

Update on COVID-19
Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health
August 5 2020 at 2 p.m.
Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.

- Thank you Lenore and good afternoon everyone. Today is the first media briefing since the long weekend, so I would like to begin by thanking everyone in our city for doing their part to keep each other safe in our first weekend of Stage 3.
- I was pleased to see people moving around our city these past few days out on their bikes and walking around with smiles on their faces. I noticed others physically distanced on neighbourhood patios. Many residents were also doing their part by wearing their masks as they went about their day. There is certainly more energy and life in our city thanks to your efforts over these past months. Your actions will also help to keep us moving forward.
- The impact of your actions is reflected in today's numbers. Today there are 18 new confirmed and 1 new probable case of COVID-19 in Toronto. To date, 14,015 people have recovered, an increase of 28 since yesterday. Our local numbers continue to be in the low double-digit range, which is good news.
- My team and I continue to watch our city's daily case counts. We also continue to observe what is happening in other parts of Canada and beyond to see what lessons we can apply locally to protect your health.
- In recent weeks we have observed some concerning increases in COVID-19 activity in some jurisdictions who had previously reported low or no virus activity for some time. As I have shared before, we are expecting to see more COVID-19 activity in our city as we reopen.
- While our numbers are holding steady, this doesn't mean we won't see an uptick in COVID-19 in our city. These increases don't happen overnight. It can take up to 14 days to develop symptoms after being exposed to the virus and then testing needs to be done before the positive results are then reported to

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public health and reflected in our numbers. This is why it is critical that we keep monitoring our numbers closely over the next few weeks to see how our reopening is impacting virus spread.

- I know these months have been very difficult since this unprecedented global emergency was first declared. However, this pandemic is not over. We will continue to live with COVID-19 for some time and we need to keep doing our best to prevent this virus from spreading throughout our city.
- I've been receiving many questions about expanded gathering limits since we moved into Stage 3, so I wanted to take a moment to clarify this for you. While the province's gathering limits have increased to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors, our other critical public health measures have not changed. We must continue to:
 - Maintain our social bubble of no more than 10 people with whom we may have close contact;
 - Keep 6 feet from people who are not in our social bubble;
 - Continue to use a mask in indoor public settings and when we cannot maintain physical distance outdoors;
 - Wash our hands often; and
 - Stay home if we are sick.
- At this time we need to think differently about how to plan and organize social events. For example, please consider the amount of space available and limit the number of guests to make sure that everyone can maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet from others outside of their household, or social bubble.
- We also still need to keep washing our hands, watching our distance and wearing our masks. These actions, along with our other public health measures have helped us to safely reopen parts of our city so we can have safer social connections with our friends and our loved ones, which we all need for our well-being.
- They are also helping to restart critical local economic activity. Taken all together, they will keep us moving forward as safely as possible.

- Another way that we can all do our part is by downloading Canada's new COVID Alert app. It is a joint initiative of the Governments of Ontario and Canada and is now available for download at no cost from the Apple and Google Play app stores.
- The new COVID Alert app offers users the opportunity to quickly be informed if they may have been exposed to COVID-19 so that they can get tested right away to help protect themselves and those around them.
- This new app complements, but does not replace, our comprehensive contact tracing efforts by helping to quickly identify new contacts that may not have been easily found otherwise. It is built with a privacy-first approach and is a safe and easy to use tool that we can use to protect ourselves, our friends, families and our loved ones. I downloaded it over the long weekend and I also encourage others to download it as well.
- Beginning today, new measures come into effect that require masks or face coverings to be worn in common areas in apartments and condominiums and additional requirements for food and drink establishments. These temporary bylaws were approved by Council on July 29 to protect the health and safety of our city by reducing opportunity for COVID-19 spread. More information is available on these new bylaws is available on our website.
- Finally, I am pleased to announce that our provincial colleagues at Ontario Health are supporting another community pop-up COVID-19 testing site in Rexdale this Friday. The pop-up testing site is being hosted by a local partnership between the Rexdale Community Health Centre and the Health Commons Solutions Lab. The testing site will be located at the Rexdale Community Hub, at 21 Panorama Court and will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. I would like to extend my thanks once again to our colleagues at Ontario Health and to the community leadership in Rexdale for this important initiative.
- As the warm summer weather continues in our city and more people interact with each other, we need to remember that COVID-19 is still in our



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community. We still need everyone to do their part to prevent further virus spread in our city. So please continue to wash your hands, watch your distance from others, wear your mask and as always, please continue to take care of each other.

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