

Region prepares roll-out of third doses to vulnerable populations, pop-up clinic set for Ribfest

As the number of new cases of COVID-19 continues to increase, the Region of York is preparing the groundwork to administer third doses of vaccine to vulnerable and high-risk populations.

The Province announced last week it will begin administering third dose vaccines to some individuals with compromised immune systems.

Populations falling under this category include organ transplant recipients, patients with haematological cancers, residents of long-term care homes and certain retirement homes.

“A complete two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series provides strong protection against COVID-19 infection and severe outcomes in the general population, including the Delta variant,” said Dr. Karim Kurji, York Region’s Medical officer of Health, in his weekly update on Monday. “However, for some populations, a third dose may be required to provide sufficient protection. We are working on plans to administer third doses to these highest-risk groups and details will be announced soon.”

Details, however, are in place for the return to school next month and Dr. Kurji used Monday’s update as an opportunity to underscore the importance of masking up.

“Like last year, all students from Grades 1 to 12, staff and visitors, will be required to wear masks indoors with some reasonable exceptions,” he said. “Masks will also be required on all school vehicles. If you are a parent with a child going into Junior or Senior Kindergarten, we recommend they wear a mask if attending school in person this year to help keep them safe. Of course, those who cannot wear a mask, such as students who have trouble breathing or are unable to wear a mask for medical reasons, will not be required to wear one in school. This decision was made for a variety of reasons, including the highly contagious delta variant, support from the Ontario science table, and public health agency of Canada, local modelling showing the rising cases with about 100 daily cases projected by October and an anticipated increase of other respiratory viruses this fall and winter.

“Vaccination is one of the keys to ending this pandemic and a return to normal life. Most COVID-19 cases we’re seeing in hospitals and ICUs are in unvaccinated individuals. Being fully vaccinated greatly reduces the risk of contracting COVID-19 and getting seriously ill. As cases continue to increase the Province has delayed the next step in reopening. We must not let all of our hard work become undone. We must continue to follow all public health measures such as physical distancing, wearing a mask, and practicing good hand hygiene. Most importantly, if you have not yet been vaccinated, I urge you to book an appointment or walk into one of our clinics.”

To do so, visit [York.ca/covid19vaccine](https://york.ca/covid19vaccine).

POP-UP CLINIC

Revellers will be able to get their first or second doses of Pfizer or Moderna at Ribfest this Saturday and Sunday.

A pop-up clinic will take place at Machell Park on Friday from 4 ? 11 p.m., and on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The clinic will be open to walk-ins looking for their first or second doses.

LOCAL STATS

As of Tuesday, August 24, Aurora has seen a total of 1,890 cases of COVID-19, 17 of which remain active.

1,825 cases are now marked as recovered while 48 have proved fatal.

Of the 17 active cases, 15 are related to local transmission, close contact and unknown exposure and 2 related to institutional settings.

70.5 per cent of new cases amongst the population 12-years-of-age and up between August 17 and August 24 have been of the unvaccinated.

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter