

Update on COVID-19
Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health
March 31, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.
Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.

- As of 1 p.m. today there are 793 cases of COVID-19 in Toronto. This includes 628 confirmed cases and 165 probable ones. There are 65 cases hospitalized, 33 in ICU. Approximately 25% are attributed to community spread and 43 people have recovered. There have been 8 deaths in total. I extend my sincerest condolences to the family and friends of these individuals.
- These numbers are constantly changing and they will increase in the coming days and weeks. The only way we can reduce the impact is for every single resident to do their part and to stay home.
- The lives of our essential workers and our most vulnerable citizens are in your hands. It depends on each of you and your actions to make a difference and to save lives.
- This virus spreads from person-to-person who enter into close contact that is closer than 2 metres. People moving around in our community coming into close contact with others is exactly how COVID-19 spreads.
- I have been stating repeatedly the importance of physical distancing and I am disappointed that there are people in our community who just are not listening. I hear stories of people selfishly going for walks in large groups. These short-sighted and selfish actions impact everyone and have consequences. People are ignoring our instructions and as result our essential workers are getting sick and others are dying in our community. This is just not acceptable.

Public Health

- Practising effective physical distancing means that you are only to go outside if you need to:
 - Access health care services;
 - Shop for groceries or medication at the pharmacy;
 - Walk pets, when required;
 - Get outside for daily exercise or fresh air, or
 - Support vulnerable community members to meet these needs.
- When you are outside taking care of these essentials, you need to maintain six feet, or two metres, from everyone with one small exception: if you live in the same household you can walk side by side, but only in groups of no more 5, and not with people who are sick, or under self-isolation.
- Some have asked, can my child play outside with other children in the neighbourhood? The answer is simply no. For the safety of your child and all others, this kind of interaction with others must be avoided to prevent virus spread.
- Others ask, how often can they get groceries? I am asking people to minimize, where possible, the number of times each week they go out to get groceries and other essentials, like medicine. Ideally once a week. If available, even better to obtain those essentials by ordering online.
- Each time we leave the home, we increase the risk of virus spread. I am making sacrifices, essential workers are making sacrifices to protect our city. We all need to make sacrifices in this new world we find ourselves living in.
- These decisions are extremely difficult, and are often made with a heavy heart and as a last resort to protect our city. There is no alternative given so many people in Toronto are blatantly disregarding the severity of this situation.
- We continue to monitor our situation, but given the increased cases we are seeing in places like New York City, I am concerned that this may be our reality unless we move to stronger measures.



Public Health

- The only way we can reduce the spread of the virus is by staying home and away from other people. It is not forever but the longer it takes for us to comply, the longer this is going to last. I need each and every one of us to make our best efforts now so we can prevent situations we are seeing in other jurisdictions.
- I am in active discussions with all of our partners about the potential for other increased measures. I will soon share what that means.
- Please stay home, stay safe and take care of each other.

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