

Ontario Further Eases Restrictions on Retail Stores and Essential Construction During COVID-19

Retailers to follow health and safety guidelines

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is allowing all retail stores with a street entrance to provide curbside pickup and delivery, as well as in-store payment and purchases at garden centres, nurseries, hardware stores and safety supply stores. The business owners should review the health and safety guidelines developed by the province and its health and safety association partners.

Today's announcement was made by Premier Doug Ford, Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance, and Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

"We haven't been sitting on our hands. Whether it's releasing our framework for reopening or putting in place the workplace safety guidelines needed to help businesses adapt to the new environment, we've been laying the groundwork for the safe, measured, and gradual reopening of our province," said Premier Ford. "As the trends improve, we can move forward with reopening more and more of our economy and getting people back to work."

As early as Friday, May 8 at 12:01 a.m., garden centres and nurseries will be able to open for in-store payment and purchases, operating under the same guidelines as grocery stores and pharmacies. Hardware stores and safety supply stores will be permitted to open for in-store payment and purchases as soon as 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, May 9. On Monday, May 11 at 12:01 a.m., retail stores with a street entrance can begin offering curbside pickup and delivery, in accordance with the Ministry of Health's Guidance Document for Essential Workplaces and occupational health and safety requirements.

In addition to easing restrictions on retail, the government is also expanding essential construction to allow below-grade multi-unit residential construction projects like apartments and condominiums to begin and existing above-grade projects to continue. This will help clear the way for the housing and jobs our economy will need to support economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Businesses must follow public health measures and should review the workplace safety guidelines, such as promoting physical distancing and frequent handwashing, sanitizing

surfaces, installing physical barriers, staggering shifts, and using contactless payment options to stop the spread of COVID-19.

"It's due to the progress we have made collectively to slow the spread of COVID-19 that we are able to see a gradual easing of restrictions, allowing certain businesses to reopen safely," said Minister Fedeli. "During this period, we must move cautiously and strike the right balance between getting people back to work and preventing further outbreaks. Protecting the safety of staff, customers and the general public is our number one priority."

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, in partnership with Ontario's health and safety associations, has released over 60 sector-specific health and safety guidelines, including guidelines for curbside pickup and delivery services. Business owners should review the guidelines and consult with local public health officials to ensure they have the information they need to protect workers, customers and the general public as the province prepares for the gradual reopening of the economy.

"Small businesses across Ontario have done their part to help slow the spread of COVID-19," said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction. "I encourage all business owners to learn the new health and safety guidelines, so when it comes time to reopen you will be prepared to hit the ground running and provide the services we all count on every day."

The government's [Framework for Reopening our Province](#), which was released on April 27, 2020, includes guiding principles for the safe, gradual reopening of businesses, services and public spaces, and the criteria Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and health experts are using to advise the government on the loosening of public health measures, including emergency orders.

"The health and safety of every Ontarian will always be our top priority as we continue planning for the next phase of our fight against COVID-19," said Minister Elliott. "Together, each of us have put in tremendous effort to stop the spread, and because of these collective efforts we have made tangible progress. More than ever, we need to continue practicing physical distancing while we slowly and carefully reopen Ontario's economy."

LEARN MORE

- [Health and Safety Association Guidance Documents for Workplaces During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
- [Ministry of Health's Guidance Document for Essential Workplaces](#)
- [Learn more about A Framework for Reopening our Province.](#)

- [See how your organization can help fight COVID-19.](#)
- Learn more about [Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19.](#)
- Visit Ontario's [COVID-19 website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from the virus.

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