

Today, Ontario is reporting 1,210 new COVID-19 cases, with the average number of daily cases over the past seven days now standing at 1,370.

During a media conference on Thursday (November 19) announcing COVID-19 workplace education and enforcement campaigns, Ontario Premier Doug Ford said more stringent public health measures would be introduced in the province on Friday (November 20).

“These measures will have to be tough in the hardest-hit areas,” Ford said. “We’re seeing concerning trends — our hospital ICUs are in jeopardy, our long-term care homes are at risk. We have some difficult but necessary decisions to make.”

The government is expected to move more public health unit regions into more restrictive levels in the province’s colour-coded system. This could include Peel, Toronto, and York being moved into the most restrictive “lockdown” level. It is also possible that some health units, such as Peterborough in the greater Kawarthas region, may be moved from the green “prevent” level into the yellow “protect” level.

Most of today’s new cases are in Peel (361), Toronto (346), and York (143), with smaller increases in Durham (57), Ottawa (37), Hamilton (37), Halton (35), Waterloo (28), Simcoe Muskoka (27), Windsor-Essex (24), Niagara (21), Middlesex-London (19), Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (11), Grey Bruce (10), Eastern Ontario Health Unit (8), Thunder Bay (7), Huron Perth (7), and Brant County (6).

The remaining 16 health units are reporting 5 or fewer new cases, with 4 health units reporting no new cases at all.

Of today’s cases, 53% are among people under 40 years of age, with the highest number of cases (446) among people ages 20 to 39 followed by 353 cases among people ages 40 to 59. With 1,376 more cases resolved since yesterday, the percentage of resolved cases has increased by 0.3% to 83.8%. The average positivity rate across Ontario has decreased by 0.4% to 4.1%, meaning that 41 out of every 1,000 tests performed were positive for COVID-19 on November 18.

A total of 29 new deaths were reported today, including 15 in long-term care facilities. While hospitalizations have decreased by 6 to 529, the number of patients with COVID-19 admitted to ICUs has jumped by 19 to 146 — approaching the threshold of 150 that Ontario public health officials say will require surgeries and other medical procedures to be cancelled to accommodate COVID-19 patients. The number of patients on ventilators has also jumped by 10 to 88.

A total of 41,838 tests were completed yesterday, and the backlog of tests under investigation has increased by 7,822 to 44,493.

There are 91 new cases in Ontario schools, an decrease of 18 from yesterday, with 75