



INFORMATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	December 14, 2020
SUBJECT:	Extreme COLD Weather Protocol and COVID-19 (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Paul Johnson General Manager Healthy and Safe Communities Department
SIGNATURE:	

The Healthy and Safe Communities Department (Housing Services, Recreation, Public Health) has revised Hamilton’s Extreme COLD Weather Protocol in response to COVID-19 and in accordance with the COVID-19 provincial framework and restrictions.

The Medical Officer of Health for the City issues a Cold Alert when: the temperature drops or is expected to drop below -15°C (5°F); or when the temperature feels like -20°C (-4°F) with wind chill. A Cold Alert triggers a coordinated Community Cold Response approach that includes the City and various community agencies focused on outreach response for vulnerable populations and those experiencing homelessness; and a community response focused on individuals living in vulnerable conditions and/or with limited heat. Staff have conducted contingency planning to ensure a plan is in place for the 2020/2021 winter season that is responsive to the provincial COVID-19 Response Framework “Red” Restrict category that Hamilton currently is under, and ensuring plans are in place should the City be moved to the “grey” Lockdown category.

City of Hamilton Recreation Centres active during cold response

The following recreation centers were selected as warming centers to serve the broader community need and because the necessary public health measures such as capacities, screening, physical distancing could be easily implemented:

- Ancaster Aquatic Centre, 47 Meadowbrook Avenue, Ancaster
- Bennetto Community Centre, 450 Hughson Street N., Hamilton
- Bernie Morelli Recreation Centre, 876 Cannon Street E., Hamilton

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- Dundas Lions Memorial Community Centre, 10 Market Street S., Dundas
- Hill Park Recreation Centre, 305 South Bend Road E., Hamilton
- Huntington Park Recreation Centre, 87 Brentwood Drive, Hamilton
- Norman Pinky Lewis Recreation Centre, 192 Wentworth Street N., Hamilton
- Sir Allan MacNab Recreation Centre, 145 Magnolia Drive, Hamilton
- Stoney Creek Recreation Centre 45 King Street E., Stoney Creek
- Winona Recreation Centre 255 Winona Road, Winona

These facilities will be available in the event of a Cold Alert during [their regular business hours](#) with capacity limits and COVID-19 precautions in place.

To protect residents, COVID-19 precautions remain in place for all City sites:

- A maximum of **10 patrons** may be in a facility, regardless of size, at one time.
- Locations are staffed at the front doors; staff will actively screen and register anyone who attends.
- Active screening will be done daily upon entering for all staff, volunteers and clients. Individuals will also be asked to self-monitor.
- Clients must wear masks/face coverings at these locations.
- Community Warming Centres are designed to support physical distancing; individuals will be instructed to physically distance around others. Signage reminding individuals about the importance of physical distancing will also be posted in these locations.
- Locations are stocked with proper hand hygiene supplies (i.e. pump soap, warm running water and paper towels or hot air dryers).
- In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that have frequent contact with hands will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- Staff are trained on the safe use, care, disposal and limitations of PPE.
- Staff will contact Public Health for specific advice and control measures regarding anyone who displays symptoms or is suspected to have COVID-19.

Community Warming Centres

In addition to the identified recreation centres, select community agencies are also participating in this year's Cold Alert response offering warming locations and drop in programs. Capacity restrictions will apply and COVID-19 precautions will be in place at these locations. The City continues to work with a number of community groups to secure some additional locations. This information will continue to be updated on the City website as agencies agree to participate.

Outreach Response

Cold Alert Response for vulnerable residents include increasing our emergency shelter capacity by using hotel spaces, increasing options for couples, and increased work with

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our Intensive Case Management programs to concentrate on housing placements/outcomes

Since March 2020 in response to the pandemic, Hamilton has expanded shelter space and has made investments in emergency shelters in order to ensure they are set up with COVID appropriate distancing and protocols in place. The City continues to ensure adequate shelter space and drop-ins are available during the winter months.

During a cold alert the Street Outreach Team acts as the first contact and helps to:

- Ensure they monitor/visit known locations where homeless individuals reside
- Coordinate access to available shelter beds
- Refer to community supports

The Salvation Army

- Triages calls from the public about people on the street who may need shelter and monitor shelter space and availability.

For more information and tips to stay warm, please visit www.hamilton.ca/cold

If you have any questions about the Extreme COLD Weather Protocol, please contact Rob Mastroianni, Manager, RCF Subsidy Program and Emergency Shelter Services, Housing Services Division at ext. 8035 or at rob.mastroianni@hamilton.ca and if you have questions about public health triggers please contact Matthew Lawson, Manager, Health Hazards & Vector Borne Diseases, Healthy Environments Division at ext. 5823 or at matthew.lawson@hamilton.ca.

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