

## FAQ – Section 22 Class Order 08 Jan2021

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### **Q. What is a class order?**

**A.** A class order is a legal order that enables Ottawa Public Health (OPH) to enforce public health requirements for group(s) of individuals that it applies to. These efforts are being made to protect the local community from potential exposure to COVID-19 and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 within our communities.

### **Q. Under what authority has this class order been issued?**

**A.** Ottawa Public Health's Medical Officer of Health issued a class order under Section 22(5.0.1) of the Health Protection and Promotion Act. This Act authorizes a class order to be issued to address the risks presented by the potential transmission of COVID-19 to people who reside or are present in Ottawa.

### **Q. Why has OPH issued a Section 22 Class Order?**

**A.** Given continued COVID-19 infections in the City of Ottawa, more actions are needed to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Key risk factors of potential transmission include crowding, close contact, prolonged exposure and forceful exhalation. A section 22 Class Order is being issued to enforce the importance of physical distancing and wearing masks in order to decrease or eliminate the risk to health presented by the COVID-19.

### **Q. Who is this order directed to?**

**A.** This order applies to all persons residing in or present in the Ottawa region who:

- Own or operate an outdoor recreational amenity.
- Persons who access an outdoor recreational amenity
- Owner/operators are required to post signage, consider strategies to limit where people congregate and flow to remind patrons of the requirements.
- Persons who access an outdoor recreational amenity are responsible to keep 2 metre physical distance, wear a mask when required, and not contribute to crowding.

**Q. When is the class order effective?**

**A.** January 8, 2021 at 5am

**Q. How will this be enforced?**

**A.** City of Ottawa Bylaw has the authority to enforce class orders, including issuing tickets with accompanying fines for behaviours in contravention of the order.

Ottawa Public Health is leveraging this as another tool to emphasise the importance of our ongoing vigilance in following the public health measures including physical distancing, avoiding crowding and wearing of masks whenever possible.

**Q. How does this impact places like the Rideau Canal or NCC places like Bruce Pit and other trails?**

**A.** Capacity limits may apply to areas where people congregate within the amenities such as the canal and access points and trail heads on NCC parkland that are prone to crowding.

Regardless of the location, residents are encouraged to maintain the 2 metre (6ft) physical distance between persons outside their household and avoid crowding to reduce transmission of COVID-19.

**Q. Does this mean only 25 people can park in a parking lot?**

**A.** No. More than 25 people can park in a parking lot at an outdoor recreational amenity, however at any given time individuals must comply with posted capacity limits. It is recommended that people park, and then move along to the trail to ski and not congregate in the parking lots before or after the activity.

**Q. Does this mean only 25 people can be on a tobogganing hill?**

**A.** No. The capacity limits are applicable to the areas where people may congregate. For example, at the top and bottom of the hill. At all times, people are required to keep 2 metres distance from those outside your household. So, if a hill is small (e.g. 25 people cannot keep 2 metres physical distance), the top of the hill may have a lower total capacity.

**Q. Will the capacity limits create additional crowding waiting for access to the ice rinks?**

**A.** Those waiting their turn to skate, are required to maintain 2 meters (6ft) physical distance from persons outside their household while in queue.

Being vigilant with respect to crowding in areas is going to take collaboration, everyone has a role to play.

- If you are enjoying the rink while others are waiting, consider limiting your duration on the amenity to allow others to enjoy.
- For parents/guardians who are supervising recreational activities, consider only having one adult member of the family attending.
- For those waiting for your turn, keep the appropriate physical distance from persons outside your household.
- At City operated outdoor ice rinks masks are mandatory within 15m of the edge of the ice surface
- For those visiting a site or venue that is busy, seriously consider leaving and returning at another time which may not be as popular and therefore less occupied.

**Q. Does this mean that other outdoor recreation amenities like ski hills can open?**

**A.** During the [provincial shutdown](#), ski hills are not permitted to be open. When ski hills are permitted to open within the [Ontario Covid-19 response framework; keeping Ontario safe](#), this order would apply.

**Q. Is hockey permitted?**

**A.** Team sports or any game or sport that would likely result in failure to meet the physical distancing requirements are not permitted under the Order and also in the lockdown level within the [Ontario Covid-19 response framework: Keeping Ontario safe](#).

**Q. Does this apply to private backyard rinks?**

**A.** No, this order does not apply to private backyard rinks to which the public are not invited to use.

An outdoor recreation amenity as defined in this order as meaning any area authorized for outdoor recreation or sport activity to **which the public is ordinarily invited or permitted access**. OPH encourages limiting any close contact and crowding of people in all settings. Gathering limits that apply at private residences are outlined in the [province wide shutdown restrictions](#) and the [Ontario Covid-19 response framework: Keeping Ontario safe](#).

**Q. What is the difference between the gathering limits of a backyard rink and the capacity limits in this Order?**

**A.** Gathering limits put in place by the Province are applicable to an organized public event, indoor social gathering, outdoor social gathering or public event, and certain type so ceremonies including wedding ceremonies (often an event or a party). Capacity limits consider the number of people in a public space that arrive spontaneously.

**Q. Does OPH have evidence of outdoor transmission of COVID-19?**

**A.** COVID levels are high in Ottawa. When COVID levels in the community are high, it's more likely a person can to come in contact with someone who may have COVID without realizing it, who is asymptomatic. While the risk of transmission of COVID-19, on average, is greater in indoor spaces compared to outdoors, the risk of transmission is elevated in outdoor spaces when there is crowding, close contact, prolonged exposure and forceful exhalation (e.g., individuals physically exerting themselves by participating in sports and recreation activities).

Here is a [real world contact tracing example](#) of COVID-19 transmission from an outdoor setting in Ottawa.

**Q. What is considered a tobogganing hill?**

**A.** Tobogganing hills are outdoor recreation areas which are authorized or promoted for that activity. For example, the City of Ottawa has identified [57 approved tobogganing hills](#) in the City.

**Q. What is considered a recreational activity?**

**A.** Recreational activity means any outdoor activity under- taken for the purpose of exercise, relaxation or pleasure, including practice or instruction in any such activity

Regardless of the activity, the risk of transmission is elevated in outdoor spaces when there is crowding, close contact, prolonged exposure and forceful exhalation. This Order limits the crowding of people in outdoor recreational amenities.

**Q. What is the reason masks are being required around outdoor spaces but not when engaged in physical activity?**

**A.** Masks are highly recommended when engaged in physical activity but not mandatory. While the risk of transmission of COVID-19, on average, is greater in indoor spaces compared to outdoors, the risk of transmission is elevated in outdoor spaces when there is crowding, close contact, prolonged exposure and forceful exhalation (e.g., individuals physically exerting themselves by participating in sports and recreation activities).