

Update on COVID-19
Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health
March 30, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.
Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.

- As of 1 p.m. today there are 591 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Toronto, this is up 50 from yesterday. There are 67 cases in hospital, 30 in intensive care units. Approximately 24% of our cases in Toronto are attributed to community spread and 30 people have recovered.
- We have also learned that there have been approximately 12 physicians, 13 nurses and 6 other healthcare staff who have tested positive for COVID-19.
- These numbers are constantly changing and we should expect that they will increase in the coming days and weeks. We will soon post this information online.
- I have also unfortunately been notified of 2 recent deaths related to COVID-19 in Toronto:
 - A man in his 70s was admitted to Scarborough Hospital last week and sadly died yesterday.
 - A man in his 80s was admitted to St. Michael's Hospital also last week and passed away last night.
 - I extend my sincerest condolences to the family and friends of these two men who passed away.
- To-date, there have been 6 deaths from COVID-19 in Toronto.
- The numbers I just presented to you are indeed a significant increase from last week, and I expect that we will continue to see similar patterns in the coming days ahead.
- I want to acknowledge the tireless efforts of our healthcare, front line, and essential workers, including our firefighters. We need to support them at this critical time so they can continue to care for our community.



Public Health

- As you may have heard, we recently learned that some of my colleagues at one of our Toronto Public Health main offices located at 277 Victoria Street contracted COVID-19. Given that COVID-19 is spreading in our community, we were prepared for this unfortunate situation. Currently, there are 8 Toronto Public Health staff who have COVID-19 and are in home in self-isolation.
- We carefully assessed this situation, the potential health risk to our team, and provided instructions directly to the close contacts of these individuals. I have also asked for the vast majority of our staff to work from home.
- Those who are unable to work from home are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment while working at our office located at 277 Victoria Street for the next 14 days to prevent further virus spread.
- Since COVID-19 is not spread through the air, a building is not considered at risk simply because there has been a case or cases in a building. It is those that have close and prolonged contact with a COVID-19 positive case who are considered to be at risk.
- We have also conducted enhanced cleaning of the office in order to protect our staff. The health, safety and well-being of our team and our community is our top priority. Our current focus remains on our COVID-19 response, and protecting the health of our city.
- Given that the virus continues to spread in our community, we can expect that there may be further COVID-19 cases amongst public health staff and other essential service providers who are keeping our city running.
- I would like to acknowledge the many personal sacrifices of my team, their hard work and their commitment to responding and to providing for our COVID-19 response. I'm truly very proud, and consider it the highest privilege of my career, to be part of such an incredible team of health professionals. They are truly second to none.

- I understand that it is difficult to hear that some of our frontline health workers and essential service workers have COVID-19. It is important to remember that we find ourselves in the midst of a global pandemic. Looking at other cities and countries all around the world, we should expect that unfortunately more of us will get sick. For some, very sadly it will be fatal.
- This is why it is so important to stay at home to reduce this virus spread, and to protect our frontline healthcare and other essential service workers. We need to protect these people so they can continue to protect us. People shouldn't have to die, people shouldn't have to risk death taking care of us because others won't practise social, or physical, distancing. This is simply not acceptable.
- In closing, I want to commend the province for today's actions to support stronger public health measures to contain the virus spread and to protect our public including recommendations for:
 - People to stay home except for essential reasons or purposes.
 - And for individuals over 70 and others with compromised immune systems or underlying medical conditions, to self-isolate.
 - We need to protect our community's most vulnerable residents and I fully support these recommendations.
- Now is the time is to scale up our efforts. I am in active discussions with all of our partners about the potential for increased measures.
- We still have an opportunity, our city still has an opportunity to limit the impact. The physical distancing measures we are asking you to take are absolutely critical for our health, both as individuals and our city. Please stay home, stay safe and take care of each other.