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## Tuesday May 5 COVID-19 Update

Dear neighbour,

During the pandemic, the start of each month brings huge stress for commercial and residential tenants in University-Rosedale. Rent is the number one issue we are hearing about in our office.

Many of you have called to tell us that [Canada's Emergency Response Benefit \(CERB\) simply isn't enough to help you pay your full rent. That is why we are calling for an 80 percent rent subsidy](#), and mandated protection from evictions.

Many of you who run small businesses have called to say that Canada's commercial rent relief program, [will not actually help you, as your landlords are unwilling to adopt the new rent assistance measures](#) or you simply don't qualify. I have contacted our Federal MP's office to raise your concerns, and I will continue to advocate for the Ontario Government to implement our [Save Main Street](#) plan, which includes a 75 percent provincial rent subsidy that would go directly to tenants.

Real change happens when we work together. I encourage you to contact us as well as other groups that are doing useful work to help tenants and small businesses stay afloat, such as [TABIA](#), [SaveSmallBusiness.ca](#), and [ACORN](#).

Yours,

*Jessica Bell*

Jessica Bell (MPP for University-Rosedale)

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## Some seasonal businesses to reopen

On May 1st, The Ontario government announced that the following businesses will be permitted to begin operations as of Monday, May 4th:

- Garden centres and nurseries with curbside pick-up and delivery only
- Lawn care and landscaping
- Additional essential construction projects that include shipping and logistics; broadband, telecommunications, and digital infrastructure; any other project that supports the improved delivery of goods and services; municipal projects; colleges and universities; child care centres; schools; and site preparation, excavation, and servicing for institutional, commercial, industrial and residential development
- Automatic and self-serve car washes; auto dealerships, open by appointment only
- Golf courses may prepare their courses for the upcoming season, but not open to the public
- Marinas may also begin preparations for the recreational boating season by servicing boats and other watercraft and placing boats in the water, but not open to the public

Ontario has issued 61 new sector-specific guidelines for COVID-19 safety to provide businesses a safer approach when reopening. They include instructions on how to maintain proper physical distancing, best practices concerning physical adaptations to the workplace (like plexiglass barriers and boot sanitizing trays), and effective sanitation methods. You can access the full list of [guidelines here](#). More details can be seen [here](#).

As Ontario begins reopening the economy, the NDP is calling on the Ford Government to implement rules and not [just guidelines](#) to ensure all workplaces and businesses are safe.

We are also calling for Ontario's Labour Minister to [strengthen protections for workers who refuse to do unsafe work](#). As reported by the Toronto Star, over

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**SAVE THE DATE:** On May 19 at 6:00pm, I will be hosting *Work in the Time of COVID-19*, an online townhall with the Workers Action Centre's Deena Ladd and MPP for Sudbury Jamie West so workers can ask questions about their rights and what can be done to improve work during and after the pandemic. Please RSVP and send us your questions in advance at [jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca)

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## Disabled people demand more support

Many of the programs the Ontario government has implemented do not take into account the circumstances that disabled people encounter.

Disabled people bear a disproportionate risk of contracting COVID-19 and face more severe medical consequences, says [David Lepofsky](#), Chair of the [AODA Alliance](#). Moreover, [medical rationing protocols](#) put disabled people at a higher risk of being denied critical care when it is needed most—a clear human rights violation.

In University–Rosedale, we are hearing from organizations like Bellwoods Centres for Community Living on Shaw St. that many disabled people living in complex care are falling through the cracks. Bellwoods Centres for Community Living continues to worry about staff shortages and access to PPE, putting both residents and frontline workers at risk.

The Ontario NDP is [calling](#) for the Ontario government to take urgent action to protect disabled people including designing a plan to conduct in-home testing for disabled people, ensuring that home care workers have proper PPE, and calling for the Assistive Devices Program to be declared an essential service so that no one is deprived of critical mobility or medical aides.

This is unacceptable. I will continue to put pressure on this government to implement a comprehensive plan for health-care accessibility, along with Ontario NDP MPP Joel Harden, the [AODA Alliance](#), and the [Disability Justice Network of Ontario](#).

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## Cycling in the time of COVID-19

aggressive driving and speeding and this is inline with what police are reporting.

Tragically on Saturday, just after midnight, a 32-year-old cyclist was killed in Brampton, in another hit-and-run incident.

Please follow the rules of the road, and stick within speed limits. Here's [Cycle Toronto's](#) helpful guidelines on how to cycle safely and practice physical distancing during this time.

On a positive note, the City of Toronto just approved its 2020 Cycling Plan, which includes the installation of cycling lanes and/or bicycling tracks on many streets in our riding, including:

- a. Borden Street (from just north of College Street to Ulster Street);
- b. Brunswick Avenue (from just north of College Street to Lowther Street);
- c. Dewson Street (from Roxton Road to Shaw Street);
- d. Ulster Street (from Borden Street to Brunswick Avenue);
- e. Roxton Road (from Dewson Street south to Dewson Street north);
- f. Shaw Street (from Harbord Street to Dupont Street); and
- g. Sumach Street (from Queen Street to Shuter Street).

[Read the city motion for the full list.](#) I fully support this move, and will continue to [advocate for safer streets](#) at Queen's Park.

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## One-time increase to Canada Child Benefit

On May 3rd, the The Federal government highlighted that families receiving the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) will get \$300 extra per child. Eligible families will automatically receive this one-time increase as part of their scheduled CCB payment in May. Those who already receive the CCB do not need to re-apply for this one-time increase.

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## Eligibility expansion for emergency child care

COVID-19 outbreak. Those who will benefit include people who work in the food supply chain, retirement homes, grocery stores and pharmacies, and certain federal employees, including the military. To accommodate more children, 37 additional centres have been approved and will be reopening in the coming days.

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## Here's the latest on access to pandemic pay

We have heard from many frontline workers who are wondering how to access pandemic pay, when they should expect to receive it, and if there is an application process.

Our office has been in touch with the Treasury Board Secretariat to gain clarification on the process. There is no application process for the \$4/hr premium pay. This adjustment will come automatically through your employer. These payments will be retroactive to April 24th, but because of the number of employees to process these payments may not be reflected in pay for a few weeks. This top-up will continue for 16 weeks from April 24th.

The \$250 per month lump sum for staff who work more than 100 hours per month will be subject to an application. The application portal has not yet been finalized, but will be available before the end of this first month cycle.

In the last newsletter we announced that pandemic pay had been [expanded](#) to include more workers. However, we have heard from many people that too many workers are still being excluded from this list. Our office and the Ontario NDP continue to fight to:

- Expand this additional pay to include the many frontline workers that have put the needs of the community first.
- Make this additional pay retroactive to the day that the State of Emergency was declared, so that the sacrifice and hard work of these frontline workers to keep us all safe is recognized.

**Add your name to demand a wage top up for all frontline workers [here](#).**

# PPE issues in LTC homes continue

Despite Premier Ford's insistence that the province has enough personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers, reports out of long-term care facilities indicate that workers still aren't given the PPE they need, and personal support workers (PSWs) may continue to face pressure from employers to work without proper protections. The union representing the second PSW to die of COVID-19 in Ontario, Arlene Reid, said PPE protocols and government directives have "[insufficiently protected PSWs](#)" in home care, long-term care and hospital settings. We have been calling for a [new strategy to protect residents and staff](#) in long-term care.

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# Access to sanitation and washroom services for vulnerable populations

On May 1st, The City of Toronto announced the opening of sanitation and washroom service locations across the city to provide access to showers, washrooms, and drinking water during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here are the locations of the new portable washrooms and handwashing stations.

- Alexandra Park, 275 Bathurst St.
- Jimmie Simpson Park, 872 Queen St. East
- Regent Park, 600 Dundas St. East
- Outside Wellesley Community Centre, 495 Sherbourne St.
- Moss Park, 150 Sherbourne St.
- Sunnyside Park, 755 Lake Shore Blvd. West
- Little Norway Park, 689 Queen's Quay West
- Yonge-Dundas Square, 1 Dundas St. East

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Here are the addresses of the new sanitation and washroom service locations for people experiencing homelessness.

- Harrison Pool, 15 Stephanie St.
- Wallace Emerson Community Centre, 1260 Dufferin St.
- Regent Park Community Centre, 402 Shuter St.
- Centennial Park Arena (Etobicoke), 156 Centennial Park Rd.
- Commander Arena (Scarborough), 140 Commander Blvd.
- Malvern Community Centre Arena (Scarborough), 30 Sewells Rd.

## Today's COVID kindness feature

Today I want to spotlight the Gratitude Challenge undertaken by two University-Rosedale Residents Associations.



[Palmerston Area Residents Association](#) raised \$ 7,900 for the Daily Bread Food Bank. Now, they've challenged [Harbord Village Residents' Association](#) to do the same for Fort York Food Bank.

**HVRA will match your donations dollar for dollar up to \$5000.**

Donate [here](#).

It doesn't matter where you live, if you give via [this link](#) your donation will be matched.

Have ideas for acts of [#COVIDkindness](#) I should feature? Let me know! I am also sharing these regularly on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Note that this email and all previous COVID-19 updates are available at: [www.jessicabellmpp.ca/coronavirus](http://www.jessicabellmpp.ca/coronavirus)

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