

Ontario to release plan for stage two reopening next week

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Ontario Premier Doug Ford at a media briefing at Queen's Park on June 5, 2020, along with finance minister Rod Phillips, health minister Christine Elliot, and economic development minister Vic Fedeli. (Screenshot / CPAC)

The Ontario government will be releasing its plan next week for the second stage of reopening Ontario's economy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Premier Doug Ford made the announcement at a media briefing at Queen's Park on Friday (June 5), along with health minister Christine Elliot, finance minister Rod Phillips, and economic development minister Vic Fedeli.

"We're making steady progress, and we'll be ready very soon to take our next steps in restarting our economy," Ford said.

But, he added, stage two reopening "won't happen overnight". Ford said that businesses will first need time to prepare to reopen.

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“So early next week, we’ll share more details about stage two of the reopening of our province,” Ford said. “To be clear, stage two will not begin immediately. We’ll be giving notice to businesses to start getting ready.”

Ford also announced that, next week, the government will introduce a phased plan for reopening child care “safely and gradually” to support parents as they return to work.

“As much as stage two will be focused on getting people back to work, it is also about finding ways to try to get life back to normal this summer — even if it’s a little different than before,” he said.

“I’m looking forward to sharing more details early next week.”

A reporter asked Ford about an online petition from hair salon owners who are asking why people can’t get a haircut but they can go get a massage or go to the dentist.

“That makes sense,” Ford said, before passing the question to economic development minister Vic Fedeli. “I don’t disagree with it.”

Fedeli said the announcement next week would have more details on what businesses would be included in the stage two reopening.

“There are many sectors that want to open right away, but we’re always going to take the advice of the chief medical officer of health, the advice of our minister of health, the advice of all of our health professionals as we continue our cabinet discussions on what are essential businesses,” Fedeli said.