



The Oakville, Milton and District Real Estate Board

Celebrating 65 years of REALTOR® service

RISK MANAGEMENT: TRANSMISSIBLE ILLNESSES

COVID-19 has impacted many regions in the world, including Canada and the province of Ontario. The Oakville, Milton and District Real Estate Board is taking steps and making decisions to ensure we minimize the risk of exposure and spread to our Membership, clients and their families, and the communities in which we work and serve. **Your safety and well-being are of the highest priority, and want to ensure OMDREB REALTORS® and other guests to the Board that they are not placed in a position where they could face risks to their personal health.**

Importance:

The health and well-being of our Members, OMDREB staff, clients and their families is top priority for us.

Implementation:

OMDREB is taking a proactive approach in informing its Members of risk mitigation strategies currently being recommended by leading health authorities. This strategic plan is recommended for adoption by all professionals in the Real Estate industry, including all local Boards, Associations, and individual REALTORS®.

We have compiled the following subjects that we feel are the most beneficial to our Members and other Board visitors:

Conduct a personal Risk Assessment:

We are encouraging our Members to ask themselves the following questions:

- Have you felt under the weather or experienced flu-like symptoms in the past 14 days?
- Have you travelled across international borders in the past 14 days?
- Have you travelled through major transportation hubs such as bus terminals, airports, or sea ports?
- Do you already have a compromised or weakened immune system?

If you can satisfy any of the above questions, it may be advisable to avoid public spaces during peak traffic times, otherwise completely, or to seek medical attention.

Conduct an event or operational Risk Assessment

Leading health authorities are recommending that the following risk considerations be reviewed when deciding whether to postpone or cancel mass gatherings:

The Population attending the event:

- Are persons attending the event coming from regions where there is community transmission of COVID-19 or from countries with unreliable surveillance of the disease?
- Are persons attending the event Members of a professional group that might have increased risk of infection?
- Are persons attending the event from demographic groups at greater risk of severe disease, such as older adults?
- Are persons attending the event at greater risk of spreading the disease, such as young children?
- Are persons attending the event Members of critical infrastructure roles, such as healthcare workers?
- How many people are expected to attend the event?

Event Activities:

- Will attendees be participating in activities that promote transmission?

Crowding:

- Is the event being held indoors, outdoors, or both?
- Will participants be consistently within 2 metres of one another?

Event Duration:

- How long will participants be gathered at the event?

Event Resources:

- Will hand hygiene stations be available throughout the venue?
- Can event venue be configured to maintain a 2-metre distance between participants?
- Will there be health professionals or first responders on site to screen and/or attend to someone who may be symptomatic?

From the list above of risk management factors for cancellation, one should consider whether each item would be of mild, moderate, or high risk on a situational basis.

Mitigating Risks For Gatherings

Where gatherings are necessary for business operations or similar situations, the following measures should be assessed or contemplated in efforts to mitigate the risk of transmission:

- Reducing the number of participants or changing the venue to prevent crowding;
- Staggering arrivals and departures;
- Providing packaged refreshments or pre-plated meals instead of a buffet;
- Increased access to hand wash stations;
- Promoting and communicating personal protective practices
- Changing the event program to reduce high risk activities, such as those that may require physical contact between participants.

Spread Prevention

The following items have been recommended by leading health authorities as effective ways to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other flu-like illnesses:

- Wash your hands often;
- Avoid close contact where possible;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or elbow and not your hands;
- Stay at home if you are sick to prevent spreading illness to others.

Communication

When communicating with Members or the general public with respect to our activities, we should always retrieve our information from a reliable and trusted source. In conjunction with the information contained herein, the Public Health Agency of Canada should be the most utilized medium for the conveyance and transmission of information relating to any illnesses. External sources that are not from leading health authorities could be inaccurate and are typically a summation of information which may or may not be subject to personal or organizational conformation biases.

The Public Health Agency has recommended that as a mitigation strategy, event and meeting organizers should promote and communicate the above information.

To reduce the risk of inciting public fears and inaccurate perceptions, we recommend communicating the information contained herein as **“Best practices for reducing the transmission of illness.”**