

## Update on COVID-19

Chief Pegg, Fire Chief & General Manager of Emergency Management

**November 9, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.**

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

Good afternoon.

The City of Toronto has been working proactively on planning for, and responding to COVID-19, since before the arrival of the first reported case in the City.

We have implemented an incident management system that is both responsive and scalable, and that continues to be effective in coordinating our response to COVID-19 in Toronto.

We are able to respond to emerging issues and opportunities, quickly and efficiently.

As Mayor Tory mentioned, we have proactively established our COVID-19 Immunization Task Force.

As with our other COVID-19 specific task force operations, including both PPE and Business Continuity, our COVID-19 Immunization Task Force operates under our existing Incident Management System.

Reporting to the City's COVID-19 Strategic Command Team, via my role as COVID-19 Incident Commander, this task force is being co-led by Dr. Michael Finkelstein from Toronto Public Health, Chief Gord McEachen from Toronto Paramedic Services, and Acting Chief Jim Jessop from Toronto Fire Services.

We have brought together a team of professionals from across City divisions, including our Emergency Operations Centre, who are now hard at work, creating a comprehensive plan that will ensure the City is ready, once a safe and effective vaccine is available for you.

The eventual rollout of a city-wide COVID-19 immunization operation, represents a massive planning and logistics operation.

Our plans will leverage the expertise that exists within the City of Toronto.

To give you a sense as to the magnitude of this operation, the following are some of the functions that are being coordinated through our task force:

- Logistics and deployment will be led by Fire Services, leveraging the expertise contained within our Heavy Urban Search and Rescue and technical operations teams,
- Facilities will be secured and managed by our Corporate Real Estate Management teams,
- Deployment planning will be led by Paramedic Services,
- Operations planning and medical administration will be led by Toronto Public Health,
- Financial management and procurement will be led by our Finance, purchasing and materials management teams,
- Public safety and security will be led by Toronto Police in conjunction with our Corporate security partners,
- Health and safety will be led by our People and Equity and Public Health teams,
- Information management will be led by our Strategic Communications, 3-1-1 and public health teams, in collaboration with the Local Health Integration Networks;

and of course

- the overall command and strategic coordination of this combined effort will be led by our Strategic Command team, supported by the Emergency Operations Centre.

While it is not yet clear when a vaccine will be available, our COVID-19 Immunization Task Force will make sure that the City is ready to play its role in helping Torontonians get vaccinated.

This is a vital component in Toronto's rebuild and recovery that will help us to not only reclaim our city, but our lives, from the effects of COVID-19.

To echo Mayor Tory, each order of government has very specific roles and responsibilities in relation to the overall COVID-19 vaccination strategy and implementation.

The Public Health Agency of Canada, for example, is responsible for the procurement and approval of vaccines for use in Canada, while the Province of Ontario is responsible for the overarching immunization strategy on a Provincial basis.

This will likely require a phased approach, along with the determination of the immunization priorities for specific populations, as well as the distribution of the vaccine to those at the local level who will administer it.

We expect that this is likely to include local public health units, doctors and pharmacies to name a few.

Once we receive guidance from the Province, the City will be prepared to lead local implementation in Toronto.

This could range from allocating and distributing our allotted vaccine doses, working with medical practitioners, administering vaccines through clinics and other methods and providing data back to the Province so they can determine and report on the overall success of the campaign.

Together, the City and Toronto Public Health bring a great deal of experience to this mission, including the H1N1 influenza pandemic in 2009, the yearly flu vaccination clinics run by Toronto Public Health and a full-scale emergency mass immunization exercise conducted in 2016.

The lessons learned from these experiences are being applied in the development of our COVID-19 immunization plan and the establishment of our Immunization Task Force.

While there are many pieces we still don't know, what we do know is we will be prepared when the time comes.

Thank you.