

Update on COVID-19

Chief Pegg, Fire Chief & General Manager of Emergency Management

June 30, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

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

At 08:00 yesterday morning, we opened 375,000 COVID-19 vaccine appointments across our network of 9 city-operated clinics.

On the weeks of July 5, 12 and 19, our clinics are able to administer 125,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine each week.

Beginning July 5, all 9 city-operated clinics will be operating as mRNA vaccine clinics, meaning that we will be interchangeably administering both brands of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine – Pfizer and Moderna – on a daily basis.

The brand of vaccine that is administered at any given point in time, will be determined solely on the basis of vaccine availability and is not able to be selected in advance nor when you arrive for your appointment at the clinic.

The limited supply of Pfizer mRNA vaccine is largely being reserved for youth between the ages of 12 and 17 years of age.

As Dr. de Villa has often explained, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has indicated that anyone who received a 1st dose of the Pfizer mRNA vaccine, can safely and confidently receive a 2nd dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna mRNA vaccine, and vice-versa, resulting in them being fully immunized against COVID-19.

Unfortunately, over the past number of days, our clinic staff have once again been subjected to inappropriate behaviour, by a number of clients who arrive for their confirmed appointments and attempt to demand a specific brand of vaccine.

This behaviour has included aggressive and threatening behaviour, verbal attacks and displays of anger towards our clinic staff.

To be very clear, this type of behaviour will not be tolerated in our clinics for any reason.

Our clinic management teams, along with our clinic security staff, will intervene and will immediately remove anyone who displays any type of inappropriate or aggressive behaviour towards clinic staff or other clients.

Our clinic staff have no ability to determine nor control the allocation of vaccines that are provided to us by the Government of Canada via the Province of Ontario.

Both our City-operated clinic staff and our Team Toronto partner clinic staff are giving their all, 7 days a week, to get Toronto vaccinated as soon as possible.

Please respect their roles and treat them with the courtesy they deserve.

Since our next batch of appointments went live in the system at 08:00 yesterday morning, more than 102,000 appointments have been successfully booked via the Provincial Booking System.

For the week of July 5, our clinics are 40% booked with approximately 70,000 appointments remaining available;

For the week of July 12, our clinics are 27% booked with approximately 90,000 appointments remaining available; and

For the week of July 19, our clinics are 9% booked with approximately 113,000 appointments remaining available.

I want to remind everyone that these appointments are available to anyone who requires their 1st dose of vaccine, their 2nd dose of vaccine and to anyone who wishes to accelerate their 2nd dose of vaccine.

As we entered Step 2 of the Provincial Reopening Plan this morning, our collective ability to remain ahead of the Delta variant, and to keep the Provincial Reopening Plan on track, is largely dependent on our ability to get as many people fully vaccinated as possible, as quickly as possible.

For information on vaccine eligibility and to book your appointment in a city-operated clinic, please visit [Toronto.ca/COVID19](https://toronto.ca/COVID19).

If you prefer to either book or reschedule your appointment by phone, you can do so by calling the Provincial Call Centre at 1-833-943-3900.

For additional vaccine opportunities outside the network of city-operated clinics, please visit vaccineto.ca for opportunities that may exist in Team Toronto partner clinics.

For those active on social media, I also encourage you to follow Vaccine Hunters Canada on Twitter for additional information on opportunities to receive COVID-19 vaccine in Toronto.

Please ensure that you cancel your appointment, via the Provincial Booking System or the Provincial Call Centre, in the event that you will not be attending your scheduled appointment.

With tomorrow being Canada Day, I would like to remind everyone about the hazards and rules associated with using fireworks.

Fireworks, including seemingly harmless items such as handheld sparklers, involve highly flammable chemical compounds that often burn in excess of 1,000 degrees Celsius once ignited.

I ask you to think about this fact: Even consumer grade fireworks and sparklers burn at more than 10 times the temperature of boiling water and represent an immense safety risk when misused or handled inappropriately.

Over the course of my career as a Firefighter, I have personally witnessed both catastrophic property damage and horrific physical injuries caused by misused or mishandled fireworks.

In Toronto, fireworks may only be discharged without a permit, from your own private property, and only on Victoria Day or Canada Day.

A permit is needed to discharge fireworks on any other day of the year.

Fireworks may never be discharged in a City park, from a City street, from a parking lot, from a balcony or from other people's private property.

Discharging or igniting fireworks in a City park, or on a public beach, is prohibited at all times and anyone under 18 years of age is not permitted to discharge fireworks.

If you plan to discharge Fireworks on Canada Day - tomorrow, please follow the rules and observe all the manufacturer's safety precautions.

In closing, we continue to move closer to the point where COVID-19 is finally behind us and where further reopening is possible.

As Mayor Tory explained, our team is hard at work planning for both the eventual demobilization of vaccine clinic and EOC operations as well as city-wide recovery and restart operations.

I am honoured to have been asked to continue to lead this team into the next, and hopefully final phase of operations in response to COVID-19 in Toronto.

I thank both Mayor Tory and City Manager Chris Murray for their continued trust and confidence, both in me and more importantly in the team of amazing and dedicated professionals that I am privileged to work alongside each day.

We will continue to operate and evolve our COVID-19 Incident Management System, in order to ensure that we have robust and nimble plans in place as we move forward.

Over the past nearly 18 months, our Incident Management System has evolved from proactively planning for the first arrival of COVID-19 in Toronto; to managing the response to the rapidly changing pandemic including both PPE Management and Business Continuity Planning; to building and launching our Immunization Task Force operations and now into proactively planning for eventual demobilization and city-wide recovery.

Thank you to our entire city-wide team who have, and continue to give their all, in response to COVID-19 in Toronto.

I also extend a very personal thank you to my small, but extremely mighty team of 4, whom I work alongside every day on our COVID-19 Incident Management Team.

Program Manager Melissa Gennaro, Paramedic Services Commander Michael Wionzek, OEM Coordinator Simon Wells and Fire Services Division Chief Darla Tannahill never stop and simply amaze me every day.

Finally, I would like to extend a very special thank you and congratulations to everyone in our City who is making the effort to get vaccinated and to each and every resident and business owner who continue to absorb so much, as we work together to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our City.

Our collective success in beating the COVID-19 virus has come as a direct result of your sacrifice and commitment to beating this awful virus, once and for all.

Thank you.