

Update on COVID-19
Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health
March 23, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.
Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.

- As of 1 p.m. today there are 239 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Toronto. We expect to see more COVID-19 cases in our city with and without travel link. As I've said before, community transmission is occurring.
- We all have a responsibility to protect ourselves, our friends and our families from this virus spread. Toronto still has the opportunity to slow this virus spread, but we need to work together.
- This is why I am strongly supporting the province's order announced earlier today for the closure of all non-essential businesses.
- The province is doing this to reduce virus spread and while the order doesn't require these businesses to close until tomorrow at 11:59 p.m., the sooner these non-essential businesses are able to close, the greater the impact to reduce virus spread.
- This is also why I continue to strongly urge everyone to keep a physical distance of 2 metres, or 6 feet, to prevent virus spread. For you, in your day-to-day life, this means:
 - Staying home as much as possible
 - Getting groceries only when needed
 - Washing your hands often
 - Avoiding close contact with others
- When you stay at home, when you keep your distance from as many people as possible, you help to protect yourself and your loved ones.
- But, just as important, when you stay at home, you help protect those providing essential services:
 - Those who provide care to sick people in hospital
 - Those who are protecting our city: our paramedics, our police and our fire services teams; and
 - Those who make sure there is food on store shelves and our tables

- When we stay at home, we help to keep these essential workers healthy so they can do their jobs... so that our city can run safely.
- I understand that this physical distancing that I am urging you to do is not easy. In difficult times, we seek to comfort and be comforted by our loved ones. We seek support from each other and we can still do this.
- Call your elderly neighbour to see how they're doing. Skype, or Facetime, with your friends, or family. Set up a virtual games night with your friends.
- Self-isolation may be taking its toll on many of us, maybe even all of us, we are all human. But at this time, physical closeness is exactly what we need to avoid. Please do not put yourself, your relatives, or your friends at risk.
- The federal government is doing its part, the provincial government is doing its part, your local government is doing its part, your mayor is doing his part and now you need to do your part to suppress the spread of this virus.
 - If you can, please stay home
 - Only leave your home if you have to
 - People returning from travel outside of Canada, including the United States, need to stay home, even if they don't have symptoms of illness
- This is critical to protecting yourself, your family, your grandparents, your friends and your city.
- I am inspired by the many stories of compassion and acts of kindness in our city. Each is an example of our city coming together and caring for one another at a very difficult time.
- We will get through this. So please stay home, stay safe and take care of each other.