

News Release

Health
Office of the Premier
COVID-19

New triggers and revised public health recovery alert levels unveiled / One new case

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FREDERICTON (GNB) – New triggers and revised public health recovery alert levels have been unveiled in preparation for a next wave of COVID-19 in the province.

“The pandemic has been a learning curve since the beginning,” said Premier Blaine Higgs. “As we move into autumn, as schools reopen and more people return to work across our province, we have been able to look at what we did right and how that information can be used to guide future decisions. We have looked to the science, spoken with Public Health, and together have determined what situations would trigger different levels of response.”

To reduce the impact of another possible wave of COVID-19, Public Health has reviewed all alert levels and associated measures in light of new scientific knowledge and of the effectiveness of previous control measures in Canada and other countries. Details associated with these levels [are available online](#).

“New Brunswick is in a much different position to respond to COVID-19 than it was when the pandemic began,” said Dr. Jennifer Russell, chief medical officer of health. “Everyone must take precautions to limit the spread of the virus and keep the province in the Yellow level of recovery by protecting ourselves and others.”

Yellow Alert Level: This level applies today as the virus is considered controlled but there remains a risk of community transmission. Physical distancing and standard public health measures will continue to be required to mitigate the risk associated with sporadic cases or clusters.

Revised measures under Yellow include allowing public venues with seating to reduce physical distancing down to one metre with the continuous use of a mask. This measure already exists when using public transit and will apply starting Monday, Aug. 17 in settings such as theatres or recreational facilities such as arenas with the condition that food and drink not be consumed when people are seated at this distance. Distancing of two metres would be required in order for food or drinks to be consumed.

Orange Alert Level: This level would apply when there is a significant risk that COVID-19 is no longer under control. Restrictions on non-essential contact activities, both socially and in some workplaces, would be required to address a high risk of community transmission.

Revised measures under Orange would include allowing public venues with seating to reduce physical distancing down to one metre with the continuous use of a mask. Other measures would include allowing unregulated health professionals to operate. However, close contact personal services such as barbers, hair stylists or spas would remain closed. The two-household bubble would remain, but households would now be able to add formal or informal caregivers as well as members of their immediate family (parents, children, siblings and grandparents).

Red Alert Level: This level would apply when COVID-19 is no longer under control. Strong restrictions to limit unnecessary movement of people and contacts to contain community transmission would be necessary.

Revised measures under Red would allow a much broader range of businesses to continue to operate as long as they have appropriate public health measures in place. Residents would need to return to a single-household bubble but they would now keep the ability to add formal or informal caregivers and members of immediate family (parents, children, siblings and grandparents) that were introduced in the previous levels.

Daycares would remain open under appropriate guidance while kindergarten to Grade 12 schools would be limited to virtual instruction only. Teachers and school employees would continue to work at schools to teach virtually from their classroom. All primary care providers and regulated health professionals would be able to continue to offer their services utilizing virtual means whenever possible.

Green Alert Level: This would represent the end of the pandemic. All directives specific to COVID-19 would be lifted.

“It is imperative that we resume our lives, get back to school and work, support local businesses, and strengthen our economy,” said Higgs. “But it is equally imperative that we do all of this mindfully, remembering to take the simple but necessary steps to keep all of us healthy and safe, while keeping our province in the Yellow level. By following Public Health advice and obeying the mandatory order, we can keep our economy open and avoid a return to restrictive rules.”

Transparent public health triggers have now been developed which, if met, would lead to a comprehensive risk assessment and recommendations to government to move either a region, or the province, through different alert levels. Details related to these triggers [are available online](#).

“We are better prepared to live with COVID-19 in our midst, even if the dangers the virus presents remain the same until a vaccine is developed,” said Russell. “As a result, the Public Health response in a second wave will focus on keeping society and the economy moving, while keeping people as safe as possible from the disease.”

One new case

Public Health reported one new case of COVID-19 today. The new case is an individual between 40 and 49, in Zone 3 (Fredericton region), who is self-isolating. The case is currently under investigation.

The number of confirmed cases in New Brunswick is 177 and 168 have recovered. There have been two deaths, and there are seven active cases. As of today, 55,379 tests have been conducted.

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