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Saturday, April 24 Update

Dear Neighbour,

Premier Ford's dangerous and unscientific decision to close playgrounds and give the police huge power to stop, question and fine people was met with utter fury by Ontarians. His own scientific advisory table went rogue and spoke out publicly, saying they never recommended these measures to Cabinet, and two-thirds of Ontario's local police departments refused to enforce Ford's new police-state rules.

Ford backtracked fast, but the crisis continues. Every day I am getting calls from health care workers describing horrific ICU scenes. Too many racialized essential workers and their family members are being sickened and dying in hospitals because this government is not taking real measures to control the spread of COVID-19, especially in workplaces. Doing what the health experts are recommending, bringing in paid sick days, closing non-essential workplaces, and providing financial support to businesses and workers is what we need to do right now.

We just hosted a town hall on the government's failed response to the COVID-19 crisis and over 1000 residents attended. We will be organizing additional safe actions this week and next to keep the pressure on this government. Email us at jbell-co@ndp.on.ca if you want to help out.

Please stay safe,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessica Bell".

Jessica Bell (MPP for University-Rosedale)

Queen's Park

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LTB

- [Is the Attorney General planning on taking the LTB permanently online?](#)
- [Ford government chose policing over policy, failed to keep Ontarians safe](#)
- [Ontario Small Business Support Grant failing to reach UniRose](#)
- [Toronto's Medical Officer of Health issues order closing workplaces with COVID-19 outbreaks](#)

Community:

- [ACORN Support Network: Supports Available for Rides to Vaccine Clinic & Grocery Delivery](#)
- [The Common Table offering workshop on 'Homelessness in Yorkville'](#)
- [New Programming at the College-Montrose Children's Place](#)
- [Join 15 & Fairness for virtual MAY DAY action, demand decent work for all](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine information](#)



Action Alert: Paid Sick Days phone zap in PC-held ridings

Since the pandemic began, Premier Doug Ford and his ministers have shut down our efforts to create a system for paid sick days in Ontario **23 times**. He voted down our most recent motion to implement paid sick days just last Thursday. We will keep the pressure on.

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Days program yesterday. I am also angry.

I am also energized by and deeply appreciative of our work to pressure Premier Ford to legislate paid sick days for all. Doug Ford's promise that he's going to do something was a clear sign that the pressure is effective, and we must keep the momentum going.

Please join me on **Monday, April 26 at 6 pm** in calling residents in PC-held Toronto ridings to gather broad support for paid sick days.

RSVP here: <https://www.ontariondp.ca/paid-sick-days-phone-zap>

Ontario's new Bill 276 punishes people standing up for their rights at the LTB

I am deeply concerned by Schedule 27 in Ontario's new Bill 276, which if passed, will punish Ontarians who record and share proceedings at tribunals, including the Human Rights Tribunal and the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB). Those who do, will now face fines of up to \$25,000.

I believe the Ford government is introducing Schedule 27 to scare and stop people from advocating for renters.

Recordings by tenants have helped inform the public the LTB is conducting a dangerous eviction blitz in the middle of a pandemic. They have also provided evidence of breaches of procedural fairness. Recordings show that some hearings are chaotic, disorganized, and unfair. Tenants have been evicted in hearings that last minutes. Hearings proceeded, even if the tenant had a language barrier that limited their ability to understand what was going on, had poor or no access to a phone or internet connection, or didn't turn up to the hearing because they didn't receive an official notice.

If the Ford government wants to help people stay safe and housed during the pandemic, they should stop punishing people trying to stay housed, and instead provide rental support, an eviction moratorium, and true LTB reform to ensure everyone quickly gets a fair hearing.

Bill 276 is currently at second reading. You can submit written comments and apply to speak to bill 276 when it reaches committee here. Please cc-us at jbell-co@ndp.on.ca if you want me to share your concerns in the legislature or in committee.

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Ontario NDP Caucus • Groupe parlementaire du NPD de l'Ontario

The Honourable Doug Downey
Ministry of the Attorney General
11th Floor
720 Bay St.
Toronto, ON
M7A 2S9

April 23, 2021

RE: Is the Ford Government planning to move the Landlord and Tenant Board permanently online post-pandemic?

Dear Hon. Doug Downey,

We are writing to ask if the Landlord Tenant Board (LTB) is returning to in-person hearings, and when.

It was brought to our attention that during a recent LTB hearing, an adjudicator revealed that under the LTB's Digital First Strategy, in-person hearings would no longer be conducted, even after the pandemic ends. This statement was heard by several observers.

Since the LTB moved to virtual hearings, there have been growing reports from tenants and legal clinics across Ontario of systematic procedural unfairness, adversely affecting people with disabilities, language barriers due to ethnicity, a lack of access to technology, and more. These concerns go to the very heart of the LTB's legal responsibilities to the public which is access to justice for the province's most poor and marginalized tenants, and the broader, moral imperative that housing is a human right. Should the LTB continue to conduct virtual hearings in perpetuity, our concern is tenants will continue to face unfair evictions, be forced into payment plans they do not understand, and/or be unable to present evidence in their defense.

Some of these injustices have been brought to light by tenants recording LTB proceedings and sharing them on social media. Instead of solving the obvious violations of due process in the LTB, the Government has decided to suppress instances of procedural unfairness through legislation (Schedule 6, Bill 276) banning and issuing fines of up to \$25,000 dollars on those who record and disseminate recordings. Squashing the evidence is not the solution.

The LTB must commit to operating in a manner that is compliant with its obligations – arising from the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 (RTA), Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charter), French Language Services Act, Human Rights Code, Statutory Powers Procedure Act (SPPA) and the common law duty of procedural fairness.

Ontario NDP Caucus Services

Main Legislative Building, Room N200 • Queen's Park • Toronto, ON M7A 1A8 • ondpcaucus.com

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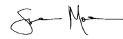
We are calling on you to clarify your government's plan to ensure the LTB upholds these basic rights and obligations, as well as whether and when the LTB will move back to in-person hearings.

We look forward to hearing from you and welcome a meeting at your convenience.

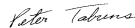
Yours sincerely,



Jessica Bell
MPP, University-Rosedale
Official Opposition Critic, Housing, Tenant Rights, and Urban Planning



Suze Morrison, MPP Toronto Centre



Peter Tabuns, MPP Toronto—Danforth



Marit Stiles, MPP Davenport



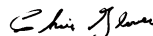
Bhullu Karpoche, MPP Parkdale—High Park



Jill Andrew, MPP Toronto—St. Paul's



Rima Berns-McGown, MPP Beaches—East York



Chris Glover, MPP Spadina—Fort York



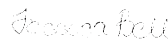
Doly Begum, MPP Scarborough Southwest

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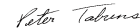
Yours sincerely,



Jessica Bell
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Bhullu Karpoche, MPP Parkdale—High Park

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Main Legislative Building, Room 1100 • Queen's Park • Toronto, ON M7A 1A8 • ndpcaucus.com

Is the Attorney General planning on taking the LTB permanently online?

During a recent LTB hearing, an adjudicator revealed that under the LTBs Digital First Strategy, in-person hearings would no longer be conducted, even after the pandemic ends. This statement was heard by several observers.

I have asked the Attorney General Doug Downey in a sign-on letter with my MPP colleagues to clarify the government's plans to keep the LTB online post-pandemic. Since the LTB moved to virtual hearings, there have been growing reports from legal clinics across Ontario of systematic procedural unfairness, adversely affecting people with disabilities, language barriers due to ethnicity, a lack of access to technology, and more. A permanently online LTB will have difficulty in meeting its obligation to give everyone access to justice and a fair hearing in court.

Let us know if you are concerned about an upcoming virtual LTB hearing, or are working on this issue at jbelle-co@ndp.on.ca.

MPP University-Rosedale



while utterly failing to quash workplace transmission
is going to lead to more people in Ontario dying.

Ford government chose policing over policy, failed to keep Ontarians safe

Ontario is in a crisis and the measures Doug Ford announced last Friday revealed his inability to lead. Instead of taking real actions to protect people from COVID-19, helping frontline and essential workers, this government chose to harm lower-income and racialized people.

I want to thank everyone who fought against the Ford government's attempt to over-police Ontarians, the public health officials who spoke out against these measures and every person who called and emailed our office expressing concern. While I am relieved Doug Ford walked back police powers, there is still so much work to be done.

That's why NDP MPPs began the week by pushing a package of legislative changes to replace the police state Doug Ford announced last Friday. Our strategy to help Ontario through the worst of the third wave included five motions that if passed, would have:

- Given Ontarians paid sick days by passing Bill 239
- Given workers paid time off to get a vaccine
- Cancelled the extraordinary police powers completely
- Shut down non-essential workplaces
- Given impacted local businesses and workers a new package of financial support

The Ford government voted them all down.



Ontario Small Business Support Grant failing to reach UniRose

Since the Ontario Small Business Support Grant (OSBG) was launched, our office has heard from a number of business owners who have struggled to access this grant and we wanted to learn more. That's why, earlier this month our office launched an [OSBG feedback form](#). So far, we have heard from well over 100 businesses, and the results have been gutting.

More than 80% of small businesses in University-Rosedale who completed our survey are still waiting for their grant to arrive, and the few businesses who have received their grant often waited for months.

Major concerns raised in the survey included:

- Applications being denied for no reason at all
- No support for small businesses still waiting for their grant
- No information on when grants will arrive

In the legislature, I asked the Ford government to provide financial support to businesses in University-Rosedale and Ontario. I will be following up with the Ministry directly to have them look into the applications made by the businesses in University-Rosedale who filled in our survey.



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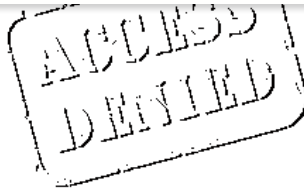
SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANT

We surveyed UniRose businesses that applied to Ontario's small business grant program. This is what we found.



How long after applying did you recieve your grant?

****Grants were promised to arrive within 10 business days. Most businesses have been waiting three months or longer.**



SURVEY STILL OPEN

[JESSICABELLMPP.CA/SUPPORTFEEDBACK](https://jessicabellmpp.ca/supportfeedback)

Toronto's Medical Officer of Health issues order closing workplaces with COVID-19 outbreaks

On Tuesday, April 20th, Dr. Eileen De Villa issued a [Section 22 Class Order](#) giving the Chief Medical Officer of Health the authority to close workplaces with active outbreaks of COVID-19.

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 is high in workplaces where workers are in close proximity and may not be able to wear adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) consistently throughout the workday. With the emergence of variants of concern that are more easily spread between people, we have seen significant increases in the number of cases in Toronto, and in the number and size of workplace outbreaks.

This order has been issued to help stop the spread of COVID-19 in workplaces as quickly as possible. Closure of workplaces can prevent additional workers from becoming infected and taking COVID-19 home to their families and their communities.

This action comes after the Ford government continually refused to act to reduce or place restrictions on workplaces from being considered essential and will help protect the public from the spread of COVID-19. Thank you Dr. Eileen de Villa for having the courage to take decisive action to protect workers in Toronto.

ACORN Support Network: Supports Available for

With lockdowns returning and variant cases increasing, the ACORN Support Network is re-starting to help those who may need grocery delivery or a ride to the nearest vaccination clinic in the coming weeks.

ACORN has very deep roots in the neighbourhoods they organize in, and many of their members are at high risk of developing severe complications from COVID-19.

The ACORN Support Network helps to:

- Engage with people on a regular basis
- Provide grocery delivery and vaccination clinic drop offs
- Give up to date info on the pandemic
- Connects people with relevant services available in their community

If you need extra support during this time - register for the ACORN support network by clicking here to access their form.

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Homelessness in Yorkville

**A community session
on understanding and
engaging**

This session is for you if:

- You are a ground-level business or resident in Yorkville, and you have interactions with people experiencing homelessness
- You are interested in learning more about the realities of local folks experiencing homelessness, and gain confidence around engaging and supporting

Facilitated by The Common Table
community drop-in program at
Church of the Redeemer,
located in Yorkville

sponsored by Bloor-Yorkville BIA



**Thursday
April 29th**

2 pm-3:30pm

on Zoom

**Pre-registration
is needed
Cost = Free**

to register email:
biamember@bloor-yorkville.com

The Common Table offering workshop on 'Homelessness in Yorkville'

On Thursday, April 29 at 2 pm, The Common Table is planning a virtual community session on understanding homelessness in Yorkville. The workshop is sponsored by the Bloor-Yorkville BIA.

Participation is free but registration is required: biamember@bloor-yorkville.com.

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program is open Monday to Friday offers two healthy meals a day, daily supplies and access to health care services and housing referrals, as well as social and creative activities, psychotherapy, support groups and more.

If you would like to volunteer to help with this outreach to the most vulnerable among us or to donate non-perishable food items, please [click here](#). Financial support will be gratefully received through [CanadaHelps](#).



**COLLEGE~
MONTROSE** Children's Place

Do you have children 6 & under?

Join CMCP's Free Virtual Programming

- Family song /literacy circles and other activities
- Child-friendly cooking & nutrition tips
- Support for parents & caregivers



416-845-7223

www.cmcp.ca



United Way
Greater Toronto



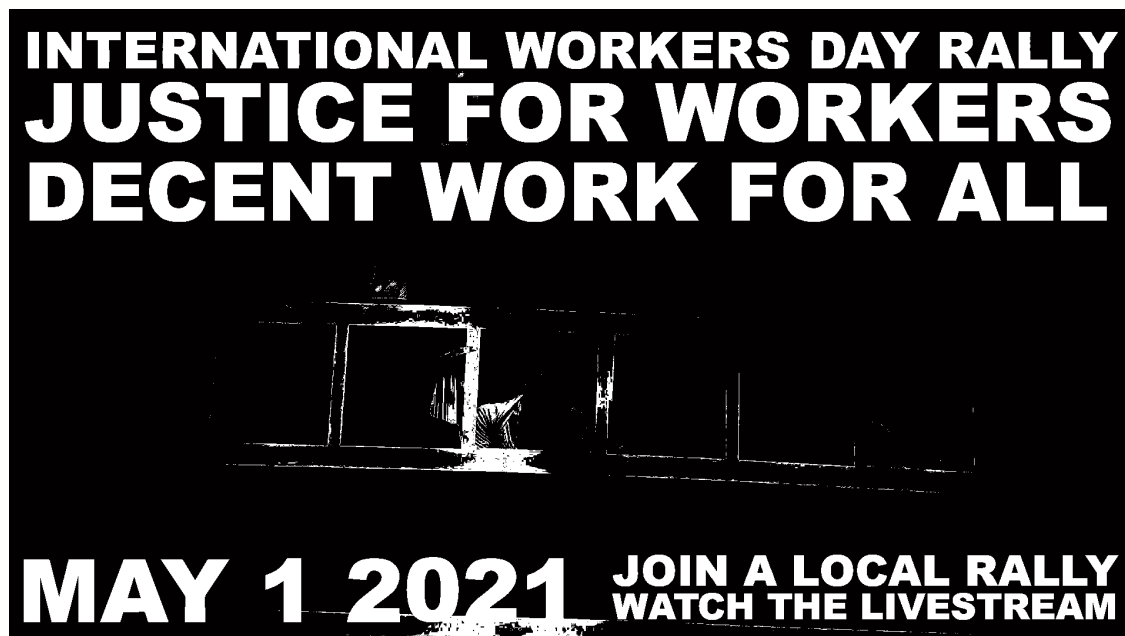
EarlyON
Child and Family Centre

New Programming at the College-Montrose Children's Place

College-Montrose Children's Place provides free programs and resources for children 0-6yrs old, their parents and caregivers. Virtual programs include play-

offered.

Visit cmcp.ca for more information.



Join 15 & Fairness for virtual MAY DAY action, demand decent work for all

On **Saturday, May 1 at 11:00 am**, [15 & Fairness](http://15andfairness.org) is hosting an International Workers Day rally to sound the alarm for paid sick days and decent wages, safe working conditions and good stable jobs for all.

Whether it is workers in part-time employment trying to string together multiple jobs in order to make ends meet and accidentally contracting or spreading COVID-19; or workers without paid sick days who can't stay home from work at the first sign of symptoms because they can't afford to lose pay; or temp agency workers being sent from one job site to another; or parents sending sick kids to school because they cannot afford to lose a day's pay to stay home with them -- a bold agenda for decent work must be central in curbing COVID-19 now and recovering from it.

Register here for the link:

https://www.15andfairness.org/international_workers_day

COVID-19 vaccine information

In response to emerging data on the increased risk of severe illness during pregnancy, all pregnant individuals are now eligible to register for vaccination appointments under the highest risk health conditions in the Phase 2 prioritization guidance starting today.

The provincial [online booking portal](#) was updated to reflect the change.

Mass Vaccination Updates

Individual COVID-19 vaccination appointments for people age 60 and over (and 50 and over in [select postal codes](#)) are now available at the City of Toronto's mass immunization clinics. To register, those who will be 60 (or 50) or older in 2021 and wish to make an appointment – or a trusted person they have delegated to make vaccination appointments on their behalf – [can visit the provincial booking system](#).

The nine City-operated COVID-19 immunization clinics will continue to operate from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days per week. A new block of approximately 231,000 individual appointments in City-operated immunization clinics between May 10 and June 6 will be available soon.

The City has also developed an [FAQ](#) for any other questions you may have.

Vaccines for those 40 and over

As of this week, residents 40 and over can contact a participating pharmacy to try and book an appointment to receive an AstraZeneca vaccine. Please visit [the provincial booking system](#) to learn more about eligibility and availability.

*Despite AstraZeneca now approved by Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunizations (NACI) for individuals 30+, [Ontario is keeping AstraZeneca shots to those aged 40+ for now due to supply issues](#). Stay tuned.

Other Vaccine Opportunities

Ontario Health Teams and hospital mobile clinics and pop-ups will be vaccinating people age 18 and older in select neighbourhoods, identified by their postal codes. Some hospital immunization clinics are also vaccinating younger residents who live in specific priority neighbourhoods and local residents with highest-risk and high-risk medical conditions. Please visit [vaccineto.ca](#) for details on hospital vaccination clinics, eligibility criteria and booking information.

The City is now providing funding to Toronto Ride, iRide and Scarborough Ride to provide assisted transportation to eligible Toronto seniors, adults with disabilities and adults who are immune-compromised, to and from vaccination appointments within the city of Toronto.

To schedule a ride for your vaccination appointment, please consider the following services:

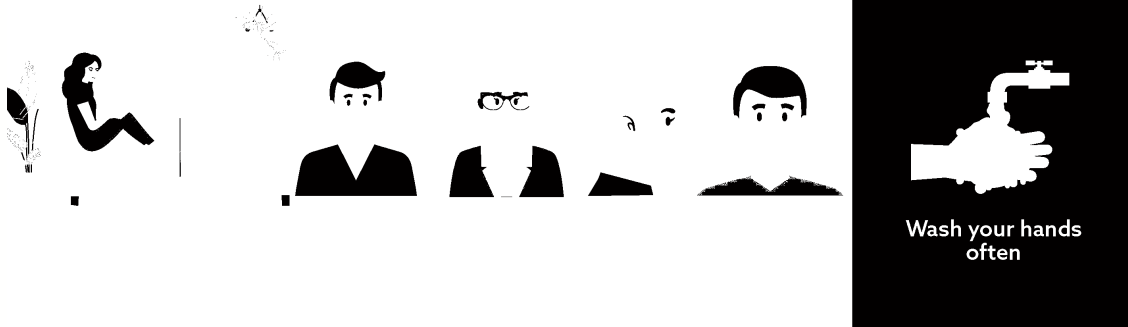
[Toronto Ride](#) - or call 416-481-5250

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For more up-to-date information, visit the [City of Toronto website](#).

4 STEPS FOR SELF-PROTECTION

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

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 downloaded the app and I encourage you to do the same.

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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**

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



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