

- Prohibiting indoor and outdoor dining. Restaurants, bars, and other food or drink establishments will be permitted to operate only by take-out, drive-through, and delivery.

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“This difficult action is without a doubt necessary to save lives and prevent our hospitals from being overwhelmed in the coming weeks,” Ford said. “Make no mistake, thousands of lives are at stake right now. If we fail to take action now, the consequences could be catastrophic.”

The government is advising all Ontarians to stay home as much as possible, limiting trips outside the home to necessities such as food, medication, medical appointments, or supporting vulnerable community members. The province is also asking employers in all industries should make every effort to allow employees to work from home.

While the province-wide shutdown is in effect, the province’s current COVID-19 response framework will be paused. The government will evaluate the impacts during the shutdown to determine if it is safe to lift any restrictions or if they need to be extended. Ontario’s chief medical officer of health will assess and apply any lessons learned during the shutdown to the COVID-19 response framework after the shutdown ends.

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In addition to the shutdown, all publicly funded and private elementary and secondary schools will move to teacher-led remote learning when students return from the winter break on Monday, January 4th.

Elementary and secondary schools in northern Ontario can resume in-school classes on Monday, January 11th. Elsewhere in the province, elementary school students can return to class on January 11th and secondary school students can return to class on Monday, January 25th.

The government has also announced the new Ontario Small Business Support Grant, providing a one-time grant of \$10,000 to \$20,000 to small businesses required to close or restrict services under the province-wide shutdown. Essential businesses that are allowed to remain open will not be eligible for the grant. Businesses affected by the shutdown will also be eligible for property tax and energy cost rebates.

More details about the shutdown and support for businesses is available at news.ontario.ca/en/release/59790/ontario-announces-provincewide-shutdown-to-stop-spread-of-covid-19-and-save-lives.

Comments
