

Non-essential workplaces will remain closed in Ontario until at least May 6, Premier Doug Ford says

Robert Benzie

All non-essential workplaces will remain closed until at least May 6 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, says Premier Doug Ford.

On Thursday, Ford extended all emergency orders that have been imposed under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act to that date.

Ontario has been under a state of emergency since March 17 and will remain so until May 12. But orders issued under that legislation need to be renewed every two weeks.

That means that everything that is currently closed will stay shut, including outdoor amenities in parks and recreational areas, most public places, and bars and restaurants, other than to serve takeout meals and spirits, wine, and beer to go.

Only supermarkets, pharmacies, LCBO and Beer Store outlets are open for full service with hardware stores, pet shops, and cannabis dispensaries only allowed to do curbside pick-up.

The move also means continued restrictions on social gatherings to five or fewer people unless they reside under the same roof and limiting staff from working in more than one retirement home or long-term care home.

“We are making steady progress in our battle against this deadly virus, but we are not out of the woods by a long shot,” Ford said Thursday.

“It is absolutely necessary to extend these emergency orders to continue keeping all Ontarians safe and healthy,” he said, stressing he was acting under the advice of Dr. David Williams, the chief medical officer of health.

“Every effort made by each of us to stay home, practise physical distancing and wash your hands has been, and will continue to be, the key to stopping the spread of this virus.”

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