

“Ontario businesses have already contributed so much to the province’s fight against COVID-19,” said Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance. “We recognize that these necessary capacity limits to reduce the transmission of the virus will impact businesses, and that’s why we are introducing these new supports, which will put money directly into the hands of business and free up their cash flows during this critical time.”

Officials say through the new Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program, eligible businesses will receive rebate payments equivalent to 50 per cent of the property tax and energy costs they incur while subject to the current capacity limits. This will provide support to businesses that are expected to be most impacted financially by the requirement to reduce capacity to 50 per cent. Examples of businesses that will be eligible for the Ontario Business Costs Rebate Program include restaurants, smaller retail stores and gyms. A full list of eligible business types will be made available through a program guide in mid-January 2022.

Online applications for this program will open in mid-January 2022, with payments to eligible businesses provided retroactive to December 19, 2021. Businesses will be required to submit property tax and energy bills as part of the application process.

“I commend business owners for pivoting quickly as we respond to the Omicron variant in our continued fight against COVID-19,” said Todd Smith, Minister of Energy. “It is essential that we support them during their time of need, and that’s why our new rebate program will provide them with the support they need right now on their energy bills.”

The province is also providing additional support to help improve cash flows for Ontario businesses by providing a six-month interest- and penalty-free period to make payments for most provincially administered taxes, supporting businesses in the immediate term while capacity restrictions are in place while providing the flexibility