

Update on COVID-19
Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health
June 8, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.
Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.

- Thank you Mayor Tory and good afternoon. Today there are 169 new COVID-19 infections in Toronto, 57 of which are related to a delay in reporting to public health of previously identified infections. To date, 9,746 people have recovered, an increase of 123 since yesterday. For more detailed data on the status of COVID-19 cases in our city, I encourage you to visit our website.
- Earlier today, our Board of Health met virtually and one of the items discussed was our current COVID-19 response and recovery. As part of my presentation, which will soon be available online, I provided an update on the budget impacts of COVID-19, our data and response, and the Provincial and City recovery and rebuild processes. I also shared an update on indicators that we are using to monitor our progress to meet our three key COVID-19 response objectives to:
 - Prevent loss of life;
 - Preserve the capacity of our healthcare system; and
 - Minimize social, economic and broader impacts of COVID-19 on our city.
- COVID-19 has drastically altered all of our lives and tragically many of us have lost friends, family and other loved ones to this virus. However, we have experienced fewer fatalities than originally forecasted and thus far have averted what could have been much worse. Implementing our public health measures also had a positive impact on our healthcare system and resources, which have continued to have capacity to deliver care to those who need it most.
- As just mentioned, there is also a third objective to our response and that is to minimize the social, economic and broader health impacts of COVID-19. All orders of government have implemented temporary measures to address this area – whether it be through deferring tax payments, income supports, and other forms of tax relief to name a few. However, achieving this third

objective will involve the gradual reopening of our community and learning how best to co-exist safely with COVID-19.

- Earlier today, the Premier announced that the province will be moving into phase 2 of Ontario's recovery framework. While our situation here in Toronto is certainly improving and we have made significant progress, other locations in Ontario with much smaller populations and very different circumstances, are at a different point in their outbreak than we are.
- Given this, the province has indicated that Toronto, along with all of the other communities in the Golden Horseshoe, who are experiencing similar circumstances, will move to the second phase at a later date.
- In order to move forward to support our city to safely reopen, we will use this time to help our local businesses, such as restaurants and hair salons, and other community services and amenities including our libraries and pools, to best prepare to reopen when it is safe to do so. We are continuing to observe and use the best available evidence to develop public health guidance to share with these businesses and settings.
- For these sectors to safely reopen, operators will need to implement physical distancing measures, and follow strict infection prevention and control precautions, including the use of face masks and coverings, to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- As we continue our COVID-19 response, we are also looking to identify people at highest risk of acquiring COVID-19 to implement upstream prevention actions to reduce virus spread in our city.
- These steps are critical to ensure our continued progress and to help prevent a spike in COVID-19 activity, as much as possible. We need to continue to protect our health care system and our community.
- I know that we all want to get back to enjoying our province and our city. I look forward to this too. However, because COVID-19 does not impact all communities in the same way, we need to keep looking at our own unique

local circumstances to inform our approach for safely reopening. The plan to reopen should be gradual and based on what is happening in our city.

- As we begin to ease our public health measures, we will all be living a new normal. Our commitment is to minimize the impact of COVID-19, especially on our most vulnerable residents, while reducing negative social, economic and broader health impacts on our community. In the coming months what this means for our residents is:
 - Continuing to work remotely, wherever possible;
 - Maintaining physical distance from people outside our household;
 - Avoiding crowds and congregations in closed indoor settings;
 - Wearing a cloth mask or face covering where physical distancing is difficult to maintain; and
 - Increased diligence on staying home whenever we are sick for any reason.
- It is also important to note that as businesses and activities reopen in our province, and people move around and interact with each other more, we will likely see more COVID-19 activity, even if we all diligently follow our public health guidance. This has been the experience in jurisdictions all around the world.
- Until we have a treatment or a vaccine, we should expect this will be the case and physical distancing will continue to be part of our lives for the foreseeable future.
- As we continue to move forward, your individual contributions continue to be central to our success. Please remember that all your efforts are worth it. Every action you take brings us one step closer to getting our city back. So please, continue to practise physical distancing and please continue to take care of each other.