

**Update on COVID-19**  
**Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health**  
**April 21, 2021 at 2 p.m.**  
**Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.**

---

- Thank you Chief, and good afternoon.
- I'll start by saying today's numbers reflect the seriousness of the situation in which we find ourselves.
- Today I am reporting 1,302 cases of COVID-19.
- There are 1,010 people in hospital in Toronto.
- 194 of them are in the ICU.
- 128 of those people are intubated, which I mention today because the figures for people currently in hospital, people currently in ICU and people currently intubated are all the highest recorded at any point in the pandemic so far.
- Finally, I am reporting the loss of 27 more lives.
- In the week since last Wednesday's report, 93 lives have been lost to COVID-19.
- I'm not going to say a lot more today, except that as of today, the death toll for the whole of the pandemic in Toronto is now 2,970 people.
- If the loss of life continues as it has, we can expect to pass a death toll of 3,000 very soon.
- I ask everyone to ask themselves if we should mark this loss of life in some way more than as a milestone.
- And that is why I ask all of us to reflect on this terrible loss of life and on what we can do in the days and weeks ahead.

- COVID-19 spreads easily – in part – to the extent that we make it easy.
- And we know how to make it difficult: staying home, staying apart, keeping a careful distance outdoors when we're around people we don't live with, wearing a mask, getting vaccinated as soon as you can.
- If you're hesitant, please find a health expert you feel you can trust and talk through the reasons for your hesitancy – but anecdotally my impression is there are far more people in Toronto who are ready to be vaccinated than there are people with reluctance about the idea.
- And for that I am grateful because it's evident we must do everything we can right now to disrupt the spread of COVID-19.
- They're all clear steps, the ones I've outlined are all clear steps to protect yourself. They're effective steps. And they're steps that may save your life or someone else's.
- In your own life, I implore you to be as strict as you can be for the next few weeks at protecting yourself and those who matter to you.
- At the same time, public health and the health care system are working to help you protect yourselves.
- That is why I am issuing a Section 22 order under the Health Protection and Promotion Act to allow Toronto Public Health inspectors the discretion to close workplaces where we have identified at least five cases of COVID-19 within a 14 day period that the evidence indicates are linked to transmission in the workplace.
- This is a decision we will take only to the extent the circumstances demand it – where by requiring the closure the spread of COVID-19 in a workplace can be interrupted for everyone's benefit.



## Public Health

- That is why the people in Toronto's hospitals, who are working flat out to care for the one thousand and ten people who are sick in hospital now, are also finding the capacity to work with local health care providers like Ontario Health Teams and community partners on the ground, to deliver mobile and pop-up clinic vaccine access to neighbourhoods at highest-risk of COVID-19. By reaching them, all of Toronto is better protected.
- This is a time for everyone to commit to their part, wherever it may be.
- There are many times we cannot avoid one another. And there are many times when we can.
- In consideration of all those lost to COVID-19, I ask each of us – in all walks of life – to do everything in our power to prevent the spread of the virus.

-30-

**Media contact:** [tphmedia@toronto.ca](mailto:tphmedia@toronto.ca)