

COVID-19 remains, but a more normal holiday season is expected

By Rob Paul

With Thanksgiving approaching, Peel Medical Officer of Health Dr. Lawrence Loh stated that it won't be fully back to normal, but it will look very different this time than it did last year.

After COVID-19's impact in the fall of 2020, Thanksgiving gatherings were to remain with only with people who were in the same household with, but Ontario Medical Officer of Health Dr. Kieran Moore says those who are fully vaccinated should be able to host indoor gatherings without masks.

"You'll want to screen for any symptoms of COVID-19, and if you have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, you'll want to be tested in advance," Moore stated in a press conference Tuesday. "We want to minimize the spread, we want families to embrace the opportunity to get back together for their mental, physical, and social wellbeing."

Moore is expected to hold a full press conference Thursday where he will detail formal guidelines on what to expect for Thanksgiving and Halloween.

Currently indoor social gatherings are allowed up to 25 and outdoor up to 100.

With the holiday season here, Peel is still dealing with consistent COVID cases. The Region saw 551 new cases this week to bring the total to 116,826. There were 10 more deaths to bring the total to 1,019.

In Caledon, there were 33 new cases this week with the Town seeing 4,849 in total throughout the pandemic. There were no new deaths; the total remains at 22.

Vaccination coverage in Peel has continued to increase with 70.3 per cent of residents being fully vaccinated and 75.8 per cent having at least one dose. Peel has administered 2,445,285 total doses with 23,002 in the last seven-day cycle (September 27 to October 3).

With those under 12 not yet able to get vaccinated though Dr. Loh stated when a vaccine is approved for those under 12, Peel is ready to roll out its plan there are currently 10 active COVID-19 outbreaks in Peel schools, but none are located in Caledon.

Due to those under 12 not being able to get vaccinated, the vaccine coverage numbers leap in those 12 and older. 86.9 per cent of Peel residents ages 12 and up have at least one dose and 80.7 per cent are completely vaccinated. 87.1 per cent of adults (18+) have at least one dose and 81.1 per cent are fully vaccinated.

Of the total residents in Peel, 1,296,774 now have at least one dose of the vaccine and 1,144,441 have completed the vaccination process.

To download or print a copy of your proof of vaccination, visit covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccine-booking-support#proof-of-vaccination. To book a vaccine in the Region of Peel, visit www.peelregion.ca/coronavirus/vaccine/book-appointment.