



Restrictions

REOPENING

What is the reopening plan for Nova Scotia? How soon can we get back to normal?

Nova Scotia will reopen gradually under a five-phase plan. It focuses on allowing Nova Scotians to safely enjoy summer with public health measures in place while we work at getting most of our population fully vaccinated. Once that happens, we should be able to further ease restrictions in the fall and ease in to a new normal of living with COVID-19.

Each phase is based on COVID-19 activity, public health and testing capacity, hospitalizations and vaccination rates. Phases are expected to last between two and four weeks as long as certain criteria are met in these areas. The more people get vaccinated, the more we can reopen the province.

What will happen in each of the five phases?

We have more details for Phase 1 which starts June 2. Some details are yet to be determined for later phases. An [overview](#) is available on our website. A [list of restrictions easing in Phase 1](#) is in the news release. More information will be coming.

TRAVEL WITHIN NOVA SCOTIA

Can I travel within Nova Scotia? What is necessary travel? Do I need an exception to travel?

Effective June 1, the legal restriction on travel within Nova Scotia will be lifted. Please note that it is still in effect over the weekend and Monday.

However, we may be asking Nova Scotians to avoid non-essential travel into and out of HRM areas and CBRM much like we have done during other periods of restrictions. We will re-assess and determine what travel will be permitted early next week.

If we do limit travel, people can still move around within each of these municipalities but we would be asking them to only go into or out of these municipalities for necessary things. Examples include school, work that cannot be done at home, healthcare, childcare and other caregiving, child custody, attending a funeral or end of life visit, complying with a court order, and providing or securing essential products or services.

We recognize there may be uncertainty about necessary travel. What is necessary for one person/family may not be for another. For example, you may need to move to another community or help somebody move, do repairs to another property, pick up an item that you've paid for, take a vehicle in for repairs, or give somebody a drive. It's fine to do these things as long as you're being careful – travel only for the task, don't make other stops, do things in a contact-less way as much as possible, and wear masks where required and when physical distancing is difficult.

We ask everyone to use their judgment and common sense in making decisions about what is necessary.

Which HRM and CBRM communities are affected?

As we start Phase 1 of reopening, we may be asking people to avoid non-essential travel into and out of



Cape Breton Regional Municipality and all areas of Halifax Regional Municipality as well as the entire communities of Hubbards, Milford, Lantz, Elmsdale, Enfield, Mount Uniacke, South Uniacke, Ecum Secum and Trafalgar. We will re-assess and determine what travel is permitted early next week.

Can I leave my HRM or CBRM for a covid test or for a vaccination appointment?

Testing and vaccine appointments are considered essential travel. If you are booking a testing or vaccine appointment now, you should try to book it as close to home as possible. If you already have an appointment, you should keep it.

My work means traveling into/out of HRM/CBRM. Can I still do this?

We are asking people to only travel if it is absolutely necessary. You need to consider whether this work is absolutely necessary at this time or could it be postponed.

Can child custody agreements continue?

Child custody agreements can continue within Nova Scotia. The child is considered a member of each parent's household. The only change would be if someone develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19, in which case Section 5 of the [child custody protocol](#) must be followed.

SCHOOLS AND DAY CARES

What is happening with schools?

As phase 1 of reopening begins, all public and private schools will reopen June 2 for in-person learning, except for schools in HRM areas and Sydney Academy and Riverview families of schools in CBRM which will continue at-home learning for now (see the [complete list of schools](#)). There will be some exceptions for students with highly complex needs. School officials will contact those families early next week with additional details about a June 2 start date. Any questions should be directed to your school or regional centre for education.

Are day cares allowed to be open?

Regulated child-care centres and licensed Family Home Child Care Agencies are open and can return to 100% capacity. Any questions should be directed to these facilities.

Can I have family or a neighbour take care of my children?

Unregulated or unlicensed child-care settings, such as neighbours or family who care for children, can continue to follow regulated ratios for school aged children; eight children or less per caregiver, including their own. For younger age groups, the ratio is six children or less per caregiver, including their own.

Who do I contact if I need help accessing childcare?

People who are required to work outside the home, such as healthcare workers, who need help accessing childcare supports can contact ECDSERVICES@Novascotia.ca or call 1-877-223-9555.

What are the masking rules for indoor child-care settings? What about schools?



Masks are mandatory for staff, visitors and children who are 2 and older in indoor regulated child-care settings. There is an exemption if a caregiver cannot get a child age 2-4 to wear a mask. This is not required but still strongly recommended in unregulated child care settings.

While all schools are currently closed, masking is now required for all grades in public schools, including pre-primary.

GENERAL GATHERING LIMIT

What is the gathering limit?

Indoors, the informal gathering limit is the people you live with, without physical distancing. Two small households (1-2 people in each) can join together. It needs to be the same 2 households all the time.

Effective June 2, we're returning to the close social group of 10 without physical distancing for the outdoor limit. This group needs to be consistent with the same 10 people all the time.

Can I have a total of 10 people in my home?

No. In your home, you are limited to the people you live with. Outside starting June 2, you can be with your close social group of 10 – this group needs to be consistent with the same people all the time.

If I have a household of 3, can 2 more people join my household bubble?

The gathering limit is not 5 – it is the people you live with. If there are 3 or more people in your household, you cannot add more. You can only join together with one other household of 1-2 people if your own household has 1-2 people.

What if my household is 3 or more and there's someone who really needs support?

If there is someone who really needs support, people need to use their common sense about helping others while ensuring their household bubble stays safe.

What if some of the people are small children or babies, do they count toward the total number of people?

Yes. It doesn't matter how old they are, each person counts.

Can I still have my neighbour down the street or family in another community look after my children?

For unregulated or unlicensed child-care settings, such as neighbours or family who care for children, they can continue to follow regulated ratios for school aged children; eight children or less per caregiver, including their own. For younger age groups, the ratio is six children or less per caregiver, including their own.

Can kids get together to play?

Children from different household bubbles or close social groups should not be getting together indoors. If they can play together outside staying 2 metres/6 feet apart, that's ok but people should really try to stick with doing activities within their household bubble. If parents aren't confident that kids can maintain physical distance, they shouldn't allow children from different household bubbles or close social groups to play together.



Can people get together outdoors with someone who is not in their household bubble?

If you're getting together outdoors with people who are not in your household bubble, they should be people in your close social groups of 10 effective June 2. This group needs to be consistent with the same people all the time.

Can people carpool?

Yes, although you should try to only carpool with your household bubble. If you have no other way to get to work, then you can carpool with other people but you need to keep the group consistent and wear masks.

What can you do to keep your household safe?

- Follow basic public health measures:
 - If you are unwell, stay home
 - Practice good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette
 - Wear a mask when required and anytime physical distancing is a challenge
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth without washing hands first
 - Test tested for COVID-19 regularly
- Understand who is at high-risk/vulnerable and continue to protect them
- Understand your own risk/vulnerability and consider who you are joining a group with
- Maintain physical distancing with anyone outside of your household
- Consider using non-medical masks even when you're not in a place that requires them if there are people in your group who are at higher risk

GATHERING LIMIT FOR EVENTS

Are any community events allowed right now?

We are not permitting events of any kind. That means, for example, no wedding receptions, no funeral visitations/receptions, no community meals or fundraising events, no parties, no sports, no festivals, no special events, no concerts.

Can there be church services or other faith gatherings?

With phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, faith gatherings can be held outdoors with a limit of 10 plus officiants when hosted by a recognized organization. Drive-in services are allowed with no limit on numbers.

Are weddings and funerals allowed right now?

Wedding and funeral ceremonies are limited to 5 plus the officiants indoors (pallbearers are considered officiants). With phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, they can have 10 outdoors, plus offiants. This is the limit no matter where it is held and no matter who hosts it. There can be no receptions or visitations associated with weddings and funerals at this time.



BUSINESSES

Does the gathering limit apply to my retail business/office workplace, etc?

Gathering limits do not apply to businesses. Businesses and workplaces need to ensure employees and customers can maintain 2 metres/6 feet physical distance. So the number of people in the space will vary from business to business. If your space is too small for physical distancing, then you can have no more than 5 clients or customers on the premises at a time.

What's the limit for a business meeting or training? Is physical distancing required?

There can be no meetings or training except for mental health and addictions support groups which can have 10 people with physical distance and masks. Meetings and training that are required for safety and essential operation are allowed, such as at daily meetings at a construction site.

What about things like shift meetings?

Toolbox talks, shop floor meetings, shift operations meetings and similar daily planning sessions that relate to operational activities in the workplace are still permitted. These quick, start of shift meetings are common in construction, manufacturing, and other similar work environments. They are intended to review planned work and emphasize important aspects, including safety, of the operations that day. They are a normal and integral part of the work process for these industries and are not considered workplace meeting under the order.

In what parts of a workplace do people have to wear masks?

Masks are mandatory in most [indoor public places](#) – many of which are also workplaces such as bars, restaurants, stores, gyms and more. Masks are also mandatory in private indoor workplaces (such as offices or warehouses) in all common areas, areas where there is interaction with the public, areas with poor ventilation, and areas where distance cannot be maintained.

Are bars and restaurants allowed to open?

With Phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, restaurants, bars, wineries, distilleries and tap rooms can open outdoor patios at their maximum capacity with physical distance between tables. Masks are required when people are not eating or drinking. They must remain closed to indoor seated service but customers can go inside to use the washroom or pay. They can continue to offer takeout, delivery and drive through service.

Hotel restaurants can be open for indoor seated service for hotel guests only. Guests who are in quarantine can not go to the hotel restaurant but can get room service.

Can wineries, distilleries and tap rooms open?

Wineries, distilleries and tap rooms follow restrictions for restaurants and licensed establishments when serving food and alcohol. They follow restrictions for retail when selling product in retail space or storefront.

Are the casino, VLTs and First Nations gaming centres allowed to operate?

Casino Nova Scotia in Halifax and Sydney, VLTs and First Nations gaming centres are closed.

What are the restrictions for indoor recreation and leisure businesses? What are some examples?

Businesses that offer indoor recreation activities are closed. Some examples include make your own pottery café, rage room, escape room, trampoline facilities, indoor rock climbing, places to play board



games, children's play places, dance classes, and music lessons. Staff could use their business premises to offer virtual sessions with no more than 5 people in one location.

What about outdoor recreation and leisure businesses like fitness classes, shooting ranges, golf courses, putting ranges, go-carts, and outdoor adventure?

With Phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, outdoor fitness and recreation businesses and organized clubs can operate with a maximum of 10 people and physical distancing. People can go inside these facilities briefly to pay if necessary. When activities are offered on the business's premises, there can be multiple groups of 10 that are distanced from each other.

Can you still order alcohol on the green of a golf course? Are physical distance and masks required on the green?

If the green is licensed, we would consider food or alcohol service on the green to be delivery service. Physical distance is required among people who are not in the same household (or 2 small household bubble) or effective June 2 with Phase 1 of reopening starting, with the same close social group of 10. That means only players from the same household or close social group would be able to share a golf cart. Masks are not required on the green. Lessons are allowed, outdoors, one-on-one, with distancing.

Can marinas be open?

Outdoor areas of marinas can be open. If they have an outdoor restaurant/bar patio, it can be open following the rules for restaurants and licensed establishments. People using marinas should stick to their own household members or effective June 2 with Phase 1 of reopening starting, with close social group of 10. They may not be allowed to travel into or out of HRM or CBRM (see above) to go to a marina, unless it's absolutely necessary.

How are fitness and recreation facilities operating?

Indoor fitness facilities (like gyms and yoga studios) and recreation facilities (like pools, arenas, tennis courts, and large multipurpose recreation facilities) are closed. Staff can use the facilities to offer virtual sessions with no more than 5 people in one location. They can offer one-on-one personal training in their facilities.

With Phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, outdoor fitness and recreation businesses and organized clubs can operate with a maximum of 10 people and physical distancing. People can go inside these facilities briefly to pay if necessary. When outdoor activities are offered on the business's premises, there can be multiple groups of 10 that are distanced from each other.

Outdoor pools can open with a limit of 10 people at a time with physical distancing.

Can hotel, condo and apartment building gyms and pools be open?

Hotel gyms and pools can only be open to guests who are not in quarantine. Use is by appointment only for one person at a time or people from a single room.

Gyms and pools in apartment and condo buildings can be open only to people who live there. These are common areas so masks are required except while in the pool or doing exercise that makes wearing a mask difficult. Building managers should consider setting up an appointment system for using these facilities similar to our requirement for hotels.

Can personal services businesses be open, like hair salons, barbers and spas?



Personal services businesses can reopen for service by appointment only. They cannot provide any services that require removing a client's mask. They must follow their sector plan.

Can retail stores operate?

With Phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, retail stores can operate at 25% provincewide. These types of businesses must:

- Ensure customers and staff can maintain physical distance (2 metres/6 feet apart)
- Customers must maintain physical distance and wear non-medical masks when lined up to enter a retail business – both indoors and outdoors
- The business cannot play music louder than 50 decibels so that normal conversation is possible
- Limit one shopper per household, with exceptions for children and caregivers

What's the definition of a retail business?

A retail business is one that engages in the retail sale or rental of items to the public on ongoing basis at a fixed location.

If I have reached my store's maximum occupancy, there isn't enough room for everyone to stay 2 metres/6 feet apart. What should I do?

In this case, you set a lower limit on the number of people who are on the premises at a time to ensure physical distancing.

Are there rules for shopping malls?

In addition to the retail rules outlined above, the following is also required for malls:

- No more than 10 people at a time can line up at a retail business inside the mall and they must maintain physical distance
- People are not permitted to loiter in any area of the mall
- Directional markings are provided to manage the flow of people within the mall
- Furniture in common areas of the mall is removed or inaccessible
- Non-retail public areas in the mall must be closed, other than public washrooms, breastfeeding stations, and hallways that give access to stores
- The mall cannot play music louder than 50 decibels so that normal conversation is possible

Can farm farmers markets and flea markets be open?

If the market is not a regular daily or weekly operation, they are considered special events which are not permitted until at this time.

These markets are only considered retail operations if they have regular hours every day or week, the majority of their vendors are always the same, and the market serves as their retail outlet. They can operate indoors or outdoors at 25% capacity, including vendors and customers. They need a COVID-19 prevention plan. Physical distancing and masks are required.

Can driving schools operate?

Driving schools cannot operate at this time. That applies to both classroom and practice driving sessions.

Can you have a cleaner come into your home? What about a nanny? What about a plumber, electrician or other service provider?



These types of service providers can enter your home if necessary. People should wear masks, maintain physical distance where possible, and clean high touch surfaces frequently.

Can a landlord show an apartment unit? Can a realtor show a home?

Realtor's and landlords can show properties, however, landlords must gain the tenants' consent for in-person showings for the purpose of renting or when the property is being sold. If a tenant chooses not to allow in-person viewings, they must allow the landlord, and up to one other person, entry into the premises to film/photograph the property for virtual viewings. The landlord must give notice to the tenant 24 hours before entry. [Learn more](#).

Everyone needs to wear masks and maintain physical distance. High touch surfaces should be cleaned frequently. There is some [further guidance](#) on the website. If tenants are concerned, they could leave an apartment unit while it's being shown.

ACTIVITIES

What are the restrictions for sports?

With Phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, organized sports practices and training can have 10 people. Multiple groups of 10 are allowed outdoors with physical distance between groups. There can be no games, competitions or tournaments.

What are the restrictions for arts and culture?

With Phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, arts and culture rehearsals can resume.

Professional arts and culture rehearsals can have 15 people indoors without physical distance. Masks are not required but are recommended when possible. They must have a plan for their workplace.

For amateur arts and culture rehearsals, there can be 10 people outdoors without physical distance. Masks are not required but are recommended when possible. Multiple groups of 10 are allowed outdoors with physical distance between groups.

Can there be spectators for sports or for arts and culture performances?

There are no activities for spectators to attend in-person. There can be virtual gatherings and performances with a limit of 5 people involved. Masks and physical distancing are required. Drive-in theatres can open.

What are the restrictions for school-based sports and performance arts?

At schools that are open, school-based sport and amateur performance arts are following the same rules as non-school sports and amateur performance arts. There can be 10 people outdoors for practices or rehearsals without physical distance. Masks are not required but are recommended when possible. Multiple groups of 10 are allowed outdoors with physical distance between groups.

School gyms are closed for community use. Field trips have stopped. All school-organized activities that bring students from different schools together, such as sports and music, have been stopped.

What is the limit for beer leagues and pick-up games and practices?



With Phase 1 of reopening starting June 2, organized sports practices and training can have 10 people. There can be no games, competitions or tournaments.

Can after school programs still happen? What's considered an after school program?

After school programs offer care for children from Primary to Grade 6, five days a week for the entire school year. See more in the [Before and After School Programs Guidelines](#). These programs can run at schools that are open.



Can people get together to play darts, cards, pool, bowling, bingo or karaoke?

Licensed establishments and unlicensed establishments (such as community centres and charities) cannot host these activities at this time.

Can libraries, museums or the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia be open?

Museums, libraries and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia are closed, but libraries can offer pick-up and drop-off of books and other materials.

Can there be overnight/sleepover camps such as for Girl Guides or children with disabilities?

We stopped these types of overnight summer camps for youth early in the pandemic. They are still not be permitted for the time being but are [planned for reopening for summer](#). This does not affect regular camping at campgrounds. It does not affect businesses that offer things like retreats or tours.

Does the general gathering limit apply to day cares, day camps or before and after school programs?

No, the limit of 15 without physical distancing remains in place for these settings.

How many people can be at a playground? Can 10 kids be in close contact at a playground?

The gathering limits do not apply to people going to parks, beaches, trails, playgrounds, etc for recreation. You should primarily stick to your own household when you go to these places.

Children at a playground should not spontaneously form a group.

Masks are now mandatory outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained, including playgrounds and parks.

Are parks, trails and beaches open?

Yes, parks, trails and beaches are open but people should not travel into or out of any restricted area to use them.

Can campgrounds and rental cottages be open?

[Provincial park campgrounds](#) are opening June 1. Private campgrounds can be open for both seasonal and short-term campers effective June 2 with distance between campsites following their sector plan. People should not travel into or out of any restricted area to use them.

Can people go to their cottage or seasonal campsite?

Effective June 1, the legal restriction on travel within Nova Scotia will be lifted. However, we may be asking Nova Scotians to continue avoiding non-essential travel into and out of HRM areas and CBRM. We will re-assess and determine what travel is permitted early next week. If these restrictions are in place and going to your cottage or seasonal campsite would involve going into or out of these areas, you should pick one place and stay there.

Can people do door-to-door canvassing? Can they do this for the census?

If this activity can be avoided, it should be, although there are ways to do it safely. The census is an important national process managed by the federal government. Their website says:

Census employees must wear a mask and practise physical distancing, in accordance with guidelines from public health authorities. Statistics Canada will do everything it can to get Canadians to respond to the census without an in-person visit from a census employee. In-person visits will take place only when



other options (e.g., online, by phone) are not available. If you have further questions, you should contact Statistics Canada.

COMPLIANCE

What should I do if there's a large informal gathering like a house party or other rules being broken?

If you have a concern about a particular instance of public health measures not being followed, you can call your local non-emergency police number. Each person at an illegal event can be fined \$2000.

What should I do if rules aren't being followed at a business?

If you have concerns about how a business is operating, you could speak with the manager. If you feel it's necessary, you could contact the Safety Division at the Department of Labour and Advanced Education at 1-800-952-2687 or LAESafetybranch@novascotia.ca.

What should I do if I'm concerned about my employment rights in relation to the pandemic?

You can contact the Labour Standards division at the Department of Labour and Advanced Education at 1-888-315-0110 or LabourStandards@novascotia.ca.

CONTINUING CARE

Can a long-term care resident go to their family's home for a visit? Can family visit a resident in their facility?

Effective June 2, there can be outdoor visits with fully vaccinated residents of long-term care facilities except. Each resident can have their 2 designated care providers visit present at the same time. Recreation activities and services such as hairstyling can resume for fully vaccinated residents. Residents can only leave their facilities for medical/dental appointments. Residents who go to school or work can resume doing so.

All adult residential centres and regional rehabilitation centres licensed by the Department of Community Services residents can have visitors outdoors and resume community access for work, therapy, recreation and family visits as long as they follow public health measures.

Can adult day programs operate?

Community-based adult day programs for seniors cannot operate at this time.

Adult day programs for people with disabilities funded by the Department of Community Services are also closed, except for those that have scheduled vaccine clinics.