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From: AMO Communications <Communicate@amo.on.ca>
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To: Monica Hawkins
Subject: AMO Policy Update – Provincial COVID-19 Lock Down, Water Taking Changes, Long-Term Care Medication Safety

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April 1, 2021

AMO Policy Update – Provincial COVID-19 Lock Down, Water Taking Changes, and Long-Term Care Medication Safety

Provincial COVID-19 Lock Down

The provincial government is imposing a [provincewide emergency brake](#) in all 34 public health unit regions as a result of an alarming surge of COVID-19 case numbers and related hospitalizations across the province. The provincewide emergency brake will be effective Saturday, April 3, 2021, at 12:01 a.m. It is intended to be kept in place for at least four weeks.

The provincewide emergency brake puts into place time-limited public health and workplace safety measures to help to stop the rapid transmission of COVID-19 variants in communities, protect hospital capacity, and save lives. Measures include, but are not limited to:

- Prohibiting indoor organized public events and social gatherings and limiting the capacity for outdoor organized public events or social gatherings to a 5-person maximum, except for gatherings with members of the same household (the people you live with) or gatherings of members of one household and one other person from another household who lives alone;
- Restricting in-person shopping in all retail settings, including a 50 per cent capacity limit for supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience stores, indoor farmers' markets, other stores that primarily sell food and pharmacies, and 25 per cent for all other retail including big box stores, along with other public health and workplace safety measures;
- Prohibiting personal care services;

- Prohibiting indoor and outdoor dining. Restaurants, bars, and other food or drink establishments will be permitted to operate by take-out, drive-through, and delivery only;
- Prohibiting the use of facilities for indoor or outdoor sports and recreational fitness (e.g., gyms) with very limited exceptions;
- Requiring day camps to close; and,
- Limiting capacity at weddings, funerals, and religious services, rites or ceremonies to 15 per cent occupancy per room indoors, and to the number of individuals that can maintain two metres of physical distance outdoors. This does not include social gatherings associated with these services such as receptions, which are not permitted indoors and are limited to five people outdoors.

The current [COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#), will be paused when the provincewide emergency brake comes into effect.

Changes to Ontario’s Water Taking Program

Yesterday the Province [announced](#) new changes to Ontario’s water taking program. It is one of the key commitments of the [Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan](#). The changes include new rules that give municipal governments more direct input on allowing bottled water companies to withdraw new or increased amounts of groundwater in their communities. The Province also provided new guidance on managing water taking in areas [where sustainability is a key concern](#) and [where there are competing demands](#).

Strengthening Medication Safety in Long-Term Care Homes

The government [announced](#) it is acting to strengthen medication safety for residents in long-term care homes. \$77 million will be provided to homes to use more advanced technologies. The goal is to facilitate for better transmission and handling of prescriptions, more accurate administration of medication, and increased security of the drug supply in long-term care homes.

This initiative is part of the response to the final report of the [Public Inquiry into the Safety and Security of Residents in the Long-Term Care Homes System](#). In the report, Justice Gillese emphasized the importance of medication management to keep long-term care residents safe.

AMO’s [COVID-19 Resources](#) page is being updated continually so you can find critical information in one place. Please send any of your municipally related pandemic questions to covid19@amo.on.ca.

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