

Introduction

On April 25, 2020 the Provincial Government announced that they would permit the use of community gardens across the province. These gardens are an essential source of fresh food for some individuals and families, including those who face food insecurity.

In order to safely permit this work to continue, the province stated that Local medical officers of health would provide advice, recommendation and instructions that the gardens must meet in order to operate, such as physical distancing, and cleaning and disinfecting commonly used equipment and surfaces. The Board of Directors, following the advice of the Grey Bruce Health Unit has established the following guidelines to be followed by all staff and volunteers during the pandemic.

Communication and Signage

All staff and volunteers shall be required to read these guidelines prior to attending the garden. The signed acknowledgement must be submitted to the garden manager.

Signage will be posted advising the public that the site is closed to visitors and only authorized staff and volunteers will be permitted to enter.

Prior to attending the garden, approval must be received from the garden manager to ensure that all attendance is recorded and does not exceed the maximum of five (5) people at any time.

Additional signage will be posted within the site regarding physical distancing, restricted areas, no sharing of tools, handwashing and disinfecting procedures. Staff and volunteers shall obey all posted signs.

Screening

Before attending the garden, all employees and volunteers shall conduct a self-screening assessment by answering the following questions:

- Are you feeling unwell and have any of the following symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing?
- Have you travelled outside of Canada recently?
- Have you been in contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, please stay home. If you had planned a shift with the garden manager, please let her know as soon as possible that you will be unable to attend.

If you develop symptoms after a visit to the garden, please inform the garden manager immediately.

Physical or Social Distancing

Gardeners must maintain a minimum of two (2) meters or six (6) feet of separation at all times, unless they reside in the same household.

Children should only be brought to the garden on an as required basis and shall not be brought if they are too young to understand physical distancing and hygiene practices. Parents or guardians are responsible for following the guidelines on behalf of their children.

Although the garden is a great place to socialize, it is not appropriate during a pandemic. Therefore the number of gardeners is limited to five (5) at any one time.

Hygiene

If possible, wash your hands before entering the garden and as you leave.

If you have to cough or sneeze, do it into your sleeve or a tissue. Dispose of the tissue into the trash and immediately wash your hands.

Avoid touching your eyes and face.

Use of Tools and Equipment

Avoid sharing tools. Volunteers are asked to bring their own tools and protective equipment and take them home at the end of their shift. Staff will be assigned tools and personal protective equipment for their individual use.

Where sharing a certain piece of equipment is unavoidable, the equipment shall be cleaned and wiped down with a disinfectant between uses. Equipment with metal or fiberglass handle is preferred over wood for this type of use.

Eliminate the need to touch surfaces where possible. For example, leave doors open to common areas that may need to be accessed throughout the day and designate a single person to be responsible for a task rather than doing many things in different spaces.

Failure to Observe Guidelines

If a staff member or volunteer witnesses a violation of these guidelines, they shall report it immediately to the garden manager.

The Board of Directors reserves the right to ask any staff or volunteers to leave the garden at any time if they fail to observe the guidelines.