



Sharing Child Custody and Co-Parenting during COVID-19

Tips for parents

The COVID-19 pandemic may be challenging to parents who are not living together and are co-parenting their children. Below are some tips to help you work together during this stressful time.

Stick to the court-ordered parenting schedules as much as possible

- Regular parenting time and custody schedules should be kept, unless someone is self-isolating or under quarantine.
- If you think the other parent is not taking the necessary health precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, try to discuss it, if that is not possible, consider obtaining legal advice.
- It is important for your child to see both parents, taking the necessary precautions is key to making this happen.

Maintain structure and routines

- Stick to regular family schedules and routines – schedule time for exercise, schoolwork, family time, chores and hobbies. Keep regular bedtimes and mealtimes.

Keep conflict away from children

- Stay child-focused and work together as a united team to help your child feel safe and reduce any stress or anxiety that they may feel. Focus on what is best for your child.

Reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19

To set a positive example, ensure that both homes are taking measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19; be [COVID Wise](#):

- W – Wear a **mask or face covering where required**, or when you cannot maintain a physical distance of two metres (six feet).
- I – Isolate yourself from others when you are sick (and **get tested immediately** if you have **COVID-like symptoms**).
- S – Stay **two metres (six feet) apart** from those outside your household or your chosen social support person(s).
- E – Exercise **proper hand hygiene**; wash your hands regularly or use sanitizer especially before touching your face.

- Consider downloading the [COVID Alert app](#) so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.
- When carrying out parenting exchanges, do it where you can keep a safe physical distancing of two metres (or six feet) from the other parent while wearing a mask, and wash your child's toys, each time they return from their other parent.
- Parenting exchanges should not take place when a parent or child is self-isolating and should only resume once the isolation period is over. If self-isolation was due to illness, whomever is ill must also be feeling better, and not have a fever.
- Follow public health guidance if you or your child [has COVID-19 or have been exposed](#) to someone with COVID-19.
- It can be difficult to care for a sick child and more so if you are also ill. Friends or family can help by dropping off groceries and medicine. If anyone in the home is on isolation do not have visitors.
- If you are the primary care provider, you may not be able to isolate yourself from your child. This can lead to longer isolation times which can be hard for the other parent and child. Have regular check-ins by phone or video.

For more information about COVID-19

- For more information, visit our website at [Ottawa Public Health](https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/covid19/) (https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/covid19/) or call us

Ottawa Public Health COVID-19 Telephone Line

- Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 6 pm, weekends, from 9 am to 4 pm
- Telephone: 613-580-6744 follow the prompts to the COVID-19 telephone line
- TTY: 613-580-9656

Additional resources for those pregnant or parenting can be found at:

- [Resources for Those Pregnant and Parenting:](https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/social-distancing-for-parents-teens-and-children.aspx) (https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/social-distancing-for-parents-teens-and-children.aspx).

For more legal information or support

- [Legal Aid Ontario:](https://www.legalaid.on.ca/covid-19-legal-aid-services/) 1-800-668-8258 https://www.legalaid.on.ca/covid-19-legal-aid-services/
- [Law Society of Ontario:](https://www.lso.ca/public-resources/finding-a-lawyer-or-paralegal/law-society-referral-service) 1-855-947-5255
- [Law Society Referral Service:](https://www.lso.ca/public-resources/finding-a-lawyer-or-paralegal/law-society-referral-service) 1-800-668-7380 https://www.lso.ca/public-resources/finding-a-lawyer-or-paralegal/law-society-referral-service.

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