

June 26, 2020

NOTICE: Employers of Temporary Foreign Workers

Note that the information that follows applies to all employers of temporary foreign workers (TFW), even if the workers arrived last year or stay year-round.

In a previous letter Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) sent to employers of temporary foreign workers on May 6, 2020, Federal and Provincial requirements that employers were expected to implement were outlined. Starting next week, WDGPH will be following up with all employers that house temporary foreign workers in inspected accommodations to determine if requirements highlighted in the WDGPH's letter dated May 6, 2020, including requirements in the Federal and Provincial documents referenced, are being followed. This follow-up will have two components:

1. A phone call assessment to confirm that employers have prepared plans and protocols that address requirements (e.g. isolation plans, screening protocols, cleaning and disinfection protocols, etc.)
2. An in-person inspection of the accommodations. (To facilitate physical distancing, employers will be asked to arrange to ensure workers are not in the accommodations during the inspection.)

You will be contacted next week to schedule the above.

Furthermore, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, has advised local health units of additional requirements that employers should be taking to minimize COVID-19 risks. These requirements are in addition to existing Federal and Provincial requirements and will be included as part of the phone call assessment and in-person inspection. Additional requirements for employers of temporary foreign workers are as follows.

All employers of farm workers (including temporary foreign workers, local workers, and temporary help agency workers) should:

- Keep a list of names of all temporary foreign workers scheduled to arrive in Canada, their planned date of arrival and a plan for isolation of the workers.
- Ensure temporary foreign workers, including those in isolation, have the means to call WDGPH at 1-800-265-7293 (including ensuring workers have access to contact information and a phone) and that workers are encouraged to call WDGPH if they have any signs of illness. As per existing requirements, the employer remains responsible for notifying WDGPH of any symptomatic workers.
- Notify WDGPH if the worker(s) needs to leave the farm for any reason while under isolation, such as to seek medical attention.

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- Ensure that accurate and updated contact information for all employees (permanent, temporary, or contract) is maintained and available to be produced to public health units within 24 hours of request to support case management and contact tracing requirements.
- Ensure that employees that work on farms are assigned to the same team/group/work pod (cohort) that is separated from other individuals and teams. Where an employer houses workers in multiple accommodations, workplace cohorts must align with accommodation cohorts.
 - Within the team/work pod, workers should maintain a two-metre physical distance from other workers as best as possible. Where physical distancing may be difficult, face coverings should be used (as well as any other personal protective equipment required for the nature of the work).
- Ensure workers and employees have contact information for emergency services, the local health unit, the Ministry of Labour Training and Skills Development and Health Care provider information (if available).
- Ensure that all employees (as well as contracted employees) current or future are exclusively working for one employer. Individuals who are employed by more than one employer must immediately limit this to one employer. Where the nature of the work requires that employees visit different facilities, precautions must be taken to ensure the visiting employees remain cohorted and separated from employees at the facility being visited.
- Ensure that potable water is available at all times to workers under isolation.
- Ensure that the health unit is contacted for approval if renovations within pre-existing and approved living accommodations are planned that impact floor space, number of faucets, toilets, showers, and/or bathtubs.
- Ensure that all known instances of non-compliance with the *Emergency Management and Civil Protections Act*, *Quarantine Act* or isolation requirements are reported immediately to the appropriate agency.
- Follow all legislative requirements to [protect worker health and safety](#) (*Occupational Health and Safety Act*), any directions and guidance provided by WDGPH, Government of Ontario and Federal Government pertaining to COVID-19.
 - This may include ensuring workers adhere to isolation protocols, ensuring that the required public health measures such as active screening and physical distancing are always maintained within a workplace and supporting all aspects of investigations and outbreak management related to communicable diseases, including COVID-19.

If you have questions, we encourage you to contact PHI.Intake@wdgpublichealth.ca.

Sincerely,



Christopher Beveridge, CD, MA, CPHI(C)
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