

Ontario Announces a Second State of Emergency Announces New Enforcement Measures

On Tuesday, January 12, the Ontario government declared a state of emergency and issued a **Stay-At-Home order**. They also announced restrictions and new enforcement measures designed to dramatically reduce the amount of community and workplace transmission.

HRAI staff participated in a [briefing session](#) led by the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade which provided a high level overview regarding the new measures and restrictions.

Review this information by clicking [here](#). Note: This document is continuing to be updated and clarified.

There are a key issues of which to be aware:

- 1) **Emergency Measures** will come into effect between Tuesday January 12, 2021 and Thursday, January 14, 2021 at midnight. They will remain in place for a minimum of two weeks and could be extended. With the exception of front line, essential workers, people are asked to Stay-At-Home and to work from home where possible.
- 2) **Essential Work:** The Stay-At-Home order does not define what work or jobs are essential. It mandates that whomever **can** work from home **must** work from home. The government is relying on the best judgment and common sense of employers to determine who can do so. If an employee believes they should be working from home, they can contact the Ministry of Labour to file a health and safety complaint
- 3) **Enforcement:** Workplaces are identified as a source of COVID transmission despite the protocols most employers have put in place. Employers and managers should not that the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development **will increase inspection, enforcement and ticketing at workplaces**. They have increased the amount of the fines and the ability of police officers, provincial inspectors and municipal bylaw officers to issue fines.
 - a. **Rapid Testing:** A plan for rapid testing at workplaces, particularly manufacturing sites, is in development and is expected to be rolled out soon.
- 4) **Stay up to Date:** HRAI recommends that members consult these websites and use the Stop the Spread Business Information Line in order to stay informed:
 - a. **Stop the Spread:** 1-888-444-3659
 - b. [COVID-19: Provincial Shutdown](#): This website is updated by the provincial government.

- 5) **Financial Support for Businesses:** In addition to federal and provincial resources that were previously established, on Dec. 21, 2020, the provincial government announced a new [Small Business Support Grant](#). Details regarding this program are in development and should be available soon. For information regarding criteria, please check [here](#).

HRAI will continue to monitor the ongoing situation and provide updates as necessary. We continue to urge members to take all the necessary precautions to ensure the spread of COVID-19 is drastically reduced and to stay safe.

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