

## Reopening of TCHC community gardens

### Frequently asked questions

May 2020

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Community gardens, including those beds that have been assigned for tenant use, will be opened in Toronto Community Housing buildings **soon**.

Toronto Public Health has created a set of interim guidelines to follow for opening and operating community gardens safely. Toronto Community Housing has been working to put these guidelines in place and has established that our gardens will be opened in phases.

#### **Why can't the gardens open right now?**

Toronto Community Housing cannot open community gardens until we have made sure that all gardens are ready to operate based on Toronto Public Health's guidelines during social distancing. These guidelines are important infection prevention and control measures to help reduce the risk of COVID-19.

#### **What are the guidelines?**

Any person that uses community or allotment gardens must follow these guidelines/directions.

- Reduce the risk of transmission, which includes staying home when you are ill and practicing all established physical distancing measures

- Hand hygiene and cough etiquette, which includes washing your hands before entering and exiting the garden space
- Garden manager and garden members will be required to sign the Toronto Public Health Community and Allotment Garden Declaration, attesting that they must adhere to the interim directions
- Self-screening
- Entrance restrictions
- Maintaining a sign-in and sign-out system to track who is in the garden each day
- Cleaning and disinfecting requirements
- Equipment and tools requirements
- Communications, which includes creating a schedule to minimize crowding at the garden
- A process for dealing with gardeners who become ill while at the garden

Guidelines will be communicated in full for all participating tenants.

### **What do you mean by “opening in phases”?**

Based on garden assessment, we will be opening our gardens in two phases. The first phase will consist of gardens that are fairly easy to open. The second phase will include gardens that need more coordination before opening.

## **When will the gardens open?**

While a definite opening time hasn't been established, the goal is to have all community gardens open and operating with full safety precautions by the end of May.

## **Are any gardens staying closed?**

Some gardens affected by building construction will not open. As well, gardens that are considered "beautification gardens" will not open at this time.

## **How will you communicate this to tenants?**

We will use our established channels to communicate to tenants. This includes posters at affected buildings, social media posts, updates to [torontohousing.ca/covid-19](https://torontohousing.ca/covid-19) and more.

Local Community Services Coordinators (CSCs) will be a resource for tenants. The CSCs will be involved in the opening and supervision of the gardens.

## **What happens if someone doesn't follow the guidelines set by Toronto Public Health?**

We are working on a process for responding to a situation where guidelines aren't being followed. We will communicate more once the process is final.

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