

## COVID-19 Facebook live update: December 1, 2020

>> Pat: Good morning.

I'm Pat Living with the department of health and social services and moderator for the COVID-19 update for Tuesday, December 1st.

WE are joined by Yukon premier, the honourable Sandy Silver, the Yukon's Chief Medical Officer of health, Dr Brendan Hanley.

Sign language interpretation by Mary Thiessen and Andre Bourcier from the French language services directorate are also with us today.

Following our speakers we will go to the phone lines for questions from reporters.

We will call you by name and you will each have two questions.

Before we begin with our speakers, I would like to verify that everyone can hear us?

If any of the reporters are having a problem, please e-mail [ecoinfo@gov.yk.ca](mailto:ecoinfo@gov.yk.ca).

Premier Silver?

>> Thank you very much.

Hello everybody and thank you for joining myself and Dr Hanley on the traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Taa'an Kwächän Council.

In the past week, we have announced eight new cases of COVID-19.

Now have a total of 47 cases in the territory and a total of 17 active cases.

We have also issued and a Chanel public notifications over the past few days.

I encourage all Yukoners to review the public notifications so that they know if they have been in the location where they may have been at risk of exposure.

Anyone who has symptoms should self isolate or arrange for testing at the COVID-19 testing and assessment centre at 867-393-3083.

Or through their rural community Health centre.

Once again, I want to stress how important it is to practice the Safe Six.

They are still the best thing that you can do to keep yourself and others safe.

Wash your hands often, maintain physical distancing, stay-at-home if you're sick, travel responsibly and respectfully, both inside and outside of the territory -- respectfully.

Self isolate as required, and follow gathering guidelines that are in place including limiting indoor gatherings to ten people.

By practising the Safe Six, you can help keep all Yukoners safe.

And there is more that you can do.

As we announced last week, masks are now mandatory in all indoor public places-- spaces throughout the Yukon for those over the age of five years old.

By "indoor public spaces" we are referring to indoor areas of a building that aren't intended -- intended for the common use of the whole public.

This includes public buildings, stores, lobbies, hallways, waiting rooms, public bathrooms, elevators, in other indoor spaces.

Mask use can help reduce the risk of an infection-- of an infected person passing the virus along to someone else.

And wearing them can protect people from being infected.

However,, like seatbelts and bike helmets, masks are only effective when you wear one.

My simple advice, if you're not sure whether or not you're in a public space, wear a mask.

Do it for your neighbours, do it for your friends, and for your colleagues.

We cannot let our guard down and we must remain vigilant.

I also want to take some time to emphasize the importance of staying home if you're sick.

As we deal with the second wave of this pandemic, it is very important to be mindful of what we are each doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

It is important to monitor your symptoms and stay-at-home if you're sick.

I know Yukoners take their work very seriously, and it is not easy to stay away.

But it is very important.

Across the territory, workplaces have done a lot-- a lot of work to adapt to COVID-19 in put in place safety protocols.

It has been great to see the quick and creative changes that local businesses and organizations have made to keep their operations safe and healthy.

We can't thank you enough.

As we face the second wave, it is a good idea to review operational plans and ensure you're doing everything you can to keep your businesses safe and sanitary.

The best way to prevent spread at the workplace is Tuesday at home if you're not feeling well.

I want all Yukon employers and employees to know that they are supported in this.

Our government has paid sick leave rebate programs for employers, including those who are self-employed.

To complement this, under new COVID-19 regulations, an employee is also entitled to a leave without pay for a period of up to 14 days if they require it.

And employees can use this leave if they are someone in their care is order to follow a health protection measure such as self isolating.

You can find more information about this support and others at Yukon.ca.

The length of these provisions align with the recommendations of how long people must self isolate because they have developed symptoms or or at risk due to contact with the virus.

To reduce the strain on the healthcare system and to further limit exposure, a doctor's note is required to access this leave.

So please take the precautions and stay home if you're feeling sick.

Doing so will ensure that we can continue to work in safe, healthy places.

Also, if you're in a position to work from home, please do so.

We need to take extra care to limit our interactions with those outside of our bubble as we experience the second wave and spend more time indoors.

I know that Doctor Hanley will have more to say about bubbles and social interactions in a moment, but I want to remind people of course, this goes without saying sometimes, that these are extremely challenging times and there is no denying that.

I know it is not easy to hunker down and keep to ourselves after all that we have been through since the spring.

We need to continue to support one another, to check in on one another, and to do so, we do all that we can to help out each other when we see people in need.

We will get through this together, and we will get through this together with patients and with kindness.

There are some helpful sights on the horizon including the prospect of effective vaccines.

I want to update all Yukoners on where we are with respect to vaccines.

Last week I had a frank discussion about the premiers and Prime Minister about a national approach to vaccine delivery.

We discussed the importance of waiting for regulatory approval before giving out vaccines as well as providing additional information to Canadians as it becomes available.

I continue to stress the importance of fair and equitable access to the vaccine and vaccines including four key populations that are high risk such as long-term care residents, elder populations, immunocompromised individuals, healthcare workers, and indigenous and remote northern communities.

My colleagues and I understand that this will be the most complicated immunization program ever delivered in Canada and that we need to take a team Canada approach.

Working with other provinces and territories on approvals on timing, procurement, distribution, and costs.

Many details are still being finalized, including the number of doses that will be available and the timelines for rolling out the vaccines across Canada.

A National operations Centre is being established to coordinate the logistics and distribution of vaccines, and the Canadian Armed Forces are helping with planning, data sharing, and supporting indigenous and rural communities.

Yukon's emergency measures organization has been in contact with Brigadier General of the joint task force North to build planning capacity for distribution in the North.

The federal government is acquiring and distributing equipment as needed to accommodate vaccine delivery, including 26 culture cold temperature freezers to store candidate vaccines.

Minister Pauline Frost and her fellow health ministers, along with federal, provincial, and territorial officials are working together to advance a vaccine strategy.

They continue to meet regularly to share information and to ensure a coordinated approach as we work towards approval of candidate vaccines.

Yukon health officials have been preparing a vaccination plan for the territory.

This includes identifying storage space, the number of required doses, staffing requirements, and plans for distribution.

We anticipate approved vaccines will be available in early 2021.

There are still many issues to be worked out, and vaccines still need to be approved by health Canada.

We will continue to share information as soon as it becomes available.

I encourage all Yukoners to be patient, to continue to practice the Safe Six, and wear a mask.

We need you now more than ever.

You can always find the most up-to-date information on Yukon.ca, and the last thing I want to touch on before I pass things over to Dr Hanley has to do with the fact that we are in December.

As we set our sights toward an unusual holiday season, I know many kids around the territory are wondering how their gifts might get here in light of the self isolation requirements and I have good news on that front.

I can confirm that Santa is a critical worker and I know Dr Hanley and his team have been working very closely with his at -- with his counterparts in the north ball.

With that, I will turn things off to Dr Hanley.

Thank you.

>> Pat: Thank you, Premier Silver.

Dr Hanley?

>> Thank you, premier.

Thanks for listening to my recommendation as well.

Good morning.

Happy December.

I hope everyone is doing well.

I know there are many things in motion at the moment.



They have outbreaks going on with a sharp increase in case numbers.

We have the mask mandate which some people welcome, and others --

[ Audio Difficulties ]

All recent cases are recovering well, while at home in isolation with two cases still in hospital.

And YCDC is continuing with intense contact tracing.

We don't know when this will end.

We won't know when this will be over, until we see at least a few weeks without further cases linked to this outbreak.

And so far, we have, despite extensive testing, not identified signals of community transmission.

In other words, we're not seeing cases appearing in the community that are not connected to travel or Dr Hanley cases.

However,, we have not ruled it out.

So for the time being, our approaches to pursue rigorous contact tracing, and to test wisely.

Wisely, and widely.

I thought it would be at this point worth reaffirming and focusing on what our general goals are with the pandemic and particularly in this time of outbreak.

And if we have goals, how do we get there?

Our general approaches -- is similar to Canada's as a whole, to prevent the harmful effects of COVID infection, to protect people and settings that are mobile -- more vulnerable to COVID's threat, and to minimize the negative mental and physical effects caused by the COVID response.

In other words, we are continually striving for the best balance of reducing COVID's threat while supporting the health of our people, whether that's mental, physical, spiritual.

Or overall health.

And preventing harm to our society, so protecting overall well-being.

More specifically our goal should be to contain COVID so that we can ideally prevent COVID transmission.

If we can't achieve that, we will strive to keep transmission to a minimal level while protecting our citizens, our elders, our communities, our healthcare and essential workers, and our healthcare system.

And as we continue towards this present goal of containing the outbreak and preventing it from turning into more widespread disease, our approach is based on the following measures.

Carrying on with meticulous contact tracing, maintaining accessibility to testing to detect otherwise undetected disease, and we have increased our testing capacity recently by offering a more convenient way to get tested with the extended drive-through testing centre.

So if you're symptomatic, you can drop into the drive-through and seek testing.

We are also continuing to identify sites where transmission may have occurred.

These core public health measures are in addition to what we need to do is a population to prevent transmission.

Including the Safe Six and masking and I will go over these in some detail later.

I think everyone understands why we want to test and contact tracing.

But why the public notifications, isn't that just raising the alarm?

We know well that COVID-19 can be spread from people who have symptoms that may be mild enough they are not recognized as something potentially serious.

Are it can be spread in that period before symptoms develop.

So without knowing, these intervals -- individual's can be out and about in the community in that two or three day precept emetic period.

Every time that we interview a positive case and nurses tried to suss out while the -- where the individual was while infectious, sometimes that may involve a sad in where there has been significant mixing with a member of the public.

Sometimes these situations are so transient, a few minutes and a gas station or convenience store, that they are not significant ways for COVID to spread.

But sometimes when the durations are longer and perhaps other conditions prevail as well, there may be more crowded venues, maybe closer spacing, maybe absence of mask used.

Those are situations where we will post notifications to notify potentially exposed members of the public.

For this reason I have to publicly provide information for where there may have been possible public exposures.

This is another strategy to find places where transmission may have occurred and therefore to find others who may have been infected.

Therefore if you were in one of the identified spots before the times-- or during the times specified, we ask you to self monitor for 14 days from that a visit.

And if symptoms do present, to immediately isolate and seek testing.

But otherwise, please consider these locations safe to frequent if they are open.

All of these businesses are facing challenging times during a pandemic in we have been working closely with all of them to help them operate in a safe manner.

Now, this outbreak is not over.

But we have already learned a lot, and there are significant lessons to be learned that we need to apply to further preventative measures now.

Here's what we are seeing.

People who are working or participating in activities while sick with symptoms.

We see COVID infection being passed around in work settings, or in other public settings where people are meeting and gathering outside household bubbles.

So here is takeaway number 1.

If you don't have any symptoms-- if you have any symptoms at all, if you do have symptoms at all, stay home.

Don't go to work.

Don't go to the Jim.

Don't go to the grocery store or pick up a coffee.

Many of our recent cases have arisen from transmission within a work setting.

A sick staff member goes to work, infects a coworker who then goes home and, in fact, a family member, and so on.

If you're sick, it is your responsibility to protect your partners and your friends at work, your family at home, and others that you associate with.

So if you do get symptoms, what will you do?

Will you continue to pick up work and get -- get groceries for dinner, or will you stay home and stay away from others?

You need to walk through this scenario ahead of time and be ready in case you do fall ill.

If you have symptoms, even mild, you must avoid others and avoid public places.

If you continue with your daily lives, you maybe the reason others become infected.

So if there is one thing to take from today's briefing, Lee stay home if you're feeling sick.

This is critical to reducing the number of cases throughout the territory.

Employers, please prepare for staff to be second ensure that both you and they know the supports that are in place for you, as the premier mention.

Check the website, phone, ask your colleagues.

But staff and employees should never feel compelled or obligated to work while sick.

As the premier confirm, the wearing of a nonmedical mask is now mandatory in in Yukon well in indoor public spaces.

Everyone over the age of five will be required to wear a mask in less mandate is enforceable under the seven emergency measures act.

Meaning that Yukoners will be required to wear masks and spaces as defined in that order.

Details as always are available on Yukon.ca.

The evidence is more compelling by the week.

Masks to help us in situations where physical distancing may not be possible.

While we can continue to socialize, go to work, and visit other public spaces if we are well, masks will give us yet one more layer of protection in addition to our Safe Six measures.

Masks help prevent the spread of a person's infectious respiratory droplets.

If that person is wearing a well fitted, nonmedical mask.

And remember, COVID can spread before symptoms occur.

Masks can help us further protect ourselves and others, including those who are more vulnerable to COVID-19.

Wearing a nonmedical mask that properly covers your nose, mouth, and ten helps reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 when the also follow the Safe Six.

Remember, masks are not as substitute.

They are in addition to all those measures that are already well-known.

It is important that you continue to physically distance and wash your hands, and follow the other measures when applicable.

For Yukoners who cannot afford or find a mask, the Yukon government does plan for a limited time to make them available at public facilities.

Please refer to [Yukon.ca](https://www.yukon.ca) for more information and guidance on the use of mandatory masks.

These recent and ongoing outbreaks have led us, as they should, to think about what our risks are and what we are doing to diminish those risks.

We need to have those difficult conversations about what extra societal measures may be needed, either now or if things get worse.

In many ways, we have been relaxed sort led into complacency as the risk for COVID has seemed mostly outside our borders.

But now there is no further room for minimizing a threat are denying it.

COVID-19 is here, it is real, and it could get worse.

I am going to ask you to make some small sacrifices for the greater good.

And by and large, there is nothing here we have not already asked.

It is just a matter of redoubling efforts to do what we already should be doing.

First, if you can do so without disrupting the workflow or service to others, please work from home.

I ask that employers consider ways they can support having some employees work from home where possible.

If you're unable to support this as an employer, please refer to Yukon.ca for all the pandemic relief supports.

Now importantly, we are not going back into the shutdown phase that we faced eight months ago.

We want services to continue to run.

We want clients to continue to get the services and the care that they need.



We want those important transactions still to occur.

But at least to some extent, if we can make the workplace is a little less peopled, and a little more spacious and carry on just as well, we will be in a better place.

Second, do not work while you have symptoms.

We have witnessed this occurring due to COVID spread.

We have seen out occur all over the world and now we are witnessing it here in Yukon.

Really, the only reason to have any symptoms and remain working is the single runny nose we highlighted in the traffic light guidance.

Basically anything else, you need to stay at home, stay away from others, self isolate and arrange for either a test or ten days of self isolation.

Third, regarding your household or social bubble, let's take another look at those rules and now we really need to stick to them.

Stick to your social bubble in every setting.

Your social bubble consists of people you live with or who regularly come into your household.

Their social bubble can include one other household.

Everyone in your household must be a part of that social bubble, and that is it.

That is your bubble, like it or not.

If you're in a shared household, you either formed the bubble among you or you have no shared facilities and no close interactions.

This means that the household members you interact with are not having dinners with their neighbours or friends outside of this bubble.

The bubble is designed to be small but can include a maximum of 15 people and remember, that is split between two households.

People you play sports with or work with, if they are not already in your social bubble, they are not part of your social bubble.

So in these areas, you need to follow existing guidance whether that is for contact sports, sports guidelines, or operational plans that you need to have set up for your workplace.

And if you go out to restaurants or bars, please don't share tables with people outside of your bubble.

The harsh reality for now is that you can only socialize with your friends in these settings when well spaced from each other.

Sharing a table is unfortunately not one of those ways.

We are seeing transmission of COVID-19 in multiple settings where indoor spaces are shared, whether at home, at work, or during leisure activities.

It is vital that for the next few weeks, we hunker down and reduce our outings and social gatherings outside of the household.

We will have to work a little bit harder these next few weeks, even months.

And we will need to comply with the new guidelines, sticking to our household bubble, and showing compassion where it is required.

We are not alone in this battle and as proud Yukoners, we can work together to slow the spread of this virus and ease the strain we are all feeling by investing in our efforts.

I want to talk about the importance, as I have mentioned many times before, of confidentiality.

During these last few weeks, I'm sure we have all heard the constant swirl of rumours.

We have released numerous cases that have been linked to specific locations.

We need to remember that privacy is essential during a time like this.

When people are sick with COVID-19, we want to avoid those individuals being named or blamed or ostracized because they became ill.

People are often fit -- dealing with an overwhelming amount of emotion and fear.

They don't want or need to be identified among their peers or their community.

It's nobody's fault but COVID-19 is in our territory but it is everyone's responsibility to stop it from spreading.

COVID-19 will take any opportunity to infect.

It is always knocking at our door, and it can affect anyone in the time.

Please understand that and be synthetic to others.

For those who are presently fearful of contracting COVID-19, please it might be helpful to remember the following.

If you were identified as a primary contact, you will be reached out to by a nurse.

If you're a secondary contact, in other words if you have been in contact who was at a place of exposure, please don't be alarmed.

You can carry on with your life and like anyone, if symptoms occur, self isolate and arrange for testing.

If you have questions, you can call the COVID info line.

If you have symptoms, you can call 811 or do the self-assessment online for testing.

We will always try to help.

And remember, no news is good news.

Nurses at Yukon communicable disease control or community nursing will directly advise any contact the may have been exposed to COVID-19.

So three important areas to remember before I have a couple of closing remarks.

One is, if you're sick, stay away from others and please don't participate in activities and don't go to work.

The second is keeping your social bubble relay to your household, that one or two household bubble.

We really want to keep social activities within that bubble.

The third is, if you have an opportunity to work at home, please work at home.

All of these are in addition to the mandatory masking that comes into effect today.

Sometimes I have shouted out to people are congratulated or thanked people, and I think it is always important to express gratitude to those many people who are involved in a COVID response.

That is whether it is our frontline public health people, community nursing, the people who work hard, so hard in long-term care, our frontline healthcare workers, the team that supports me and all of the activities in the COVID response unit, but one group I wanted to shout out to today was our Yukon EMS folks for although they do.

Whether in their everyday mission to be right there to help people when they are in need, or for the many other services they provide.

You may not realize that Yukon EMS assists the COVID response unit and the department of health and social services, and putting together the drive-through testing Centre basically overnight.

EMS primary care paramedics now staff that centre as well as providing staff for the COVID-19 testing and assessment centre.

They have locked -- work long hours to provide Yukoners with additional testing options.

Yukon AMS paramedics are also at the Whitehorse emergency shelter every day, helping out with a variety of healthcare services and assessment.

EMS volunteers and staff are also all around Yukon communities, always standing by to help.

I want to thank all of the staff of Yukon EMS for being there for my team, and for all Yukoners.

And as the premier said, there has been much speculation about how on earth Santa is going to make it to Yukon on Christmas night.

I can add my insurance -- insurance to young Yukoners as -- just as we are preparing and so many areas we have not forgotten us into needs to get in, do what you needs to do cog and get out.

In case you thought you're getting away without being spied upon, I have been able to advise that elf on the shelf will also be receiving a special exemption from the south isolation requirement.

This will be working self isolation.

The elf will be required to wear a mask when unable to physically distance from others.

He will be watching how long you wash your hands for and what else you're doing to stay safe.

More importantly, sand and on the reindeer have also been granted exemptions to be able to visit Yukon on the night of December 24<sup>th</sup>.

I have heard something about immunity.

I've also heard they may be getting that new Russian vaccine on the way over here.

What you can't be sure they are going to be immune.

But as a premier said, since they are critical workers we have given them all the advice to help them stay safe while delivering their goods.

The government -- they could arrive at any time of the night and he must not peak.

I know you want to check out Santa's mask and how it fits over that beard.

Or how Rudolph's mask could possibly fit over that red nose.

But you do need to give them the space to do their job safely and move on to all the other kids.

That's all for my update, thank you.

Remember to take -- take care of each other and stay well.

>> Pat: Thank you, Dr Hanley.

We will now go to the phone lines and start with John from CKRW.

>> Reporter: Dr Hanley, I was wondering if maybe you could clarify as to what a good, nonmedical mask would be constructed out of material wise, thickness, and maybe if you're privy to the info, where some people might be able to get one.

>> Yeah...

And know, we have just finished some guidance but covers all of those aspects.

So there is of the order itself which basically says how you have to wear a mask, when you have to wear a mask, and what that exemptions are.

Then there is guidance which goes more into the materials but really, a well fitting mask, good starting -- good cloth materials.

Two or three layers is ideal.

Two layers is also fine.

Some highly -- guidance is also provided with video footage of how to properly put on and take off the mask, and all of those really, caring and nurturing for your mask.

There is also-- there will be more specific information on where to get masks when you're unable to access or have difficulty finding them.

Those are going to be at a number of locations.

I don't have specifics.

>> I would just add, and I know Dr Hanley mentioned it in his opening comments as well.

For a limited time, masks will be made available at public facilities throughout the Yukon Hospital Corporation's PPE supply chain.

With an estimated maximum of around 200,000 masks be industry did.



Priority of these masks that the corporation is making available will be for those who are the most vulnerable or to have access to masks but they will be made available to all Yukoners, to remove any real or perceived access barriers.

Masks will also be provided to municipalities, First Nations, territorial government offices upon request, and some of first nations governments have already been provided nonmedical masks upon request.

Again with the type of mask, I think Dr Hanley, two layers or three would be great.

Tightly woven fabrics such as cotton or linen.

The third should be a filter type if possible and large enough to completely cover the nose, mouth, and chin.

>> Reporter: This morning, while getting my coffee I noticed a number of patients in a coffee shop, I want to mention the name just to not ostracize the business.

They were not wearing their masks and today was the start of the mandate.

My question surrounds the idea of enforcement to go with noncompliance for the mask mandate as well as, I guess what exactly will enforcement look like?

>> I know the premier carries the big stick.

You know, this is the first day, so we recognize that even though I am...

Incredibly impressed by the level of uptake in the population and just walking through downtown yesterday, I was noticing even outside, the degree of uptake of mask use was astounding.

So I think, let's give us a chance to adapt to mask use in the variety of settings that are spelled out in the order.

You know, I think we will see increasing uptake and a continued increase of uptake.

And really, the goal is to have as close to 100 percent of the population wearing masks as possible with some of those exemptions for recognized and supported for people who, for a small variety of reasons, will not be able to wear masks.

Having said all that, you know, give us some time.

There is some habit-forming to happen, there is education, there is availability and accessibility.

All of those are really important to enforce mask usage.

Enforcement as they are, it is not in my mind the first priority.

And I think it would be a big mistake to go running around everyone on the first day who is not wearing a mask.

But there are enforcement mechanisms written into the order so that there is a fine possible for noncompliance with mask use, if there can't be reasonable verification of an exemption for that individual.

>> Pat: Premier Silver?

>> Thank you, Dr Hanley.

I completely agree with the strategy.

They have been talking for a few weeks now about the inevitability of masks and about the fact that we really want to see an educational campaign as opposed to an enforcement campaign, especially in the first couple of days.

We know that Yukoners want to do the right thing.

I know the majority of Yukoners are on board to protect other Yukoners.

Yukoners want to make sure they are not responsible for spread, and so we will be encouraging compliance to begin with.

And we are going to be enforcing the use of masks with fines or penalties but that is a last resort at this point.

There is a ministerial order that will be enforceable under the civil emergency measures act, but the primary means of compliance will be through education, awareness, and support.

Again, if it does get to a fine, been the fine for not wearing a mask one required to is a fine of up to \$500.

Sanctions would only be used in egregious scenarios of noncompliance.

A customer like you described or a visitor could be refused entry of service if they are not wearing a mask as well.

But there is the ability for the government to enforce fines.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will move now to Tim from Whitehorse Star.

>> Reporter: Yes thank you.

First question I would like to ask is, if you could go over the medical exemptions for not wearing a mask.

>> Yeah, I actually don't have them in front of me but, there is a list and there are some like facial deformities, there are some areas where breathing with -- that make breathing difficult.

There are some mental health reasons, there were people with anxiety for example or other mental health conditions, kind of claustrophobic tendencies where wearing a mask is very difficult.

I think those are the main categories and there may be another couple that I am forgetting.

>> Just in terms of exemptions in general, outside of medical exemptions, again we mentioned children under the age of five will not be required.

Other exemptions as the doctor references, people with medical conditions, also people participating in sports, in private areas and long-term care homes, while eating or drinking at public restaurants they will also not be required.

The current recommendations for schools will remain in place, those recommendations are that students aged ten and older, so great four in up, where nonmedical masks in school settings where physical distance and cannot be maintained.

And this order also does not apply to workers who do not offer services to the public.

For those places, individual workplace policies will apply.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Do you have a follow-up, Tim?

>> Reporter: I do.

Are you expecting much active resistance are pushed back to the mandatory mask bylaw?

>> I mean, you're always going to get folks that don't want to be part of the solution.

I think the conversation Dr Hanley and I have been having for nine months now, going on nine months, watching acceptability of masks internationally, nationally, and locally, so much has changed.

So much has changed within the last month as well as far as acceptability in public spaces.

So sure, we are going to see, as you said -- as the previous reporter said, people going into places not wearing a mask.

But we believe for the general population, most people want us to get over this.

COVID fatigue for everybody, conversations about vaccines really puts us in this precarious position where Yukoners are not living in their Gestalt, they are looking forward to a future where all this can be behind us.

So now more than ever, it is really important for all Yukoners who care about the safety of our elders, the safety of people with underlying health considerations and just the general population, now we need Yukoners to dig deep.

We are kind of in the seventh inning stretch right now.

So we really need to maintain that diligence, I think the Chief Medical Officer of health and his team have done an extraordinary

job of preparing Yukoners for this inevitability, and here we go with just another part of the new normal.

We are really encouraged by the amount of mask use we have been seeing, but you're going to get some folks that are obviously not going to commit to this.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Now to Claudiane, Radio-Canada.

>> Reporter:

[ Speaking French ]

>> Interpreter: Could you please repeat in French, what are the rules for wearing masks and what kind of measures have been taken to ensure that people will wear them?

[ Speaking French ]

[ Speaking French ]

>> Interpreter: So you mentioned that it is important to stay home when you have symptoms.

Is it related to the latest cases?

Is it at the workplace that most of these cases have appeared at this point?

[ Speaking French ]

>> Pat: Thank you.

I won't ask you to repeat that, you have already said it in English.

We will move to Beth, Canadian press.

[ Audio Difficulties ]

>> Pat: I'm going to assume that Beth has no questions.

Onto Maryne, L'Aurore boréale.

>> Reporter:

[ Speaking French ]

>> Interpreter: Could you please repeat in French what measures have been taken regarding Santa Claus?

[ Speaking French ]

[ Laughter ]

[ Speaking French ]

>> Reporter:

[ Speaking French ]

>> Interpreter: Does that mean that this year, the traditional pictures taken with Santa are not going to happen?

[ Speaking French ]

>> Pat: I will ask you to repeat that an English, please.

>> The question about space and standup photos.

The spacing will have to be observed and all the guidelines unfortunately.

So there may not be an opportunity to have a close encounter or a hug with Santa.

However, there are methods, and I was just speaking about my kids who just had their school photos done.

Instead of the traditional class photo, they were going to just Photoshop the individual photos into one class shoot.

They are always these opportunities for innovation.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We will move now to Haley, Yukon News.

>> Reporter: Thank you.

I had a question for Dr Hanley.

I'm sure this was covered earlier in the pandemic but I'm hearing more people asking questions about it.

So much of the advice for contact tracing or being in an area has to do with waiting to see symptoms.

Is asymptomatic transfer of the virus before you see symptoms a concern at all?

>> Absolutely, a great question and absolutely, it is a concern.

That factors into how contact tracing is carried out.

And even how our public notifications are carried out.

We always built in a presymptomatic-- we always since -- assume an infectious period of up to three days before some them on such.

So that is almost like our safety factor, or precautionary factor, to recognize that infectivity occurs in those up to three days.

It is really probably two to two and a half days.



We have now gone to three days is our usual approach, and again, just building and that safety factor so that we are looking for contacts not just at the time of symptom onset but in those days before and the same of the notifications.

Recognizing that people may have been in those places-- if they have been in those places before symptom onset, we count those as potential exposures if they are in the two to three day period before hand.

>> Pat: Thank you.

Next question Haley?

>> Reporter: Thank you.

Yes, my other question was sort of touched on but when it comes to household bubbles, obviously it is much easier if you have a nuclear family.

Maybe two adults and a kid living in a house.

In situations where more adults might be roommates, living together and then they are bubbling with other roommate households, can you give more practical advice for sort of best practices when you have got those shared households back how to build a reasonable bubble?

>> Yeah, I will try, and again I think it is a mixture of being really prudent and common sense.

And recognizing what you're starting with.

There is no doubt that a shared households where you have for

instance a group of young adults who are all working in different places, you're already looking at a potentially risky scenario.

So it is important to establish at the beginning what the understanding is within that household.

Are you having four people for instance who have separate bathrooms and separate lives from each other?

And rules about using a kitchen and spacing within the kitchen.

And as I indicated briefly, and no sharing of facilities.

So you're really setting yourselves up to be living completely different lives and that does happen.

Or are you actually forming a social bubble?

So there are your friends, and you're deciding to make that your social bubble.

That means that you're limiting your bubble outside, so that really is your bubble.

You could entertain one or two others into that bubble.

That is not where the 15 applies.

The 15 is really to recognize a two households where you might have two large families.

A family of eight in the family of seven.

They can deliberately form that bubble.

So I think, you know, we have not spelled out every detail and the guidance but I think it is really being aware of the potential interactions that go beyond the household.

So if you have those four people within a household who want to be a social bubble and they are all working in different places, you're already introducing other risk of social interactions.

The preferred way would be to keep that bubble really small, whether that is just the household or maybe one or two other close friends, then that is it.

Then there is no other bubble.

If you're in the workplace, you're observing very carefully all of the workplace guidances that exist, and the same for sports and activities and other areas.

I think probably the most important thing, read the guidance and be very deliberate about what you're and how you define yourselves.

>> Pat: Thank you.

We had a bit of a phone glitch so I am going to go back.

Beth, Canadian press, any questions?

She is still not there, so thank you.

I would like to thank everyone for their time today.

Our next COVID-19 update will take place Tuesday, December 8th, at 9:30 AM.