

**Update on COVID-19**  
**Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health**  
**September 11, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.**  
**Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.**

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- Thank you Mayor Tory, and thank you Minister Hajdu for joining us here today. I want to express my sincere appreciation to our federal government partners, including the Public Health Agency of Canada, for their generous support in making this new COVID-19 isolation site a reality for our city.
  - When someone is infected with COVID-19, the best way to prevent further spread is to stay home and self-isolate. Unfortunately, this isn't always as simple as it sounds.
  - Some people live in multi-generational family homes. Others in small spaces. Some may share housing for economic reasons. And on top of that, they may have an underlying condition and share with one or even more people who've tested positive for COVID-19, or are awaiting test results.
  - But what this all comes down to is simply this: many people living under one roof and not enough space increases the risk that COVID-19 will spread in that household, which means it could spread in the community too.
  - This voluntary isolation site helps reduce those risks. Establishing this site marks an important milestone. It's a critical part of our resurgence planning for fall and winter, to limit virus spread and keep residents safer as we live with COVID-19.
  - My team at Toronto Public Health will determine which clients may benefit from staying at the site as part of the COVID-19 case and contact investigation process. Eligible individuals will choose whether or not they want to accept the offer to stay at the facility.

- The creation of this site is a result of collective efforts by many at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government. Recognizing the need for a service like this in our community, we approached the federal government to partner with us.
- The Government of Canada is providing 100% of the funding for the operation of this site for next 12 months. I cannot thank them enough for their support for this important community initiative. Thanks as well to Public Health Ontario, who will oversee an evaluation of this innovative service for our community, and of course, thanks to my team at Toronto Public Health who took this project from idea to reality in record time and who will manage the operations of the site on a go forward basis.
- I would also like to acknowledge the constant support of Councillor Joe Cressy, our Board of Health Chair, and the members of our Board of Health. Without their support, this achievement would simply not have been possible.
- In closing, I especially want to thank all the people who will choose to stay here after the site opens this weekend. Everyone who volunteers to stay is doing their part to help reduce virus spread in our city. This is an important act to help protect our residents and our city as we live with COVID-19.
- Everyone who helped create the site, those who staff it and those who use this service show the kind of spirit we need to fight back against COVID-19. There are no better words in reply than to simply say thank you.

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