

# novel coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance

## Admissions to Shelters during COVID-19 Outbreaks

Consider no restrictions on admissions of new clients for shelters under investigation for a COVID-19 outbreak unless there are overarching concerns (e.g. excessive number of individuals ill all at once, site is already at or over capacity, staffing inadequate to manage additional clients).

Admissions to a shelter may be considered during a confirmed COVID outbreak in consultation with Zone MOH. Considerations to inform this decision include an assessment of the following, either through a phone call with the facility operator or an inspection onsite by a Public Health Inspector:

- Adequacy of screening of staff and clients.
- Consistency and effectiveness of enhanced cleaning protocols.
- Ability to separate ill clients from others; cohorting of staff between ill and healthy clients as applicable.
- Appropriate use of PPE and hand hygiene by staff and clients (including mask use).
- Physical layout – separate areas for clients; sleeping space (distance between clients).
- Organizational aspects – appropriate scheduling and physical distancing for meals, showers, other activities

Also, the MOH should consider communication channels between shelter and MOH/designate, availability of healthcare staff on site, testing arrangements and availability, client risk factors for severe disease (how many, can they be cohorted/protected), occupancy status (i.e. are they at or over-capacity).

The rationale for and decisions made regarding admissions should be documented by the MOH in their own records and by the MOH designate within CDOM – the MOH should email their considerations and decisions to the CD investigator for that outbreak, who will then upload the email into the Electronic Filing Cabinet in CDOM for easy reference.

Refer to the most recent [Alberta Health Public Health Disease Management Guidelines for Coronavirus – COVID-19](#) for the recommendations on when an outbreak can be declared over.

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This document is intended to serve as a guide for Outbreak Investigators on the COVID-19 Outbreak Management team.