## **COVID-19 Safe Operating Recommendations for Community Gardens**

Until further notice, community gardens are not a recreational space or place for social gatherings. Their purpose is solely for essential food production. In-person events, workbees, workshops or potlucks are strictly prohibited. Should any guidelines change with respect to provincially mandated physical distancing guidelines, those guidelines will also apply.

It is the responsibility of each garden coordinator to ensure that members are aware of these guidelines.

**Physical distancing**

* Everyone in the garden must always maintain physical distancing of 6 feet or 2 metres (unless gardening with members of the same household).
* No guests are allowed in the community garden.
* No gathering except with your household group.
* No more than 5 people can be using the garden at one time.
* Children should only be brought to garden on an as-needed basis and should be instructed to follow these physical distancing and hygiene recommendations.

**Cleaning and disinfection**

Hand hygiene is an important means of preventing the spread of COVID-19. All community gardens should consider ways that they can encourage and support their gardeners in hand hygiene such as:

* Providing a place for gardeners to wash their hands, with [signage](https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet/factsheet-covid-19-hand-hygiene.pdf?la=en). If the handwashing station is in a bathroom, the bathroom needs to be equipped with water under pressure, liquid hand soap, and paper towels. Bathrooms are required to be cleaned at least twice daily, or as needed.
* Encouraging gardeners to bring hand sanitizer with them when gardening. If hands are visibly soiled, hand washing is recommended in place of hand sanitizer.
* Members are asked to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before entering and after leaving the garden, and after using shared tools, if feasible.

When possible and feasible, community gardens should consider other measures that would curtail the spread of COVID-19 such as:

Removing shared tools and gloves and encouraging gardeners to bring their own.

* If removing shared tools is not possible, gardeners are to wear their own gloves when using shared tools or wash their hands after using shared tools. If cleaning tools, be sure to follow the manufacturer’s instructions.

Each gardener must wear their own pair of gloves.

* Closing and/or blocking off all non-essential amenities such as picnic tables and benches.

**Responsibilities**

* Follow the KFL&A Public Health guidelines and DO NOT come to the garden if you:
  + have symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing
  + have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days, or
  + have been instructed by local public health authorities to self-isolate due to travel or contact history
* Post a [sign from KFL&A Public Health](https://www.kflaph.ca/en/partners-and-professionals/resources/Coronavirus/Signage/2020-04-14-STOP-front-door-signage.pdf), or similar from your municipality, instructing those with a travel history or with symptoms to not enter the garden.
* Garden coordinators are encouraged to develop a system that works for their garden to minimize touching of shared surfaces such as shed doors. To keep up with site work, garden coordinators may wish to have a scheduled rotation of members to perform site maintenance duties.
* Keep trips to and time spent at garden to a minimum (plan ahead!)
* Wash all produce before consumption according to safe food handling requirements.
* Let your coordinator know if you need support maintaining your garden.