

Update on COVID-19

Chief Pegg, Fire Chief & General Manager of Emergency Management

March 21, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.

Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W

Good afternoon.

I won't repeat what City Manager is going to say about the outstanding work the Toronto Public Service is continuing to do to keep Toronto safe and resilient.

However, over the past number of weeks, you have heard me commonly make reference to both essential city services and critical city services.

I would like to be very clear about what I mean when I make reference to essential city services.

Essential city services include all of the following:

- All emergency services – including police, fire and paramedics and our dedicated 9-1-1 and emergency dispatch professionals who receive, process and dispatch emergency services each and every day;
- Toronto Water staff who continue to ensure our drinking water is reliable, safe and remains at the high standard we have all come to expect.
- Shelter, Support and Housing Staff who continue to ensure that our shelters and respite sites remain open.
- Long-Term Care staff who ensure that our long-term care homes continue to operate;
- Solid waste staff who ensure that our garbage, organics and recycling collection continues,
- Transportation staff who ensure that our roads remain safe and open, including snow removal services, road maintenance and other related functions;
- Toronto Hydro staff who are ensuring that our electricity remains reliable;
- TTC staff who are ensuring that we continue to be able to move safely and efficiently throughout the city;
- Our 3-1-1 staff who continue to ensure that our residents can get in contact with us when they need us;
- And of course, our amazing Public Health professionals who are on the frontlines of this pandemic each day.

There are also many critical services that are operating every day, who are making it possible for the City's essential services to function.

Examples of critical services include:

- Technology services who ensure that all our systems remain reliable;
- Procurement, materials management and finance staff who ensure that we are able to order, receive and pay for the PPE and other supplies we need;
- Our mechanics, who ensure that the City's fleet is able to stay on the road;
- Our administrative professionals, lawyers and experts who ensure that the City is able to efficiently and effectively respond to the ever changing landscape that is emerging;
- And the list goes on.

The City Manager is going to speak specifically about many of these important functions and the actions the City is taking to keep our City moving, healthy and safe. Yesterday, we had some questions about the enforcement of the Provincial orders that accompanied the declaration of the Provincial COVID-19 emergency.

The City will respond to concerns on a priority basis, but to be clear, only the Police can enforce a provincial order.

As always, the public can call 311 and we will investigate and, if necessary, request police to take appropriate action.

The first course of action, however, is always education.

I want to be very clear that the penalties associated with violating the Provincial orders are very serious.

An individual found guilty of violating these orders is subject to fine of up to \$100,000 and imprisonment of up to one year.

A Director or Officer of a Corporation, who is found guilty of violating these orders is subject to a fine of up to \$500,000 and imprisonment of up to one year.

A Corporation who is found guilty of violating these orders is subject to a fine of up to \$10 million dollars.

I also want to be clear that a person can be found guilty of a separate offence on each day that an offence occurs.

Our collective goal remains the same – we need people and businesses to comply with not only the orders, but with the advice being provided by Public Health.

Enforcement action will be taken when warranted and required, but I truly hope that this will not be required.

This is all extraordinarily unprecedented for us all. I want to thank the public service, my team at the EOC and the public as we continue to adapt to changing circumstances on a daily basis.

I encourage everyone to make [Toronto.ca/covid-19](https://toronto.ca/covid-19) their first point of access for credible information about the public health response, but also City service impacts.

And once again, PLEASE, do not call 911 when seeking information about COVID-19 or city services. 911 is for use in emergency situations, requiring response by Toronto Police, Toronto Paramedics or Toronto Fire Services only.

I will now invite City Manager Chris Murray to address you.