

**From:** AMO Communications <Communicate@amo.on.ca>  
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**To:** Monica Hawkins  
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May 27, 2020

## **AMO COVID-19 Update – Emergency Orders Extended and Next Steps on Long-Term Care**

### **Emergency Orders Extended to June 9<sup>th</sup>**

The Ontario government is extending all [emergency orders](#) in force under s.7.0.2 (4) of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Current emergency orders include the closure of outdoor playgrounds, play structures and equipment, public swimming pools and outdoor water facilities, as well as bars and restaurants except for takeout and delivery. Additionally, there continues to be restrictions on social gatherings of more than five people, and staff redeployment rules remain in place for long-term care homes and congregate settings like retirement homes and women's shelters.

Under the [Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act](#), emergency orders can only be extended for up to 14 days by the Lieutenant Governor in Council (Cabinet) or the Legislative Assembly, on the recommendation of the Premier may, by resolution, extend the period of an emergency for additional periods of no more than 28 days.

### **Long-Term Care**

AMO is deeply concerned about the Canadian Armed Forces' findings on their observations while dispatched to assist in five long-term care homes in Ontario in the last month given challenges managing their COVID-19 outbreaks. The Armed Forces personnel, being in the homes 24 hours a day for a month, had an opportunity to

observe the full range of care provided or not provided in a way that government inspectors and family members can't.

While municipal long-term care homes were not among those implicated, there are important lessons for all operators as we prepare for the upcoming provincial commission on the long-term care home COVID-19 crisis. Premier Ford noted today that there will be an "independent commission" into elderly care and this could be carried out by the Attorney General, possibly the police, and will include public hearings. It is expected that AMO, and its Task Force on Health, will be involved in this process and at a minimum, make submissions.

Ontario will be taking over the management of four of the five long-term care homes that were the subject of the Canadian Armed Forces report. The Premier also said today that the government will be conducting "extremely rigorous" inspections of those homes, as well as thirteen other homes facing COVID-19 challenges and will be doing random spot checks across the province.

The municipal sector in Ontario is, and will continue to be, at the forefront of developing age-friendly communities and providing vital services to seniors. This includes long-term care, affordable housing, public health services and community support services, as well as general planning for age-friendly communities. AMO, and its members, have been advocating for better funding and coordination of all [seniors' services](#), for well over a decade.

Long-term care homes in Ontario are today serving increasingly complex patient groups with high acuity needs. They are providing 24-hour medical care and supervision in a secure and comfortable environment. Ontario's municipal order of government is an important player in the provision of long-term care services. As per the *Long-Term Care Homes Act*, upper and single-tier municipal governments in southern Ontario are responsible for establishing and maintaining long-term care facilities. However, in northern Ontario, municipal governments often jointly fund a home managed by a District Board Home Board of Management.

The municipal sector operates over 100, or 16%, of the homes with 17,000 beds. About 1 in 5 beds is in a municipal home. As well, municipalities contribute significant funding over and above the provincial funding subsidy, about \$350 million per year not including capital.

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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Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
200 University Ave. Suite 801, Toronto ON Canada M5H 3C6

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