
Government of

Department of Health & Wellness



PO Box 2000
Charlottetown
Prince Edward Island
C1A 7N8

Telephone: (902) 368-4996
Fax: (902) 620-3354
Internet: princeedwardisland.ca

To: PEI Post-Secondary Education
From: Chief Public Health Office
CC: Mark DeMone, Teresa Hennebery, Neil Stewart
Date: June 18, 2021
Subject: Update: Return to In-Room Learning for PEI Post-Secondary Education (Fall 2021)

The following is an update to our May 3, 2021 memo regarding COVID-19 public health measures for PEI post-secondary education (PSE) return to in-room learning in the fall 2021.

At the end of May, the government of Prince Edward Island in collaboration with the Chief Public Health Office announced *Moving Forward*: a five-step provincial re-opening plan for the summer and fall 2021 ([Moving Forward in 2021 | Government of Prince Edward Island](#)). The plan is a stepwise approach to easing travel and public health measures based on achieving PEI vaccination targets and retaining a low level of disease and controlled transmission in PEI, the Atlantic region, and Canada. The availability of testing capacity, public health capacity, and health care system capacity remain essential throughout the steps.

Based on the release of the *Moving Forward* plan, we have revisited our guidance for public health measures for PSE in-room learning this fall. The aim is to align with public health measures for Step 5 of *Moving Forward*, which is planned to begin September 12, 2021.

Vaccination with two doses of a Health Canada authorized COVID-19 vaccine continues to be an essential layer of protection against moderate to severe COVID-19 disease. In keeping with Step 5 of the *Moving Forward* plan, we anticipate that by early September at least 80% of eligible Island residents will have received 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccine. Isolation and testing measures for the fall are to be determined for unvaccinated and partially-vaccinated domestic and international travelers. We are monitoring Government of Canada decisions on self-isolation requirements for international students. We anticipate a high level of herd protection against COVID-19 in the general population and for PSE students, faculty and staff. Vaccination will be important to protect students, faculty, and staff and prevent a potential 4th wave of COVID-19 as they return to in-room learning.

The following measures are proposed for in-room learning this fall:

- Since closed spaces such as classrooms represent a higher risk for COVID-19 transmission, vaccination together with strong public health measures provides a basis for a return to safe in-room learning. We anticipate working with PSE to help ensure high rates of COVID-19 vaccination for on-campus students, faculty, and staff. This may be accomplished, for example, through education campaigns and the potential for vaccination clinics on campus.
- For students, faculty, and staff, physical distancing of 6 feet and masking must be maintained at all times. If classroom capacity is not determined by physical distancing, maximum classroom capacity is 50 persons or 50% of seating capacity, whichever is greater. (Please note: Further easing of physical distancing and non-medical masking requirements are anticipated for the fall and may lead to greater classroom capacities if vaccination rates are high in these settings).
- Other general public health measures should be maintained in accordance with the latest guidance from the Chief Public Health Office (e.g. staying home when sick, washing hands, cleaning and disinfection, etc.)
- Operational plans with special attention to in-room learning should continue to be updated and approved by the PEI Chief Public Health Office.

PEI's COVID-19 response continues to be dynamic as we respond to emerging epidemiology and evidence. As such, it is likely this guidance will need to be modified in the weeks ahead to reflect our current situation. We will continue to work with PSE to provide the most up to date information and recommendations.

Thank you for your support of PEI's COVID-19 response. Based on approval of operational plans by the Chief Public Health Office, post-secondary institutions in PEI are listed as a federal Designated Learning Institution for the purposes of any order issued under section 58 of the Quarantine Act (Canada). As we head towards the fall 2021, we look forward to working with you to ensure a safe post-secondary learning environment for students, faculty, and staff.

Dr. Heather Morrison
Chief Public Health Officer

Dr. David Sabapathy
Deputy Chief Public Health Officer