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NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Cautiously Lifting Capacity Limits in Select Settings

Public Health and Health Care Indicators Stable or Improving as Vaccination Rates Increase

October 08, 2021

[Ministry of Health](#)

TORONTO — With public health and health care indicators remaining stable or improving, the government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, is cautiously lifting capacity limits in select indoor and outdoor settings where proof of vaccination is required, as well as certain outdoor settings that have a capacity below 20,000. This gradual and incremental approach will continue to help protect people and ensure the province continues to cautiously lift public health measures safely.

“As we continue to see more Ontarians roll up their sleeves with over 22 million doses administered, our government is cautiously lifting capacity limits in select settings where we know proof of vaccination requirements are providing an added layer of protection to Ontarians,” said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. “The fight against COVID-19 is not over and we must all remain vigilant by continuing to follow the public health measures we know work and keep us safe, and receiving your first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine if you have not already done so.”

In keeping with the government’s cautious approach, effective Saturday, October 9, 2021, at 12:01 a.m., capacity limits will be lifted to allow 100 per cent capacity in the following settings:

- Concert venues, theatres and cinemas;
- Spectator areas of facilities for sports and recreational fitness (would not include gyms, personal training);
- Meeting and event spaces (indoor meeting and event spaces will still need to limit capacity to the number that can maintain physical distancing);
- Horseracing tracks, car racing tracks, and other similar venues; and
- Commercial film and television productions with studio audiences.

To date there has been a limited number of outbreaks in these settings. Other public health and workplace safety measures continue to remain in effect for these settings. This can include wearing face coverings, screening and the collecting of patron information to support contact tracing. In settings where capacity limits have been lifted, the requirement for individuals to maintain two metres of physical distancing are being removed, with limited exceptions. In addition, proof of vaccination will continue to be required in outdoor settings where the normal maximum capacity is 20,000 people or more to help keep these venues safe for patrons.

Since the proof of vaccination requirement went into effect, the province has reached two key milestones in its COVID-19 response, with more than 86.8 per cent of individuals aged 12 and over vaccinated with at least a first dose and more than 81.9 per cent with two doses. The majority of new cases continue to be among the unvaccinated.

“I am thankful for the continued efforts of Ontarians getting vaccinated and following public health measures and advice as we have continued to cautiously and gradually reopen the province. Our public health and health care indicators are continuing to trend in the right direction, and we are able to lift additional restrictions,” said Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health. “However, now is not the time to let our guard down. We must all continue doing our part and continue strictly following the measures that remain in place and get as many people as we can fully vaccinated, especially as we enter the holiday season.”

Capacity limits will continue to remain in effect in all other remaining

settings at this time. The Chief Medical Officer of Health and the government will continue to review data and trends in key public health and health care indicators to determine the necessary and appropriate measures to protect the health and safety of Ontarians.

Quick Facts

- As a result of Ontario's cautious approach, Ontario continues to report one of the lowest rates of active cases in the country, well below the national average, and the province has trended towards the best-case scenario projected by the Ontario COVID-19 [Science Advisory Table](#).
- On [September 25, 2021](#), the government, based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, cautiously eased [capacity limits](#) for select indoor and outdoor settings where proof of vaccination is required.
- As of [September 22, 2021](#), Ontarians are required to be fully vaccinated (two doses plus 14 days) with proof of vaccination along with ID to access certain public settings and facilities.
- Effective October 13, 2021 at 12:01 a.m., proof of vaccination or an [eligible exemption](#) will also be required to attend a social gathering associated with a wedding service, rite or ceremony or a social gathering associated with a funeral service, rite or ceremony in a meeting or event space. Proof of a negative antigen [COVID-19 test](#) within the previous 48 hours will no longer be permitted as an alternative to proof of vaccination.
- Local medical officers of health have the ability to issue Section 22 orders under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, and municipalities may enact by-laws, to target specific transmission risks in the community.
- Anyone with symptoms or who is a known close contact of someone with COVID-19, and other groups that meet provincial testing eligibility criteria, should make an appointment at an assessment centre, participating pharmacy or specimen collection centre. Please visit [Ontario.ca/covidtest](#) to find a testing location and for eligibility criteria to be tested.

Additional Resources

- [Ontario Cautiously Easing Capacity Limits in Select Settings Where Proof of Vaccination is Required](#)
- [Ontario Releasing Guidance to Support Proof of Vaccination Policy](#)
- [Ontario to Require Proof of Vaccination in Select Settings](#)
- [Using your Vaccination Receipt: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Find out how to celebrate holidays and festivals [safely](#) this fall.
- [Questions and Answers](#) document to help clarify requirements under Ontario Regulation 364/20 (under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020) related to proof of vaccination against COVID-19.
- Businesses may refer to the following [poster](#) to provide guidance for their patrons on requirements for entry.
- Those who have questions about COVID-19 vaccines and would like to speak to an experienced agent or health specialist are encouraged to call the Provincial Vaccine Confidence Line that can be accessed through the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre: 1-833-943-3900 (TTY for people who are deaf, hearing-impaired or speech-impaired: 1-866-797-0007). The Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre is available in more than 300 languages, seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- For resources in multiple languages to help local communication efforts in responding to COVID-19, visit Ontario's [COVID-19 communication resources webpage](#).
- Visit Ontario's [website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect the people of Ontario from COVID-19.

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