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## Friday, April 16 Update

Dear Neighbour,

In today's announcement, Doug Ford announced the stay-at-home order will be extended by an additional two weeks, as well as further restrictions on outdoor activities and retail in hopes of flattening Ontario's COVID-19 surge.

### **Effective immediately:**

1. Outdoor gatherings have been limited to household members only. Households with only one member are still allowed to join one other household.
2. The province is also shutting down all non-essential construction and limiting outdoor recreational amenities such as golf, soccer and playgrounds.
3. Big box retail capacity has been capped at 25 per cent.
4. Weddings, funerals and places of worship will be allowed to host no more than 10 people indoors.

**Beginning Monday, April 19**, the province will implement checkpoints at all interprovincial borders and limit border crossings to Manitoba and Quebec, with the exception of essential services such as goods, transit and medical care. Police enforcement of the stay-at-home order will also be enhanced. Police will have the authority to require any individual who is not in a place of residence to give an address and ask why they're out.

Additionally, the province will focus 25 per cent of all future vaccine allocations on the 13 public health regions that historically suffered high rates of COVID-19-related deaths, hospitalizations and infections.

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stronger measures were not imposed. The hard reality is our healthcare system is struggling to hold on.

Public health officials warned the Ford government long ago the new COVID-19 variants were deadlier and more transmissible and would require swift actions to stop the spread. Doug Ford ignored those calls.

I standby our public health officials and their recommendations for keeping Ontarians safe, and will continue to call on the Ford government to do more for the workers of Ontario, by legislating paid sick days, providing direct rent relief for those who have lost income, ramping up vaccinations for at-risk populations, getting non-essential workers out of workplaces, closing non-essential businesses and more. If you need help, please write to my office at jbell-co@ndp.on.ca.

Please stay safe,



Jessica Bell (MPP for University-Rosedale)

My newsletter for this week includes

**Queen's Park:**

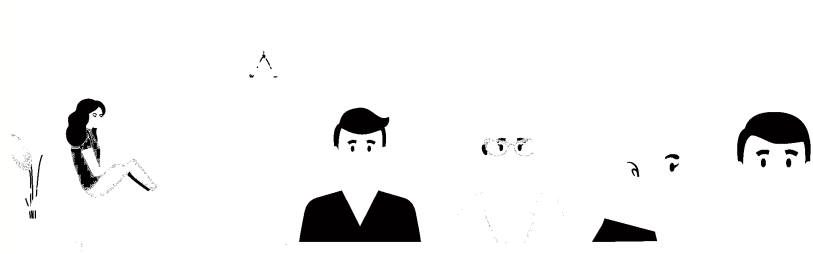
- [Your questions about COVID-19 vaccines answered with Dr. David Fisman](#)
- [Ontario schools close for in-person learning, budget cuts loom](#)
- [ACT NOW! Vaccinate child care workers](#)
- [Paid sick days, vaccinating essential workers key to beating third wave](#)
- [Ford's triage protocol needs public consultation and must respect disability rights](#)
- [My new bill would reduce microplastics in Ontario waters](#)

**Community News:**

- [Upcoming tenant information session and resist renovictions workshop hosted by ACORN](#)
- [The Power to Act: Climate Change and Proportional Representation](#)

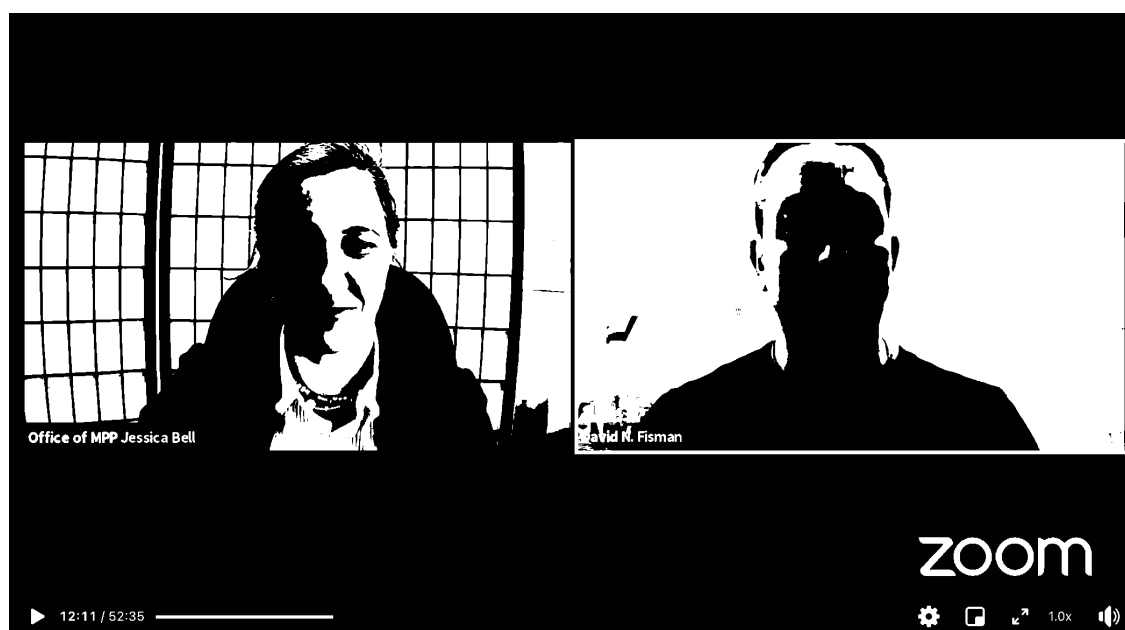
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We all have a role to play to help reduce COVID-19 spread & keep our city safe:



[TORONTO.CA/COVID19](https://toronto.ca/covid19)

 **Toronto** Public Health



## Your questions about COVID-19 vaccines answered with Dr. David Fisman

There are a lot of questions and concerns within our community about the vaccination process, including when, where and how to get a vaccine, questions about COVID-19 hotspots and vaccine eligibility, vaccine shortages and more.

On Wednesday, April 14, I invited Dr. David Fisman, a professor of epidemiology at the University of Toronto, for a Q&A on COVID-19 vaccines and Ontario's vaccine rollout to help answer your questions. During our Q&A we learned about how the vaccines work, why it's important to vaccinate essential workers, how soon you can expect your first and second dose and more.

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If you missed us, [you can watch the full Q&A video here](#).

If you have a question about vaccines or the vaccine rollout that were not answered, please email [jbell-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbell-co@ndp.on.ca).

For more information on vaccines and vaccine eligibility, [click here](#).



## Ontario schools close for in-person learning, budget cuts loom

Earlier this week we learned Doug Ford was [closing schools for in-person learning across Ontario indefinitely](#).

While I believe this was a necessary step to keep educators, parents and communities safe, it should never have come to this. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Ford government has failed to implement measures that would make schools safe, including capping class sizes to 15 students, upgrading ventilation in schools, delivering on-site school testing, and swiftly vaccinating education workers. Instead, Premier Doug Ford's inaction resulted in an onslaught of school closures, leaving parents and educators scrambling once again. To top it all off, the Ford government plans to cut \$1.6 billion from the education budget next year, instead of investing in important programs like [children's mental health services](#) to help our kids recover from this difficult year.

On Monday, April 12 I held a town hall with MPP Marit Stiles (NDP education critic), Jess Lyons ([Ontario Parent Action Network](#)), and Nigel Barrieff (educator

Soon, the new budget will go to third reading. I urge you to take this opportunity to write to Premier Doug Ford ([doug.fordco@pc.ola.org](mailto:doug.fordco@pc.ola.org)) and Education Minister Stephen Lecce ([stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org](mailto:stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org)) demanding the Ontario government invest more in schools. Don't forget to CC my office ([jbell-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbell-co@ndp.on.ca)).



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✉ jbell-co@ndp.on.ca

**THEREFORE** we the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: Prioritize child care workers and ECEs in the vaccine rollout and vaccinate them immediately.

[illegible]

In order to ensure child care centres can remain open to serve essential and frontline workers, the Ontario NDP has called on the Ford government to prioritize child care workers and ECEs in the vaccine rollout and vaccinate them immediately.

A printable version (which can be read in legislature) is [available here](#).

## **Paid sick days, vaccinating essential workers key to beating third wave**

Among those at high risk for contracting the virus are the workers who have continued to produce food, build homes, deliver packages, drive buses, and more, while the rest of the province is under a stay-at-home order. Despite the clear need for essential workers to be vaccinated as quickly as possible, the [Ford government announced](#) it would be the employer's responsibility to set up, operate and fund onsite vaccination clinics as well as employer-sponsored offsite community clinics.

Another major issue facing essential workers is access to paid sick days, and major workplace outbreaks like the one at an [Amazon distribution centre](#) and [Cargill](#), are clear signs that every worker in our province must have access to paid time off. Paid sick days allow workers to stay home when they have symptoms, get tested for COVID-19, and even go and get a vaccine.

We know that workplaces are major sites of transmission for COVID-19 and that new, more aggressive variants have put workers at even greater risk during the third wave. It's well past the time to give essential workers what they need to stay safe: access to vaccines and paid sick days.

Learn more about the [impact of COVID-19 on essential workers and marginalized communities here](#).

Add your name in [support of paid sick days here](#).

## **Ford's triage protocol needs public consultation and must respect disability rights**

As Ontario prepares for [hospitals to fill beyond capacity](#) and ICUs struggle to provide care for a rising number of people in critical condition, the Ford government must urgently take steps to hold an open, accessible, and inclusive public consultation process on how critical care triage decisions will be made.

Last year, more than [200 community organizations wrote to the Ford government](#) denouncing its directions to Ontario hospitals on life-saving critical care, concerned that the included triage protocol discriminated against people

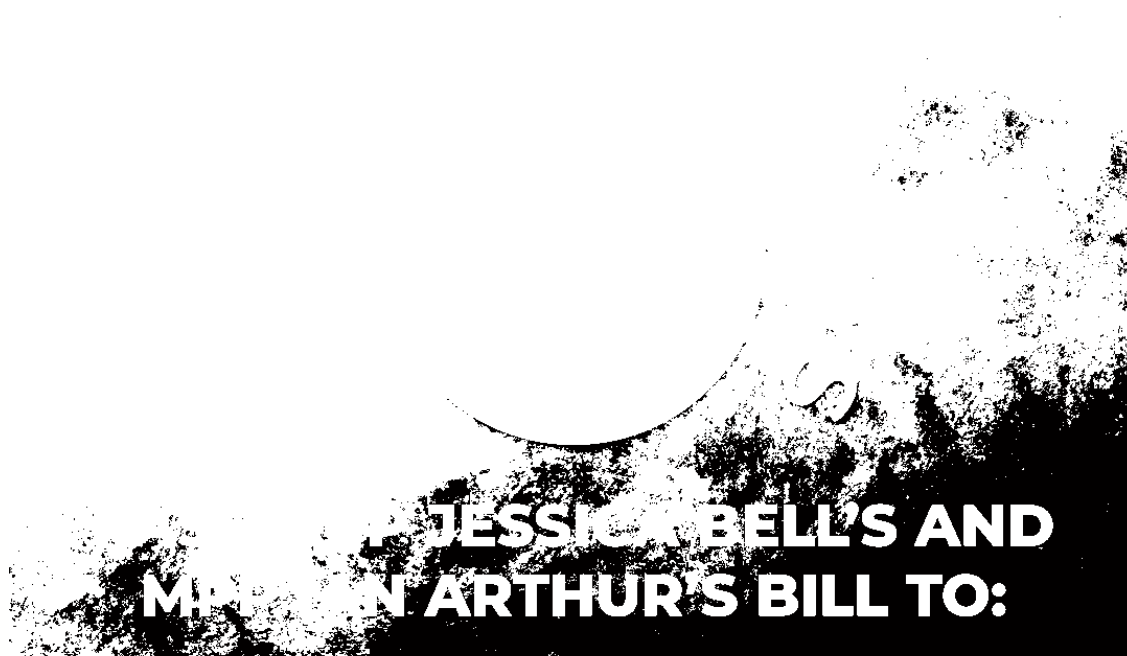
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the government is planning for doctors to have to make life-and-death decisions about allocating care, but is doing so behind closed doors.

There is a long history of discrimination and bias against people with disabilities in accessing health care, often based on stereotypes and perceptions about the value and quality of lives of people with disabilities. People with disabilities also face a higher risk of getting and being severely impacted by COVID-19. Should Ontario's critical care physicians be forced into making triage decisions, it is imperative a person's disability is never used as a criterion for who gets health care.

To learn more about Ontarians with Disabilities Act Alliance (AODA) and how you can join the alliance, [click here](#).

You can read the [full protocol here](#).



## Ontario waters

Microplastics in the Great Lakes is an increasing concern for the health of our waters, the creatures that live there, and the 14.5 million Ontarians who rely on them for their drinking water.

The most common type of microplastic, microfibers, shed from our clothes into washing machines, which release, per load, anywhere from hundreds to hundreds of thousands of microfibers into our waterways. As plastics bioaccumulate in fish, the effects are passed up the food chain to larger fish, birds and mammals.

To help stop microplastics from leaching into our ecosystems, I announced I will be introducing a bill with my colleague NDP MPP Ian Arthur, requiring manufacturers to equip washing machines with a microfilter, which studies show, reduce 87% of microfibers from ending in washing machine wastewater.

This innovative technology was developed by [researchers right here](#) at University of Toronto in our riding, and was piloted by the good people of Parry Sound. Lisa Erdle, from the University of Toronto, and David Sweetman from Georgian Bay Forever, joined us at our press conference.

We can and must address microplastic pollution now. For our plant, for ourselves and for future generations to come.

[Click here to help stop microplastics from entering our waterways.](#)

[Click here to learn more.](#)



## Upcoming tenant information session and resist



Ontario has an affordable housing crisis and many renters are suffering extreme stress and hardship because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dealing with landlord harassment or fighting a no-fault eviction forces many tenants out of their homes without a fair fight or fair compensation.

Next week, ACORN is hosting two virtual workshops which will cover details around renovictions, what to look out for, how tenants can protect themselves, and how to get organized in their buildings to fight back against them. There will be time for questions and discussion afterward.

**Saturday, April 24 at 2 pm - Tenant Rights**  
**Register here:** [bit.ly/TenantsRightsInfoSessions](https://bit.ly/TenantsRightsInfoSessions)

**Monday, April 26 at 6pm - Resist Renovictions**  
**Register here:** [bit.ly/ResistRenovictionsWorkshop](https://bit.ly/ResistRenovictionsWorkshop)

Those who are interested can also RSVP by emailing [torontoadmin@acorncanada.org](mailto:torontoadmin@acorncanada.org) or by calling 416 461 9233.

To demand Doug Ford pass legislation protecting tenants from illegal evictions, [click here](#).



## The Power to Act: Climate Change and Proportional Representation

Our electoral system, first-past-the-post, has an enormous impact on the policies that our governments produce, sometimes with dire consequences. Ontario's Doug Ford is a perfect example of this: obtaining a majority government with only 40% of the vote, the Conservative party has passed several pieces of legislation that have severely harmed our climate response.

With the high stakes of climate change at risk, it's worth asking if there is a better way to elect governments in order to enact policies the majority of voters want and need.

Join Fair Vote Toronto with Fridays For Future Toronto on **Wednesday, April 21 from 6-7 pm** for a webinar exploring the challenges and opportunities

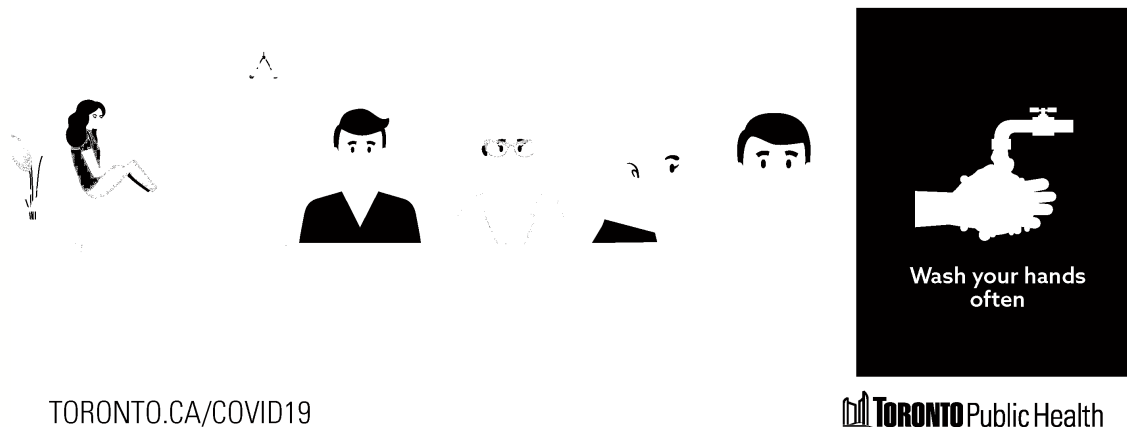
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of adopting proportional representation, an electoral system that gives voters the power to act by rewarding cooperation over competition.

To learn more about the webinar and register in advance, [click here](#).

## 4 STEPS FOR SELF-PROTECTION

We all have a role to play to help reduce COVID-19 spread & keep our city safe:



## Now is the time to follow public health guidelines

As COVID-19 cases climb in Ontario, please consider these reminders from Toronto Public Health to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed:

- Limit non-essential trips out of your home and follow [travel advice](#)
- Keep two metres (six feet) distance from others
- Wear a mask or face covering in indoor public spaces and when you can't keep physical distance
- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based (70-90 per cent) hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow or a tissue. Immediately throw the tissue in the garbage and wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home if you are feeling unwell

Download the [COVID Alert app](#) so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19. I have

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**Protect your  
community.  
Download the  
COVID Alert app.**



Health Canada Santé Canada

Canada

**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 [jbell-co@ndp.on.ca](mailto:jbell-co@ndp.on.ca)



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