rooms, kitchen, laundry areas, and other ancillary areas or group settings
 - Catering and mealtime processes
 - Necessity for off-campus visits
 - COVID-19 education and training for both staff and students (i.e., infection prevention and control, disease symptoms)
 - Enhanced/frequent [cleaning and disinfection](#) for washroom facilities, kitchen areas, and high-touch surfaces

- Control of entry/exit to facilities, including a process to track visitors (if allowed)
- Boarders/students, teachers, and other staff who are at higher risk of more severe COVID-19 illness
- Mental health of boarders/students
- Parents/guardians and boarders/students should agree to the terms of the risk plan before attending the facility.
- Identify a dedicated staff member(s) to communicate and coordinate with local public health authorities in the event of an outbreak.
- Establish daily processes to screen staff, teachers, boarders, students, and visitors using the online [screening tool](#) or [screening posters](#).
 - Boarders/students who are ill should isolate in their room, even if they only have mild symptoms, and then notify staff or appropriate residence authorities. Boarding school staff and university/college students should also contact Health Links/Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 (toll-free) for more information.
 - Consider restricting guest/visitor access to facilities.
- Develop plans for symptomatic boarders/students.
 - Ill boarders/students should be isolated from others in an individual room with their own washroom. Facilities must have a plan in place to isolate ill individuals if there are shared accommodations/washrooms.
 - Ill boarders/students should limit social contact and only leave their room for medical care. When doing so, they should wear a medical mask (if unavailable, a non-medical mask may be worn).
 - University/college students should contact their facilities' residence services for further instructions and assistance (i.e., meal delivery, special accommodations, etc.).
 - Staff providing care/support for isolating boarders should have access to appropriate protective personal equipment (PPE) (i.e., medical masks and gloves) and attempt to maintain a distance of two metres from ill boarders.
 - Consideration should be given for boarders/students to return home for the period of isolation where possible. In situations where there are no individual rooms to isolate and returning home is not an option, university/college students and boarding school staff should contact Health Links/Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257 (toll-free) for more information and to discuss alternative isolation accommodations.
 - Encourage boarders/students with symptoms to get tested. If results are negative for COVID-19, they can stop isolating 24 hours after their symptoms end. However, if they choose not to be tested they should isolate for 14 days from the start of their symptoms. Provided their symptoms have ended at day 14, they can stop isolating.

- Establish policies for accommodating boarders/students who require a period of self-isolation due to travel or exposure to COVID-19 cases.
 - If self-isolation is accommodated on campus, boarders/students should have their own room/washroom and follow the above guidelines for those who are ill.
- Develop accommodations for boarders/students at higher risk of serious illness.
- Limit teachers and staff in boarding facilities/residences to only those who are essential for the task.



In-Facility Guidance

- Display prominent [public health messaging](#) at the entrance and throughout the facility. Signs/information outlining [social \(physical\) distancing](#) guidelines should also be posted.
- Place hand hygiene stations (with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water) at the entrance and strategically throughout the facility. All individuals entering and leaving the facility should clean their hands.
- Where possible, reduce the number of boarders in the facility. This could include
 - having boarders whose primary residence is close to the school attend as “day students”
 - prioritizing specific student groups for boarding (i.e., Senior Years, students living out of province/country, etc.)
 - arranging alternative supervised accommodation in smaller groups in the community (i.e., households of three to four students)
 - increasing support for families billeting students
- Considerations for sleeping arrangements:
 - Single occupancy is preferred.
 - Where single occupancy is not possible, group students together who are in the same classes/year.
 - Dormitory accommodations should be discouraged, as these have an increased risk of transmission.
- Communal washrooms are not recommended. If this is not feasible, implement enhanced/frequent [cleaning and disinfection](#), encourage physical distancing, and reduce the time groups spend in the same space.
 - Develop plans for access to individual rooms/washrooms for boarders/students who become ill or require self-isolation.
 - Consider assigning washrooms to specific boarders/students and develop schedules for showers.
 - Provide access to individual cleaning materials to allow cleaning of facilities between uses in addition to the enhanced/frequent (at minimum twice daily) cleaning and disinfection provided by the facility.

- Provide other locations for hand hygiene if washrooms are not located next to rooms.
- Food services should follow applicable restaurant guidelines (see [Restoring Safe Services](#)). Stagger meal times in dining rooms to reduce group numbers and ensure cleaning between groups.
 - Try to group students from the same classes/year to ensure they have the same meal times to decrease the number of possible contacts.
- Implement physical distancing measures and reduce the time groups spend in dining rooms, shared recreational areas, and other congregate settings.
 - Provide staff to monitor line-ups, ensure physical distancing, and discourage groups and the intermingling of groups in common areas or group settings in facilities.
 - Communal kitchens can remain open, provided there are enhanced/frequent [cleaning and disinfection](#) procedures in place, and additional cleaning materials are available to allow cleaning between users. They should also ensure that physical distancing measures are in place and reduce the amount of time people gather to prevent groups from gathering and intermingling.
- Consider procedures (i.e., allocated time slots, extending move-in/move-out period) to limit congestion and numbers of students during move-in/move-out periods.