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February 8, 2021

## **AMO Policy Update – Gradual Return to COVID-19 Response Framework, *Conservation Authorities Act* Update**

### **Gradual Return to COVID-19 Response Framework**

Ontario has [announced](#) that we are moving to a regional approach and maintaining the [shutdown](#) in the majority of the public health regions in Ontario, including the [Stay-at-Home order](#) and all existing public health and workplace safety measures.

When safe to do so, the Province will gradually transition each region from the shutdown measures to a revised and strengthened [COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#) (the "Framework").

With improving local trends of key health and public health indicators, **3** regions will be moving back to the Framework at the Green-Prevent level on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 12:01 a.m. and will no longer be subject to the [Stay-at-Home order](#):

- Hastings Prince Edward Public Health;
- Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health; and
- Renfrew County and District Health Unit.

The Stay-at-Home order will continue to apply to **28** public health regions until Tuesday, February 16, 2021.

For Toronto, Peel and York regions, it is expected that the Stay-at-Home order will continue to apply until Monday, February 22, 2021. Final decisions by the Province will be subject to review of the trends in public health indicators at that time.

The Framework has been updated to allow a safer approach to retail. Limited in-person shopping in Grey-Lockdown zones will be permitted with public health and safety measures, such as limiting capacity to 25 per cent in most retail settings. In addition, public health and safety measures in retail settings will be strengthened for other levels of the Framework. All public health measures such as wearing a face covering and maintaining physical distancing will continue to be required.

The Province is also introducing an "emergency brake" to allow for immediate action if a public health unit region experiences rapid acceleration in COVID-19 transmission or if its health care system risks becoming overwhelmed. If this occurs, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, in consultation with the local medical officer of health, may advise immediately moving a region into Grey-Lockdown to interrupt community COVID-19 transmission.

The [provincial emergency](#) declared under s 7.0.1 of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA) will end as of 11:59 pm, Tuesday February 9, 2021.

The 31 orders currently in force under the EMCPA have been extended to February 23, 2021 and will be extended further if necessary. O.Reg.55/21 (Compliance Orders for Retirement Homes) is currently in effect until February 19, 2021. 30-day extensions of these orders can occur after February 19 with Cabinet (LGIC) approval. These extended orders should be posted in the next day or so.

## **Parts of *Conservation Authority Act* Proclaimed**

On February 2, 2021, some specific provisions in the *Conservation Authorities Act* were proclaimed to start changes to conservation authority governance, for consistency in administration, transparency, and financial accountability, as well as increased municipal and provincial oversight of conservation authority operations. These provisions include those requiring 70 per cent of municipally appointed members to be elected officials, with provision for the Minister to permit less than 70 per cent on application by a participating municipality.

Immediate action is not required on the part of conservation authorities or by municipalities related to the provision requiring 70% of municipally appointed members be elected officials. Current members should complete the remaining duration of their appointments. As new members are appointed, conservation authorities should be appointing members in a way that complies with this new requirement.

A participating municipality may also apply to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks requesting an exception to this 70% requirement. The request should include the rationale for the request, and what proportion of members

the municipality is proposing to be elected officials. Requests should be sent to [minister.mecp@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.mecp@ontario.ca).

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](mailto:covid19@amo.on.ca).

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