

Update on COVID-19

Chief Pegg, Fire Chief & General Manager of Emergency Management

September 23, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.

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

Good afternoon.

Today is the 197th day of continuous Emergency Operations Centre operations. Our EOC continues to operate, ensuring that both critical and essential services are being provided without interruption.

At present, our PPE levels remain stable, and our team continues to work hard to source the equipment that we need on a go-forward basis.

From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, our City of Toronto teams have been working in collaboration and cooperation with our colleagues at Toronto Police and Toronto Public Health in responding to complaints and enforcing the laws enacted in response to COVID-19 in Toronto.

Last night, we received complaints relating to a large house party in the east end of Toronto.

Toronto Police officers responded to this complaint and, following their investigation, laid 14 charges as a result of the large gathering of people both inside and outside the home.

As we outlined on Monday, the City is in the process of streamlining and enhancing our response to complaints regarding gatherings, in response to proposed amendments to the Reopening Ontario Act, and the amended regulations under that Act, which have recently reduced the number of people who can attend social gatherings and organized events.

Effective September 19, the maximum number of people permitted to attend organized public events and social gatherings is 10 people indoors and 25 people outdoors.

This includes functions, parties, dinners, gatherings, BBQs or wedding receptions held in private residences, backyards, parks and other recreational areas.

These limits do not apply to an event that is being held at a place operated by a business or organization.

The enforcement of these emergency orders continues to be a top priority for the City of Toronto and we have been working closely with Chief Ramer and the Toronto Police team to enhance our collective response to this important issues.

Maintaining compliance with these important public health measures is critical to controlling the spread of COVID-19 in our City.

That is why we are enhancing our internal processes, in direct response to these emergency orders.

These changes will include enhanced communication and exchange of complaint-based information between Police and MLS.

Further, as Chief Ramer explained on Monday, this will also include response by a dedicated team of Toronto Police Officers, in direct response to complaints regarding gatherings.

As always, the Police will work in collaboration with both Municipal Licensing and Standards and Public Health enforcement officers.

The fines and penalties associated with violations of the gatherings restrictions are very significant.

But they are also completely avoidable.

Ensuring that you do not plan, host nor take part in any gathering that exceeds the limits established by the Province of Ontario is the easiest and best way to ensure that you remain compliant.

The limits that have been placed on gatherings are uncomfortable and inconvenient for us all.

But it is imperative that we do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The sooner we end the spread of COVID-19, the sooner these emergency orders and Regulations can be lifted such that we can all return to normal life.

In closing, I want to thank everyone who continues to do their part to help us stop the spread of COVID-19.

As always, I remind everyone that toronto.ca/COVID19 is the best source for reliable and timely information on COVID-19 in Toronto.