



Road & Trail Risk Assessment and Safety Recommendations

V.2 – June 30, 2021

*date sensitive and subject to change

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Introduction

The following guidelines have been created by Athletics Ontario, in order to provide a guideline for Ontario Race Directors to follow while developing Operational Plans for their events to maximize the opportunity for a safe event for participants during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. These guidelines are date-sensitive and subject to change depending on current re-opening guidelines.

These guidelines were developed following the Center of Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Event Safety Alliance (Appendix E) published recommendations with the help of a Provincial Task force of and by cross-referencing existing Operational Plans from 3 running events in Canada.

These recommendations are not meant to replace any local, provincial, Federal and/or National Public Health, CDC, or WHO guidelines, but rather to address risks specifically relevant to COVID-19 and running races. Distances, measurements, or quantities in this document are based on requirements at the time of this publication and may be subject to change depending on governmental requirements. This is a living and breathing document and subject to change depending on the ever-changing state of the pandemic, and as further recommendations and guidelines are provided. It is imperative that individual race/event directors contact local Provincial Health Units for region specific protocols. Each municipality may regulate access to public areas (for example a public bathroom in a park may be deemed off limits for a race and participants if necessary staffing for cleaning is not accessible and adequate port-a-johns are available to race organizers)

It is also imperative that event directors clearly understand that these guidelines are in place to minimize risk, not to completely eliminate risk. The onus remains on event directors to clearly outline, communicate and adhere to these guidelines and for the volunteers and participants to strictly adhere to these guidelines for their own health and safety and for the health and safety of others around.

The following operational principles are organized around the six areas of risk mitigation below:

- Social distancing and density reduction
- Touch point minimization
- Hygiene
- Education and communication
- Participant self-reliance and education

Health Screening

- Clear communication (Appendix A) on race guidelines regarding reducing the presence or potential spread of COVID-19
- Strict exclusion policies for anyone who is symptomatic including participants, officials, volunteers, and spectators, (if spectators are permitted in the future).
- Clear refund policy to discourage those who feel symptoms on the day of race from attempting to participate
- Self-assessment tool/waiver
 - Two days prior to event day, send participant and volunteers a health assessment survey asking if they have travelled outside the country in the last 14 days and screen for symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (Appendix B)
 - Consult your medical team as to specific questions to be asked on Health Questionnaire, Active screening (waiver) is currently required in Ontario
 - Any participants who do not meet the health assessment criteria will not be permitted to race or attend
 - Repeat this procedure again at the venue entrance. Questionnaire to include updated common symptoms of COVID-19 should any new symptoms be discovered
 - On the day of the race upon entry, have an exit plan for any participant that does not pass the Health Questionnaire assessment
- Day of race registration is discouraged
- Temperature check via medical staff conducted in sterile manner, Temperature checking may still be a part of the over COVID-19 safety planning at the discretion of race management with consideration:
 - Value of time and exposure to conduct the screening
 - Increased cueing and marshalling needed.
 - Increased need for close contact
- A qualified individual should be designated the “Infection Mitigation Coordinator” for your race (Appendix C)

Hygiene

- Consider systematic elimination of unnecessary touch points
- Ensure participants wash hands with soap and water and/or hand sanitizer *prior to* and *after* using porta-potty or washrooms. Touchless hand sanitizer dispensers are ideal
- Spread out porta-potties considering 2-meter social distance requirement, if space is a constraint consider staggering door entrances, one forward and one back
- If possible, dedicate volunteers to regularly clean porta-potties
- As an extra precaution a plexiglass barricade, (with adequate room to pass objects into/out of) between volunteers, staff and participants could be used at race kit pick up, aid stations or any other area where close contact may occur.
- The line-up system should be configured with volunteers, signage, and barricades to

provide clear guidance. Depending on space availability, participants should line up in front of each toilet physically distanced. It would be advisable for users to exit left out of the toilet to minimize crossover with a new user. A lane two meters wide going across all the units could be taped/chalked or delineated on the ground along with signs reminding users to exit left before a new user approaches the unit.

- Supply hand washing stations/hand sanitizer anywhere near any other high touch surfaces such as on course at hydration/aid stations, entry to corrals and exit from the finish line.
- (Personal Protective Equipment) PPE: provide medical grade masks, face shield gloves (as needed) and access to hand sanitizer to all volunteers and staff, with necessary support and training, face shield add as option. Buffs/handkerchiefs do not provide adequate protection. PPE should be worn in all indoor spaces including the medical tent.
- Suggestion to educate participants on the use of face buff/handkerchief or disposable tissue as an alternative to expelling involuntary postnasal drip.

Race Kit Pickup

- If possible, dependent on weather, arrange kit pick-up outside a storefront allowing runners to line up 3 meters apart in a pre-organized line up. The line should come from the left and exit to the right, or vice versa.
- If possible, explore drive through race package pickup with assigned pickup time windows
- Eliminate race expo, or in person pre event gatherings
- Extend kit pick up hours/days to maximize social distancing opportunities
- All items should be prepackaged and placed in one package and arranged by last name beforehand to maximize efficiency and minimize participant time spent at package pickup
- Volunteers should wear a mask/face shield or mask practice strict hand hygiene, and sit two tables away from the participant picking up race kits, consider a plexiglass shield if space is a constraint.
- Everyone at the venue should wear a mask where 3 meter social distance cannot be achieved

Bag Check

- Consider eliminating bag check when safe (weather dependent).
- The line should come from one direction with the exit flow to the opposite direction. Allow a flow through as much as possible.
- A clear plastic bag can be handed out in the race kit in which participants shall place all their items. Only items that can fit within the provided clear bag will be accepted.
- Depending on the space available for the Bag Check, volunteers could lead one participant down one row of bags to allow the runner to place their own bag down at the designated spot according to bib number (this alleviates handling of the bags by volunteers)

Crowd Management before during and after your event

- Consider pre-arranging arrival times in coordination with start times to provide a flow of participants to and out of the start line with minimal wait time
- See Appendix E for diagrammatic examples

Start Line Crowd Management:

- Communicate to participants clearly prior to race day on the website and in pre-race e-mail the flow of participant traffic at the start line.
- Seed start times based on expected race finish time with fastest runners first, slower last etc.
- Shuttle busses are discouraged, if necessary, ensure PPE is worn and touch points are regularly sanitized. Ensure:
 - Ensure transport company has COVID safety plan in place
 - Occupancy has been reduced in the shuttle bus
 - Adequate PPE and hand sanitizer is available on each shuttle
 - Maximize air flow with open windows when possible.
- When necessary Shuttle busses must ensure PPE is worn and touch points regularly sanitized, 50% capacity and split seating (consult contracted bussing company for their current regulations).
- Depending on the width of the Start Corral, a calculation can be made to the amount per corral to coincide with current municipal guidelines:
 - allow no more than one person per *3 square meters or 9 square meters* of ground space. If the width of road is available, consider walking in chutes (chutes of 3 for example in Appendix E)
- Rolling start encouraged. Runners enter the corral only when their time slot has been announced. One time slot would be at the Start Line with the next group on deck on standby. Physical distancing chalk circles two meters apart can be placed on the road.
- Two-sided signs for physical distancing should be put up along the sides of the corral, regularly
- Masks: Begin with face covering which can be removed as soon as race commences. Create a policy including safe disposal of masks after removal (delete buff) in which the participant can carry (wrap around wrist) during the race so as not to minimize mask disposal challenges.

During Race Crowd Management

- Communicate to participants clearly prior to race day on the website and in pre-race e-mail the flow of traffic during the race.
- No drafting permitted. A minimum of 3 meter social distance must be practiced by all participants and volunteers before during and after the event
- Consider devising a specific Drafting & Passing Rule as below (Appendix D)

- For ease of passing communication, discourage earbuds

Finish Line Crowd Management

- Communicate to participants clearly prior to race day on the website and in pre-race e-mail the flow of the finish line dispersal zone.
- Volunteer Marshals in the Finish Line Dispersal Zone, along with signage will remind finishers to keep moving while keeping their distance.
- Masks worn by participants and all volunteers in the finish line area as soon as the participant crosses the finish line. Extra masks to be available if the participant loses the mask they started with. Suggestion to place one in finish kit below (as governmental guidelines consider not to remask people at finish line)
- Medals: Suggestion to include a prepackaged finish kit including a medal for participants to pick up once finished, prepackaged/sterile face mask, snack, and water bottle.
- Finishers should continue to egress along the road/path to exit the venue to their departure mode of transportation
- **Emergency Egress.** The need for physical distancing creates significant challenges when planning to evacuate a crowd during an emergency. Where participants might be told to take refuge, such as due to a forecast of severe storms, the area of refuge must be able to accommodate the crowd while maintaining six feet (two meters) between unrelated groups. Likewise, if patrons will be instructed to return to their vehicles in an emergency, volunteers will need training to manage the exit crowd to avoid the risk of contagion while they flee from some other hazard. Note: The goal of maintaining six feet (two meters) between people would become a distant secondary consideration if there is a clear and imminent danger requiring an emergency evacuation. Even during this pandemic, emergency egress plans should reflect that moving patrons away from the most urgent hazard is the first order of business.

Post Event Gathering

- To maintain a crowd less event, a post event gathering of any sort should be discouraged
- Suggestion to mail out awards instead of handing out in person to allow for participant quick exit

Availability of trained/educated volunteers

- Ensure all staff, volunteers, and officials have been clearly educated on all aspects of their role with respect to the prevention of potential spread of COVID-19
- Race directors should consider virtual or online training opportunities for staff and volunteers

Fluid and Food Stations

- Ensure volunteers practice regular hand washing and/or hand sanitizing and wear adequate PPE
- Workers should place pre-packaged food and beverages on the table, counter, or other surface rather than handing purchases directly to patrons.
- Workers should place requested items on the counter for patrons to reduce touching of food or packaging, and avoid self-service aid stations
- Beverage Packaging: sealed water or energy drink bottles should be used, rather than traditional water-aid stations with disposable cups.
- Alternative to sealed water bottles hygienically fill water cups by pre-trained volunteers and place on table for participants to pick up themselves. Adequate hand sanitizer use before and after pickup to be enforced.
- If dixie cups are used adequately train volunteers on regular hand washing/sanitizing minimizing touching cup rim. Minimize volunteer touch points (i.e discourage volunteers handing out water cups and encourage participants picking up their own cup(s))
- In extreme heat, if fluid refill is necessary for personal handheld hydration vessels, water should be poured by a volunteer wearing a mask, and who regularly practices strict hand hygiene, from a container with no direct contact with the participant, nor any direct contact with the participants personal hydration vessel (i.e. participant holds and opens hydration vessel and volunteer pours from 2 – 5 inches away).
- Depending on the size of event and outside temperature, proactive and clear communication about the decided upon policy with regards to aid stations, hydration backpacks/handhelds will be essential for participants to properly execute as laid out.

First Aid and Medical Response

- Engage with medical team in the early stages of the planning process
- Expect the need for additional personnel or equipment in the event of a potential exposure
- Include a medical team in the COVID safety planning to ensure clear lines of communication and responsibilities
- Dedicate an “isolation area” and exit plan should a participant screen positive for COVID-19

Risk Management and Crisis Communications

- Race organizers should have prepared in advance communication templates to all participants, volunteers and officials for the following:
 - Event Cancellation
 - Potential COVID-19 exposure scenario
 - Unforeseen incident related to COVID-19
 - Pre-prepared media statements

Data Collection

- Encourage data tracking for continued improvements in risk mitigation at all levels.
 - Contact tracing
 - Race Safe” app useful tool
 - General participant medical screening encouraged prior covid infection
 - Pre-event vaccination screening encouraged
 - General participant medical screening including prior covid infection screening

Appendix

Communication and Education to your Participants & Volunteers

What to Communicate

All rules and regulations about your race and the mitigation of any potential presence or spread of virus should be clearly communicated in all forms of communication prior to and during the event.

- Race Map, a clear outline of traffic and crowd management
- Expectations of entry into race, start line, race, and finish line and exit from the race.
- Proactive preparation for crisis and risk communication (i.e. prewrite or pre-record communications to have on hand in case of an emergency)

Where to Communicate

- Website for your race. Dedicate a page to COVID-19 preparedness. If possible, illustrate via video/slideshow/pictures etc. The more prominently new rules and expectations are displayed, the more serious event/race directors appear around enforcing them, which will tend to gain greater compliance.
- Social media channels for your race. As with the web site, the more information appears on social media, the greater its impact.
- Race registration sites should link to health and safety rules. Registration can require patrons to check a box affirming that they have read and agree to comply with posted rules, the way we affirm that we are not a robot before making an online purchase.
- Emails and push notifications reminding your participants of health rules and expectations can be sent at regular intervals from date of purchase through day of show.
- Mobile apps, if applicable, are already valuable means of giving patrons directions to your race. You can add health rules and expectations to the information on every patron's phone.
- Signage leading to, and on your race site, can be effective as a further reminder, especially if it is visually attractive and located where patrons are likely to be standing still or moving slowly such as near the start line.
- Event registration and bag check-in are excellent places to post health rules and model compliance. Registration materials can be placed by workers or volunteers on a table to be picked up by event attendees, and lines can be marked on the floor or created by rope and stanchions to enforce social distancing.

How to Change Expectations

- Widespread messaging (additional visual aid <https://odysseymedical.ca/pandemic-promise> by venue and event professionals can permit your participants to learn that the new rules are for

their protection and eventually lead to greater compliance.

Temperature and Health Screening considerations

- <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>
- http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_screening_guidance.pdf

A) The Infection Mitigation Coordinator

- Coordinate with, communicate, and help implement public health guidelines.
- Work closely with the race director to develop and implement event health plans.
- Ensure that existing safety plans are modified for compatibility with new health plans.
- Help create worker training that applies current information about hazards and infection control measures, including social distancing, handwashing, temperature checking, and disinfecting high-touch surfaces.
- Determine, in conjunction with the venue or event organizer, if a worker or participant may safely enter the event space when there is a health concern.
- The Infection Mitigation Coordinator should develop health screening questions and evaluation criteria in consultation with a qualified medical professional with questions communicated via email the day before the race, and in person on race day.

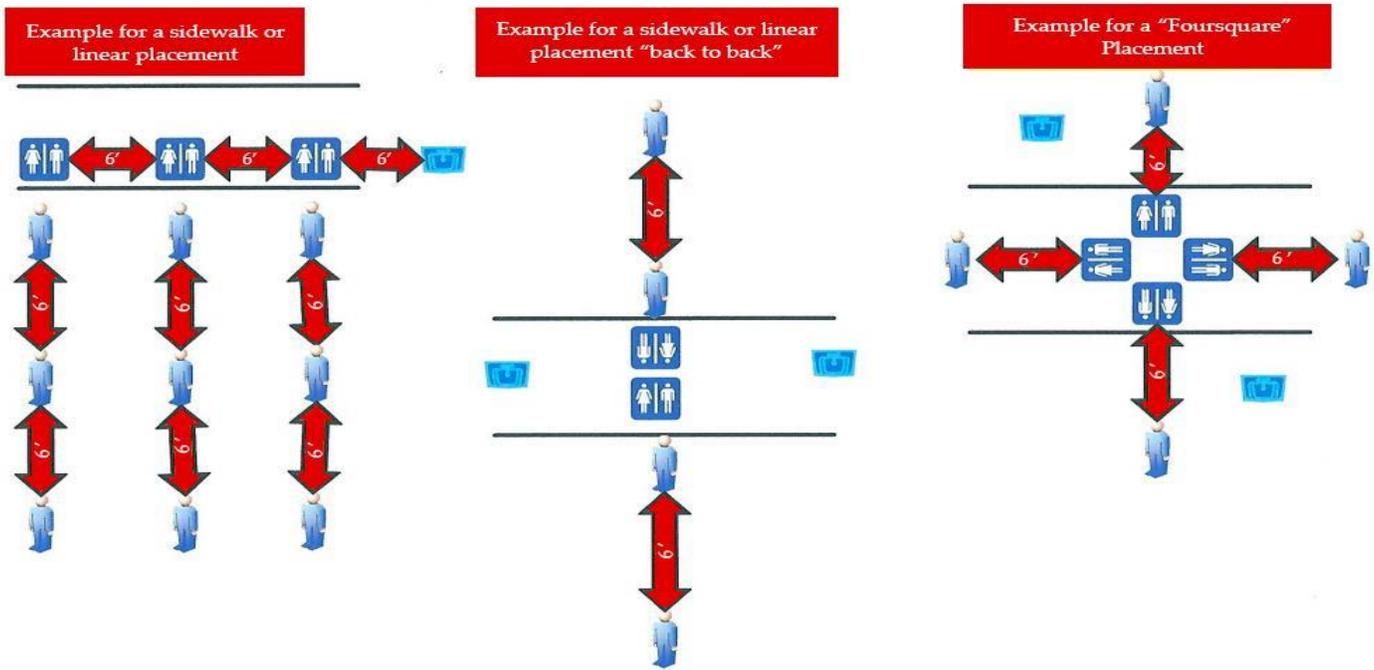
B) On the Course

Drafting and course flow considerations:

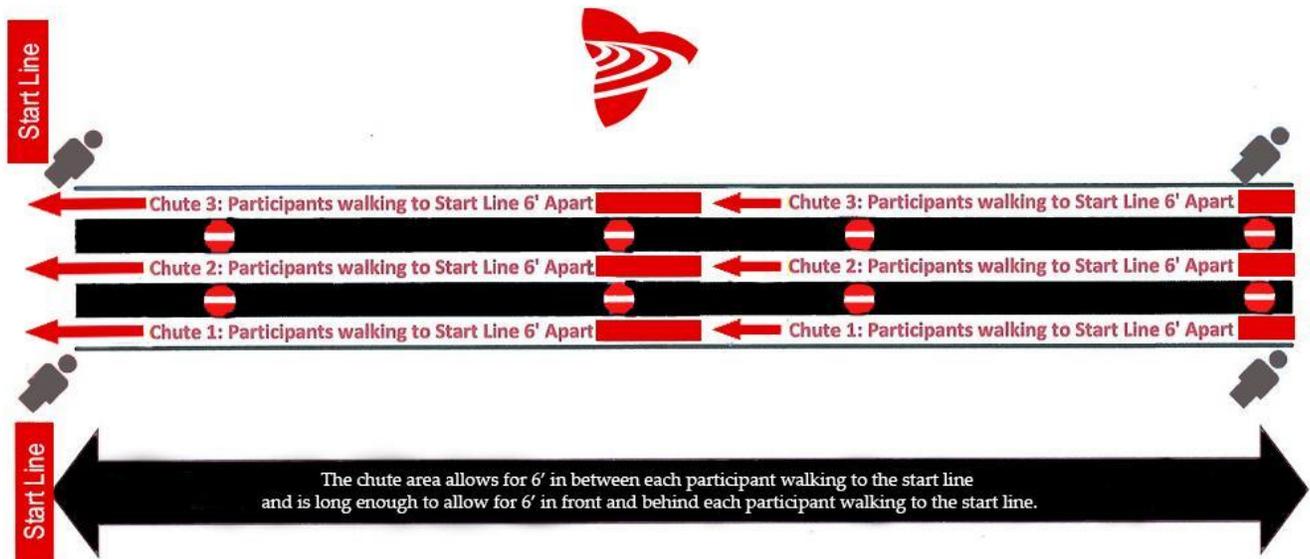
- In areas where there is two-way runner traffic on the course, especially on an 8-foot park path, overtaking cannot take place when there is a runner approaching in the opposite direction.
- In preliminary course planning, the minimum of one traffic lane must be mentioned in the permit to allow for physical distancing on the course.
- At right-angle turns, the turns must be made single file. Depending on course design and width available with consideration of safety from vehicular traffic, two runners running 3 meters apart may be able to make the turn at once.
- Volunteer Course Marshals at each intersection will continually remind runners to keep their distance.
- Course Zone Directors will patrol the course on bikes, or in vehicles where appropriate, to enforce the physical distancing rules.
- As the typical inflatable arch is about 24 feet wide, at least the final 100 meters of the Finish Approach should be two lanes wide to accommodate physical distancing of mass finishers.

C) Examples of diagrammatics for operational plan and/or to illustrate to participants

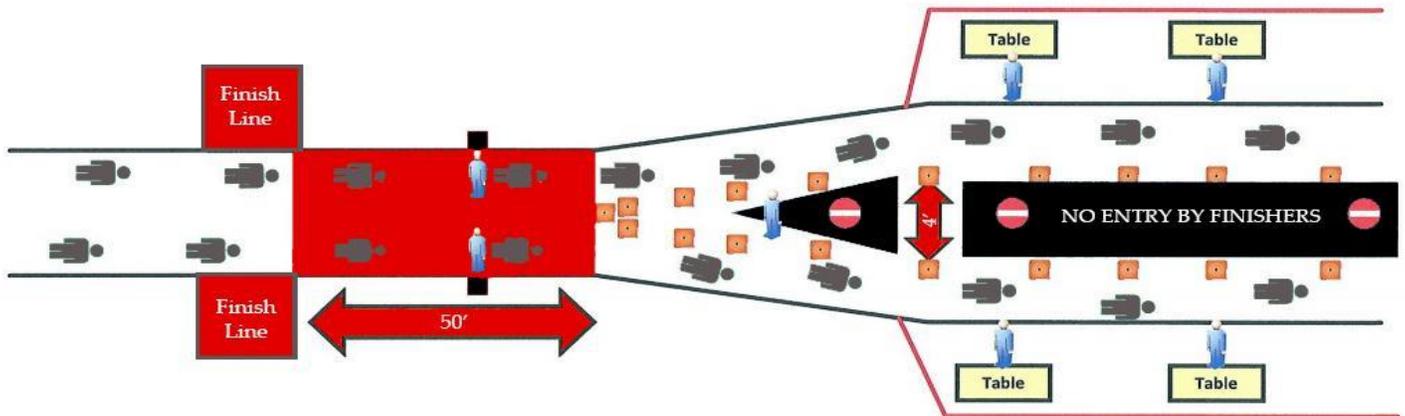
Portable Restroom Placement Example



Start Line Example



Finish Line Example



D) Links to further resources

<https://www.eventsafetyalliance.org/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html>

<https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/85514>

<https://odysseymedical.ca/pandemic-promise>

<https://itra.run/documents/ITRA%20COVID-19%20GUIDELINES%20-%20EN.pdf>

WHO - Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/key-planning-recommendations-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-the-current-covid-19-outbreak>

The Public Health Agency of Canada - Risk mitigation tool for gatherings and events operating during the COVID-19 pandemic

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/mass-gatherings-risk-assesment.html>

The Public Health Agency of Canada - Risk mitigation tool for workplace/businesses operating during the COVID-19 pandemic

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html>

The Public Health Agency of Canada - Risk mitigation tool for outdoor recreation spaces and activities operating during the COVID-19 pandemic

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-mitigation-tool-outdoor-recreation-spaces-activities-operating-covid-19.html>

Toronto Public Health - 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Guidance for Large Community Events / Mass Gatherings

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/8dbf-2019-Novel-Coronavirus-COVID-19-Guidance-for-Large-Community-Events-Mass-Gatherings.pdf>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/mass-gatherings-risk-assesment.html>

World Athletics – Infectious Diseases Outbreak Management

https://idom.worldathletics.org/?fbclid=IwAR3tJy4HMPY102wREblyRIW9XEbcBHGTJেকেD2KNkgG0JqOHR_TUxqOH8Xw

Ontario COVID-19 Screening Tool for Long-Term Care Homes and Retirement Homes

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_screening_guidance.pdf

Race Safe App

<https://www.iracesafe.com>

Contact Tracing

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/contact-tracing-initiative>

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