

[Click here to view this email in your browser.](#)



## Wednesday April 1 COVID-19 Update

### This newsletter includes:

- Information on rent and evictions
- New mandatory physical distancing measures
- Update on school closures
- Emergency childcare
- Post-secondary updates
- Preparing to receive financial supports
- Demanding support for health care workers
- Additional announcements

## Information on rent and evictions

Today is the first day of the month. I've been connecting with hundreds of constituents across the riding, and **I understand that today is a day of enormous stress for so many of you.**

I have joined my NDP colleagues in pushing every day for a [rent-subsidy plan](#) to help people get through this incredibly difficult time. **We have been continuously asking the government to table legislation that would provide immediate relief to tenants across the board** with an 80% rent subsidy for a maximum of \$2,500 for up to four months to help renters make their payments. The same payments should be accessible to help small and medium-sized businesses with their leases. We are also calling for a federal ban on mortgage foreclosures to ensure no one loses their home during this

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

**Premier Doug Ford has said in recent days that “if you can’t pay rent, and if you’re in a crisis, you don’t have to pay rent”.** The good news is that the Solicitor General has enacted a current moratorium on evictions. This means that **no new eviction orders will be issued in Ontario, and all current orders will be postponed**, until further notice. Thus, whatever your private rental arrangement, you cannot be forced out of your home and while landlords can still issue eviction notices, they can't be enforced. **If you get an eviction notice, do not leave your home. Please get in touch with our office and we can support you**, including by following up with the landlord directly, making sure they understand their obligations.

Unfortunately Ford has not taken further steps to give tenants, business owners, and landlords the clarity you deserve about what this pause on evictions will look like in the longer term. I will continue demanding a legal ban on evictions, lockouts and disconnections — including business tenants — for four months, and a legal ban on threatening to evict or disconnect a tenant’s utilities. The NDP will also continue to advocate for rent prices to stay put for six months, with a provincial freeze, along with a federal ban on mortgage foreclosures, so people have protection as they’re getting back on their feet after the pandemic has passed. [Read more on our rent subsidy plan here.](#)

I want you to know that I will continue advocating around the clock for measures that ensure everyone has a roof over their head and cannot be punished for missing a rent or a mortgage payment.

**As always, if you require urgent assistance from my office, please contact my team at 416-535-7206 or email us at [jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca)**



**For those living in Toronto Community Housing**, TCH will offer flexibility to market rent and rent-geared-to-income (RGI) tenants whose employment income has been impacted by COVID-19. They will work with RGI households

information, including options for paying rent, please see [the full TCH update on COVID-19](#).

# New mandatory physical distancing measures

This morning, the City of Toronto made important announcements about [new safety measures effective immediately](#).

**All individuals with COVID-19, who have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19, or who are returning from international travel are required to stay home for 14 days.**

**Anyone over the age of 70 is strongly encouraged to stay home as much as possible.**

**All other individuals, who are not ill or have not traveled, are strongly directed to stay home, except for the following reasons:**

- Accessing healthcare or medications
- Shopping for groceries once per week
- Walking their dogs or getting daily exercise
- While doing any of the above, people **must maintain a physical distancing of at least 2 metre at all times** .

**All businesses remaining open must:**

- maximize physical distancing and infection prevention and control practices
- limit in-person access to those businesses, as much as possible
- increase cleaning and active screening of employees at all businesses.

On the weekend, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, issued his [starkest warning yet](#), and I want to share what he said with you:

**“The lives of many Ontarians, especially our community's most vulnerable citizens, are in your hands and will depend on your actions over the coming days and weeks.”**

I know this is extremely difficult for many of us, and that many in our community have no choice but to work outside the home from day to day. That's precisely

Despite these uncertain times, I hope you are all finding moments to connect with friends and loved ones (virtually and/or at a distance of course!).

I want to thank each and every one of you for taking these measures seriously to ensure that you do not put your family, friends and others at risk.

## Update on school closures

Yesterday, the provincial government [announced](#) that **publicly funded schools will remain closed until at least May 4, and that a second phase of supports will be released for students to learn from home**. Private schools, licensed child care centres and EarlyON programs will also remain closed until at least April 13, according to the Declaration of Emergency, which only allows closures to be extended for one 14-day period at a time. Select centres designated to support frontline health care workers and first responders will remain open.

According to the Education Minister, this second phase will include:

- Reconnecting students with teachers and other school staff, including mental health workers;
- Re-establishing teacher-led learning by grade groupings, for marks, with final report cards still required.
- Prioritizing and supporting students on track to graduate;
- Distributing laptops and/or devices from schools as needed, through school boards.

Many of the details and logistics will be left to the school boards to determine. Please check with your own local board for further details:

[Toronto District School Board](#)

[Toronto Catholic District School Board](#)

[Conseil scolaire Viamonde](#)

[Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir](#)

English and French-language materials will continue to be added to the Ministry's [Learn at Home](#) site on a regular basis.

I want to hear from you about the government's plan for students, and if it will meet the needs of your family. If you're an education worker, let me know what you think about the proposals and what it means for your work and support for students.

The City of Toronto will be providing emergency child care for children of essential and critical service workers. Registration is now open. There are four locations. Information on eligibility and a link to apply is [here](#).

The service is provided at no costs to families, funded by the Province of Ontario, for children from birth to age 12. Services will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Centres are located across Toronto in existing City-run licensed child care facilities and staffed by City of Toronto child care workers.

**Note that the City of Toronto has significantly expanded the list of eligible front line workers from the list previously issued by the province, to include many city service workers such as TTC employees, solid waste, shelter support and housing administration, Toronto Water and long-term care**

## Post-secondary updates

The province has announced that the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) will be temporarily deferring loan repayments for six months, interest free, until September 30th, 2020. During this time, interest will not accrue on OSAP loans.

In addition, the province will be providing \$25 million in additional funding to publicly-assisted colleges, universities, and Indigenous Institutes to help address their immediate needs in relation to COVID-19. This includes: deep cleaning, purchasing medical supplies, or offering mental health support.

[A full update on the province's announcement can be found here.](#)

## Preparing to receive financial supports

Announcements are being released daily regarding key financial supports for individuals and businesses. Applications for many of these new programs will become available beginning next week. **I will summarize available supports in a subsequent newsletter but in the meanwhile would urge all individuals to get ready to apply by:**

1. Making sure you have a MyAccount with the Canada Revenue Agency, that your address and contact info is up to date, and that you have enrolled in direct deposit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/e-services/e-services-individuals/account-individuals.html>

are [available here](#).

## Demanding support for health care workers

I am hearing directly from healthcare workers that more resources are urgently needed to fight COVID-19. These folks are heroes, and we owe them a debt of gratitude. I join the NDP in calling on the provincial government to [address many of their concerns right now](#), including:

1. Issuing an emergency order to ensure workers can have personal protective equipment
2. Requiring all organizations to donate personal protective equipment they're not using
3. Hiking Personal Support Worker (PSW) pay and ramping up recruitment efforts to get more staff into seniors care homes.
4. Giving health care workers mental health supports
5. Scaling up free child care centres for health care workers now
6. Canceling all parking fees at hospitals and other health care facilities

## Additional announcements

- On Monday Premier Ford announced the **Declaration of Emergency** for the province of Ontario will be extended until April 13, 2020
- On Saturday Premier Ford announced that he was **cutting the number of people allowed to gather at a time from 50 to five**. Up to 10 people will be allowed to gather at funerals, and child-care centres looking after the kids of front-line workers can have up to 50 people on site. There's also an exception for households with more than five people.
- Yesterday, **the City of Toronto announced the cancellation of all city-led events through June 30**. This cancellation includes Pride Toronto festival, The Hot Docs Festival, the Inside Out Film Festival, Canadian Music Week and the Toronto Jazz Festival.
- The federal government announced that as of March 30th, **anyone in Canada showing symptoms related to COVID-19 will be barred from boarding domestic flights and trains**.

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)

accountable for raising prices significantly on the necessary goods  
Ontarians need to protect themselves and their families from COVID-  
19. **Consumers can report price gouging** by filing a complaint at 1-800-  
889-9768 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, or by [filing  
a report online](#).

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

As always, if you require urgent assistance from my office, please contact my  
team at 416-535-7206 or email us at [jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca)

We're all in this together.

Sincerely,

*Jessica Bell*

Jessica Bell (MPP for University-Rosedale)



---

*Copyright © 2020 Jessica Bell, MPP, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

