



# Town of East Gwillimbury

## MEMORANDUM

To: Council

Date: October 20, 2020

Subject: COVID-19 Update #11

Origin: COVID-19 Control Group

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### COVID-19 Control Group Updates

The COVID-19 Control Group continues to meet and is in regular communication with Council, neighbouring municipalities and York Region. The group also continues to work closely with Provincial and York Region Public Health Officials regarding this public health crisis.

### Provincial Updates Regarding an Increase in COVID-19 cases

On Friday, October 9, 2020, the Province of Ontario indicated through a public announcement that the COVID-19 pandemic is progressing at an alarming rate; On September 1, Ontario had just over 110 new cases and five weeks later, reached 939 new cases. This rise is happening too quickly, and to help prevent further spread, the government implemented a new set of measures for the regions identified as hot spots.

### Modified Stage 2 Provincial Restrictions Implemented in York Region

With the most recent escalation of COVID-19 cases in York Region, which saw the highest daily number of cases since the pandemic began (128 cases confirmed on October 14), the Region has moved from “orange zone” to “red zone”.

On October 16, the Province announced that York Region will be placed under Modified Stage 2 COVID-19 restrictions, effective Monday, October 19, 2020 at 12:01 a.m. for a period of at least 28 days.

These restrictions include the closure of:

- Indoor food and drink service in restaurants, bars, nightclubs and food courts in malls (takeout and outdoor dining will continue)
- Indoor gyms and fitness centres
- Casinos, bingo halls and other gaming establishments
- Indoor cinemas
- Performing arts centres and venues
- Spectator areas in racing venues

- Interactive exhibits or exhibits with high risk of personal contact, such as museums, galleries, zoos, science centres and landmarks
- Prohibiting personal care services where face coverings must be removed for the service (makeup application, beard trimming)
- Jury selection for provincial court trials
- Suspension of short-term and temporary absences for social or personal reasons at long-term care homes; only absences for medical or compassionate reasons will be allowed

Additional restrictions include:

- Limiting gathering sizes for social gatherings and organized public events to 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors
- Reducing capacity limits for real estate open houses and guided tours
- Limiting team sports to training sessions (no games or scrimmages)

Schools, childcare centres, and places of worship will remain open and must continue to follow the public health measures in place. Before-school and after-school programs will also be exempt from these new restrictions.

### **East Gwillimbury COVID-19 Data and Statistics**

The Town of East Gwillimbury continues to have a low number of active cases however, the Town has seen an increase in cases in recent weeks. York Region has developed an interactive dashboard for each municipality with recent case numbers. This dashboard is available at [www.york.ca/covid19](http://www.york.ca/covid19). Below is a chart of the East Gwillimbury specific data as of October 15, 2020:

|                                     | Sept 30, 2020 | October 15, 2020 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Total Confirmed Cases               | 93            | 114              |
| Total Resolved/Recovered Cases      | 86            | 96               |
| Total Active Cases                  | 6             | 17               |
| Total Confirmed Deaths              | 1             | 1                |
| Total Cases Reported in last 7 days | 4             | 18               |

### **Testing Backlog Updates**

The Province has been working on helping to expedite the testing and notification process over the last few weeks. As of October 13, 2020, the Province indicated that the testing backlog has been significantly reduced and wait times for testing are down.

They have hired 100 new contact tracers and case managers and are hiring an additional 500 by mid-November. Hiring additional contact tracers and case managers and deploying them across Ontario will significantly boost the province's response to the surge in cases and keep the most vulnerable safe and schools open. Currently, there are almost 4,000 employees supporting contact tracing efforts.

### **Public Access to Municipal Facilities**

The Town developed a three-phased Recovery Framework Strategic/Phased Approach to ensure the Town builds back better. This phased approach allows for a cautious and safe re-opening that aligns the actions of the Town of East Gwillimbury with the recommendations and guidelines from the Province of Ontario, York Region Public Health, and other authorities.

At this time, the Sports Complex, Holland Landing Community Centre and Library and Ross Family Complex and Library will remain open with additional provincial restrictions. Council and staff will continue to be able to request entrance to the Civic Centre to perform work that can not be completed at home or to host pre-planned meetings with external stakeholders that can not be completed virtually. Further updates will be provided as available.

### **Reduced occupancy numbers at Arenas & Community Centres**

The Modified Stage 2 Provincial restrictions will reduce occupancy limits within municipal facilities. It is staff's understanding that the revised occupancy for arena spaces will be 10 per ice pad. At our Recreation Centres and Libraries, occupancy cannot exceed 10 per library space and 10 per gym/program room space.

Community Parks Recreation and Culture staff will continue to work with our sports groups including East Gwillimbury Minor Hockey and the East Gwillimbury Skating Club to provide a safe space for participants.

### **East Gwillimbury Public Library**

Effective Tuesday, October 20, the East Gwillimbury Public Library will revert to Stage 2 guidelines. This allows customers to use the Library for 1-hour computer use and checkout services. Customers are not permitted to handle books or material on the shelves. Physical distancing, 10 limit occupancy and hygiene procedures will continue to be in place. The

Library follows a 1-week quarantine procedure for all returned materials. Staff are available to assist customers with finding material to check out, and customers can request their selection using the [online Curbside Pickup Request Form](#) or by calling their local branch. Curbside pickup is available by request.

The East Gwillimbury Public Library will be following all Public Health protocols and is working closely with York Region and the Town to offer safe services.

### ***New “Virtual” Programs This Season***

New for the Fall season, the Town has introduced virtual programming. Residents can enjoy activities such as fitness, yoga, draw, paint and sculpt, coding with Kids Great Minds and babysitting courses all from the comfort of their own home. Programs and take-home activity boxes have also been designed for children preparing for school.

### ***Modifications Made to In-person Programs***

In-person programs have been adjusted to keep participants and staff safe. Programs have limited availability (not to exceed 10 participants) to effectively physically distance participants. Pickleball drop-in and the Seniors’ Walking Group are back and require pre-registration to participate with limited space available.

### **Potential Winter Programs**

Should the Town be permitted to continue with operations at current occupancy levels into the Winter months, a new Winter program schedule will be provided. Stay tuned for further updates.

### **COVID-19 Employee Sick Time**

As the cases of COVID-19 continue to increase, there is an increased need for staff to stay home and self-isolate while waiting for COVID-19 test results. As a result, the Town will be providing additional COVID-19 paid leave days to each employee. This is to support staff during this unprecedented and unique time and to provide assistance to those who are healthy, but unable to physically attend to work.

As each employee’s situation is unique, each situation will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, reviewing the employees’ role with the Town and ability to work from home. Each employee who requests to use a COVID-19 day will work with Human Resources and their supervisor to review work-from-home options during their self-isolation.

Employees who are ill due to COVID-19 will be required to work with Human Resources to utilize their sick days, or short-term disability.

## **COVID Alert App**

In accordance with the recommendations from York Region's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Kurji, the Town is requiring that staff download the COVID Alert App on all Town provided or funded cellphones. Both the Federal and Ontario privacy commissioners support the use of the COVID Alert application, subject to ongoing monitoring of its privacy protections and effectiveness.

The COVID Alert App is designed to let you know if you may have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. When an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19, uploads to the app the one-time key received from their healthcare authority, the user will then be notified that they may have been exposed. The user can then take the necessary steps to limit the spread of the virus.

Anyone who believes they may have been exposed to the virus should immediately contact their local public health authority and follow the instructions provided.

## **Council Meeting Schedule Updates – Balance of 2020**

The Town will continue with electronic Council meetings for the balance of 2020. In addition, beginning in November, staff are proposing the following Council meeting schedule:

- First Tuesday of the month Council meeting 10:00 a.m.
- Second Tuesday of the month Workshops (as required) 10:00 a.m.
- Third Tuesday of the month Council meeting 10:00 a.m. with a 6:00 p.m. **optional** meeting (dedicated for holding public meetings, as required). Example of topic items to be considered at the 6 p.m. meeting include: planning public meetings, Town logo, and budget approval. For high profiled public projects such as the Official Plan Comprehensive Review and Update, additional evening sessions will be added.
- Council may refer any matter from the 10:00 a.m. meeting to the 6:00 p.m. meeting subject to notice provisions set out in the Procedural By-law.

Staff will report back to Council in November outlining the 2021 meeting schedule (taking into account the COVID-19 implications).

## **Long-term Care Facility Outbreak Update**

As of October 15, 2020, it was reported that the Town had two outstanding outbreaks at Long Term Care Facilities, with a total of 10 closed outbreaks. The current outbreaks are located at a workplace and a group home.