



COVID-19 & Homelessness: Screening

People experiencing homelessness often have underlying health conditions and are unable to implement public health recommendations due to social and economic circumstances. For these reasons, people experiencing homelessness are at higher risk of contracting COVID-19 or developing complications due to COVID-19.

Services that support people experiencing homelessness, including Friendship Centres have increased risk of a COVID-19 outbreak. Measures must be in place to control and prevent an outbreak. One measure is screening community members for COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival to the Centre or Mat Program.

1. Set up an area specifically for screening at the entrance. All community members should be screened upon arrival.
 - a. If possible, staff should be behind a physical barrier (ie. plexiglass). If not, staff should maintain social distance (6 feet/2 meters) and wear a mask, gloves, face shield and gown.
 - b. Have a hand sanitizing station at the entrance for community members to wash their hands.
2. Use the “**COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool**” to screen community members - <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx>
 - a. If the community member is symptomatic, provide a face mask and isolate.
 - b. If the instructions are to call 911, **make sure to inform them of the community member’s symptoms.**
 - c. If the community member is not symptomatic, they can enter as normal.
3. If the community member is symptomatic and instructed to self-isolate, they must be isolated. There are 2 options for isolation:
 - a. An individual room with a private bathroom.
 - b. A large well ventilated room to cohort symptomatic community members together.
4. Keep track of those who are older or who have underlying health conditions as they are at greater risk.
5. All staff should continue to monitor community members for new respiratory symptoms and fever.