



## NEWS

## Kawartha Lakes waiting to announce its own state of emergency

Mayor Andy Letham encourages residents to follow expanded provincial health and safety guidelines to help curb increases to COVID-19 cases and risks to long-term care homes

By [Catherine Whitnall](#) Kawartha Lakes This Week  
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Municipal staff are making preparations to adhere to the province's second declaration of a state of emergency since March, but the City of Kawartha Lakes isn't at the point yet to make its own declaration.

Premier Doug Ford made the not-unexpected news official Tuesday (Jan. 12) in response to a doubling in COVID-19 cases over the past two weeks, the real and looming threat of the collapse of the province's hospital system and alarming risks posed to long-term care homes as a result of high COVID-19 transmission rates.

“I am not considering declaring a state of emergency at this point,” said Mayor Andy Letham, explaining that decision will be made following discussion by council. “We will have that conversation if we have to.”

City CAO Ron Taylor shared the word council during its committee of the whole meeting, noting that, while there have already been some adjustments to operations and services as a result of the lockdown imposed on Dec. 26, more will likely be undertaken along with further suspension of services. Many departments already have restrictions in place and services such as community centres, will remain closed.

Effective Thursday (Jan. 14), at 12:01 a.m., the government is issuing a stay-at-home order requiring everyone to remain at home with exceptions for essential purposes, such as going to the grocery store or pharmacy, accessing health care services, for exercise or for essential work. This order and other new and existing public health restrictions are aimed at limiting people's mobility and reducing the number of daily contacts with those outside an immediate household. In addition to limiting outings to essential trips, all businesses must ensure that any employee who can work from home, does work from home.

Other restrictions including limiting outdoor public gatherings and social gatherings to a limit of five people – with limited exceptions – continued mask or face coverings in indoor areas of businesses or organizations, as well as outdoors where keeping a two metre distance is not possible.

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All non-essential retail stores, including hardware stores, alcohol retailers, and those offering curbside pickup or delivery, can only be open from 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. The restricted hours of operation do not apply to stores that primarily sell food, pharmacies, gas stations, convenience stores and restaurants for takeout or delivery.

As well, non-essential construction is further restricted, including below-grade construction, exempting survey.

A Feb. 10 delayed return to in-school instruction does not apply to Kawartha Lakes students.

Taylor added bylaw will enforce any violations to restrictions.

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