

Released November 17th, 2020

NEW COVID-19 Response Framework for Ontario

Mandated public health and workplace safety measures for each region in Ontario based on risk category

On Friday, November 13th, the Government of Ontario updated the newly implemented colour-coded COVID-19 Response Framework that came into effect on November 7th, 2020. The Framework mandates different public health and workplace safety measures for each region in Ontario based on the risk category that the region falls into. Regions are based on public health unit boundaries.

The Framework introduced five ‘zones’ in which a region can be categorized. A region’s determined zone will be assessed on a two-week basis; however, movement between zones can happen sooner if it is determined that a region has rapidly worsening trends that require stricter rules. The zones and safety measures are as follows:

- **Health and Safety Measures That Apply to ALL Zones**
 - Requirement for workplace COVID-19 screening
 - Face coverings required in indoor workplaces, indoor public spaces, with [limited exemptions](#)
 - Where patrons without face coverings are within two meters of workers, workers must use additional protections such as eye protection
 - When working in an area that allows employees to maintain a distance of at least 2 meters from anyone else while indoors, a face covering is not required, but is recommended
 - Workplaces must develop and implement a communication/public education plan (highlighting risk)
 - Physical distancing must be maintained
 - Non-essential travel from areas of high-transmission to areas of low transmission should be avoided
- **Green Zone – Prevent (Standard Measures)**
 - Restrictions reflect broadest allowance of activities in Stage 3
 - Limit for events and social gatherings: 10 people indoors | 25 people outdoors
 - Limit for organized public events and gatherings: 50 people indoors | 100 people outdoors
- **Yellow Zone – Protect (Strengthened Measures)**
 - Measures from previous levels and enhanced targeted enforcement, fines and safety plan must be made available upon request
 - Limit for events and social gatherings: 10 people indoors | 25 people outdoors
 - Limit for organized public events and gatherings: 50 people indoors | 100 people outdoors
- **Orange Zone – Restrict (Intermediate Measures)**
 - Measures from previous levels and enhanced measures, restrictions and enforcement, avoiding any closures
 - Limit for events and social gatherings: 10 people indoors | 25 people outdoors
 - Limit for organized public events and gatherings: 50 people indoors | 100 people outdoors
- **Red Zone – Control (Stringent Measures)**
 - Measures from previous levels and broader-scale measures and restrictions across multiple sectors to control transmission (return to modified Stage 2)
 - Limit for all gatherings, social gatherings and organized public events: 10 people indoors | 25 people outdoors
 - Restrict close contacts to household and essential supports as much as possible
 - Although many businesses are permitted to remain open under the Control zone with enhanced safety measures in place, it is up to individual businesses if they wish to remain open or not
- **Grey Zone – Lockdown (Maximum Measures)**
 - Widescale measures and restrictions, including closures, to halt or interrupt transmission (modified Stage 1 or pre-Stage 1)
 - Consider a declaration of emergency

For employers located in the **City of Toronto**, the **Region of Peel** and **York and Halton Regions** it is critically important to note that these regions have implemented additional enforcement measures on top of the Red Zone Control measures in the province-wide COVID-19 Response Framework.

Released November 17th, 2020

Workplaces in the **Region of Peel, York Region** and **Halton Region** must:

- Prohibit non-essential visitors from attending at their facilities
- Enable, as possible, work from home options for employees

Workplaces in the **City of Toronto** must:

- Conduct regular reviews of their HVAC systems to ensure they are functioning and are in good working order
- Implement appropriate infection prevention and control measures in all areas accessible to the public, including washrooms, check-out counters, concession stands, and other high-touch surfaces
- Establish appropriate work from home procedures, and the implementation of work from home wherever possible
- Appoint a compliance officer to ensure implementation of your safety plan, and all required and recommended occupational health and safety and infection prevention and control measures
- Establish policies prohibiting the consumption of food or drink by members of the public in non-food and drink establishments (where masks are required)

To find the zone that your region has been placed in and the corresponding restrictions and measures being enforced under each zone, visit <https://www.ontario.ca>.

If you require assistance to ensure that your business is complying with your region's COVID-19 measures and restrictions, contact a member of our team today to discuss your options!

HVAC systems

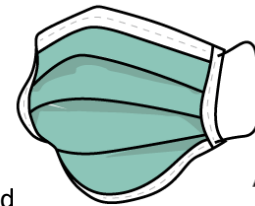
All workplaces should conduct regular reviews of their HVAC systems to ensure they are functioning and are in good working order. This is a best practice that all workplaces, no matter the region, should be performing. Employers should also consider purchasing portable HEPA filter units for individual offices or common areas i.e. boardrooms or lunchrooms or purchasing HEPA furnace filters. Consideration should also be given to allowing fresh air indoors as much as possible as per the health and safety guidelines.

Ensure all of your employees' face masks are fitting properly!

Both the employee and employer have OHSA responsibilities as it relates to PPE. Everyone, who does not have a medical or other exemption, is required to wear a medical, or a non-medical, face mask as a prevention measure against COVID-19 in the workplace. When using a non-medical face mask or covering, it is very important that it conforms to Public Health's guidance by:

- Fitting securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- Maintaining its shape after washing and drying
- Being made of at least two layers of tightly woven material (such as cotton or linen)
- Being large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping

Source: www.ontario.ca



AODA Report Deadline Extended

The deadline to submit the accessibility compliance report has been extended to **June 30, 2021**.

This applies to private sector organizations subject to the AODA, that have 20 or more employees in Ontario.

Details on completing and filing an accessibility compliance report can be found [here](#).

Source: www.accessibilitycanada.ca

Register Today

Back by Popular Demand!
HR Performance & Results presents...
Zoom Webinar on:

COVID-19 Positive, Contact Tracing & the Return to Work Process

Date: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 | **Time:** 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Price: \$25.00 (+HST) | HRPAR Business Package Clients – Free!

Register: <https://hrpar.ca/events-calendar/>

Your employee has tested positive for COVID-19...now what?

This session will provide participants with effective strategies to implement contact tracing in your workplace, employer reporting obligations for positive cases of COVID-19 and return to work options that will ensure your employees can safely return to work.