



What's New in HR Law

Reopening Ontario – Stage 2: The Regional Approach

June 9, 2020

COVID-19 Update

On June 8, 2020 the Ontario Government [announced](#) it will begin implementing Stage 2 of its three stage process for restarting Ontario's economy. Stage 2 takes a regional approach to reopening the economy in that only regions with lower rates of transmission, increased capacity in hospitals, and satisfactory testing levels will move onto Stage 2. Until now, all measures for reopening the economy were applied province-wide.

Three Stages for Reopening

The Ontario Government set out three stages for reopening the province's economy in its reopening plan, [A Framework for Reopening Our Province](#). At each stage Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health will consider:

- 1) The spread and containment of the virus;
- 2) Ontario's health and public health capacity; and
- 3) Ontario's incident tracking capacity.

This update is for general discussion purposes and does not constitute legal advice or an opinion.

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Ontario is currently in Stage 1 of the reopening plan which permitted select workplaces across the province to reopen. More information on which business were permitted to open at Stage 1 of the Ontario Government's reopening plan is provided in our previous [update](#) on May 15, 2020.

On June 12, 2020 at 12:01 a.m. select regions in Ontario will be moving to Stage 2 of the reopening plan, which will involve opening more workplaces, recreational activities, and public services. This approach recognizes that some regions have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic differently than others, and a province-wide approach is no longer effective. Those regions with less risk of community spread can begin easing restrictions and opening additional businesses.

Regions Permitted to Move into Stage 2

On Friday June 12, 2020 at 12:01 a.m. select regions, determined by public health unit boundaries, will be permitted to move into Stage 2 of the Government's reopening plan. The following public health unit regions have been identified by the Chief Medical Officer of Health as being **ready to move into Stage 2:**

- Algoma Public Health
- Brant County Health Unit
- Chatham-Kent Public Health
- Eastern Ontario Health Unit
- Grey Bruce Health Unit
- Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
- Hastings Prince Edward Public Health
- Huron Perth Public Health
- Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health
- Leeds Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit
- Middlesex-London Health Unit
- North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
- Northwestern Health Unit
- Ottawa Public Health
- Peterborough Public Health
- Porcupine Health Unit
- Public Health Sudbury & Districts
- Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services
- Renfrew County and District Health Unit
- Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit
- Southwestern Public Health
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit
- Timiskaming Health Unit
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

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The following public health unit regions will **remain in Stage 1** until otherwise instructed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health:

- Durham Region Health Department
- Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit
- Halton Region Public Health
- Hamilton Public Health Services
- Lambton Public Health
- Niagara Region Public Health
- Peel Public Health
- Toronto Public Health
- Windsor-Essex County Health Unit
- York Region Public Health

The Ontario Government plans to provide weekly updates identifying additional regions that have met the criteria required to transition to Stage 2.

In addition to the businesses already permitted to reopen in Stage 1, the following businesses and services will be allowed to reopen within the regions identified above on June 12, 2020:

- Outdoor dine-in services at restaurants, bars and other establishments, including patios, curbside, parking lots and adjacent properties;
- Select personal and personal care services with the proper health and safety measures in place, including tattoo parlours, barber shops, hair salons and beauty salons;
- Shopping malls under existing restrictions, including food services reopening for take-out and outdoor dining only;
- Tour and guide services, such as bike and walking, bus and boat tours, as well as tasting and tours for wineries, breweries and distilleries;
- Water recreational facilities such as outdoor splash pads and wading pools, and all swimming pools;
- Beach access and additional camping at Ontario Parks;
- Camping at private campgrounds;
- Outdoor-only recreational facilities and training for outdoor team sports, within limits to enable physical distancing;
- Drive-in and drive-through venues for theatres, concerts, animal attractions and cultural appreciation, such as art installations;
- Film and television production activities, with limits to enable physical distancing; and
- Weddings and funerals, with limits on social gatherings to 10 people.

More information on which businesses will be permitted to reopen at Stage 2 can be found on the Government's website [here](#).

As more businesses reopen and people return to work there is a greater need for services such as child care, summer camps, training centres and public transit. The Government has not yet

provided details on the availability of these services but indicated it will be releasing additional information shortly.

Businesses permitted to reopen are encouraged to review the Government's [Resources to Prevent COVID-19 in the Workplace](#) for guidance on how to reopen their establishments safely. As always, everyone, including those in regions moving into Stage 2, are expected to continue following all public health advice including physical distancing, wearing face masks, and washing hands regularly.

Regardless of region, as part of Stage 2 individuals will be permitted to engage in social gatherings of up to a maximum of 10 people. In addition, places of worship across Ontario will be allowed to open with physical distancing in place and attendance at 30% capacity only.

Future Updates

Our firm continues to closely monitor the developments surrounding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and Ontario's plans to reopen the economy. We will continue to provide further updates as new information becomes available.

Need more information?

For more information regarding workplace management amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, contact [Natalie Garvin](#) at 416-408-5512, or your regular lawyer at the firm.



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