

Peel Response to Provincial COVID-19 New Grey-Lockdown Measures

Questions and Answers

November 21, 2020

1. When do the new measures come into effect?

Effective Monday November 23, 2020 at 12:01 a.m., the Ontario government has placed Peel Public Health into the Grey-Lockdown level of restrictions. A new [COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open – Lockdown Measures](#) (Nov. 20, 2020) document is available.

2. How long do they last for?

The measures last for a minimum of 28 days, or two COVID-19 incubation periods, at which time, the government will assess the impact of public health measures to determine if the public health unit should stay where they are or be moved to a different level. Peel Public Health's Medical Officer of Health continues to communicate regularly with the Ministry of Health on local context and conditions to help inform the classification of their public health unit region.

3. Why are the Grey-Lockdown levels required?

Though difficult, Peel Public Health supports this necessary decision to curb further spread in Peel. This action is being taken to help stop the spread of COVID-19, while prioritizing the continued opening of schools, child care centres and other key services, as much as possible.

Due to the latest Peel data showing worsening trends in key indicators, despite having a range of public health measures in place, Peel Public Health recommended to the province to take stricter measures to protect people in Peel.

As we have seen around the world, heavy restrictions are a difficult but necessary step to stop the spread.

4. What is affected by the Grey-Lockdown measures?

The Grey-Lockdown measures prioritize keeping essential services open, as much as possible. Measures in the Grey-Lockdown category include, but are not limited to:

- Schools, before and after school programs, and child care will remain open;
- Post-secondary schools open for virtual learning with some limited exceptions for training that can only be provided in-person, such as clinical training or training related to a trade;
- No indoor organized public events or social gatherings except with members of the same household. Individuals who live alone, including seniors, may consider having exclusive, close contact with one other person;
- Outdoor organized public events or social gatherings limited to a maximum of 10 people;

- Wedding services, funeral services and religious services, rites or ceremonies where physical distancing can be maintained can have up to 10 people indoors or 10 people outdoors;
- Retail permitted to be open for curbside pick-up or delivery only, with certain exceptions such as for supermarkets, grocery stores, pharmacies, hardware stores, discount and big box retailers selling groceries, beer, wine and liquor stores, safety supply stores, and convenience stores, which will be allowed to operate at 50 per cent capacity;
- Restaurants, bars, and food and drink establishments will only be able to provide takeout, drive-through and delivery. Indoor and outdoor dining services are prohibited;
- Personal care services closed;
- Casinos, bingo halls and other gaming establishments closed; and
- Indoor sports and recreational facilities, including pools, closed with limited exceptions.

5. What are the criteria used to move a local health unit from one tier to another?

Key indicators give a picture of the impact of the pandemic on our community and healthcare capacity, in order to assess future risk. Criteria include:

- Epidemiological indicators such as the number and rate of COVID-19 cases and test positivity;
- Health system capacity indicators including hospital and Intensive Care Unit capacity, access to ventilators and ongoing availability of personal protective equipment;
- Public health sector capacity, including the number of COVID-19 cases and contacts being reached by local public health officials within one day; and
- Ongoing testing of suspected COVID-19 cases, especially of vulnerable populations, to detect new outbreaks quickly.

6. Can I travel from one area in Ontario to another with a different reopening status?

Stay home, and please do not travel between areas in Ontario unless for essentials. Reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 in communities. Protect your loved ones.

7. What can I do if I live alone? Staying at home is very isolating.

Under Grey-Lockdown measures, do not gather with others except with people you live with. For individuals who live alone, enjoy exclusive close contact with another person or household.

8. Can I attend my place of worship?

Within the new Grey-Lockdown measures, places of worship should hold virtual services as much as possible. Wedding services, funeral services and religious services, rites or ceremonies where physical distancing can be maintained can have up to 10 people indoors or 10 people outdoors.

9. Are there any penalties if I don't follow the public health measures?

To further support public health regions, the province is making additional enforcement mechanisms available to local medical officers of health who have applied additional measures based on their local conditions and needs.

Non-compliance to COVID-19 class orders issued by the Medical Officer of Health will result in a ticket of a set fine of \$750, under the amended Ontario Regulation 950 under the Provincial Offences Act.

10. What do residents need to know about shopping in Peel?

In-person shopping is permitted as follows:

- supermarkets, grocery stores and convenience stores
- hardware stores
- other retailers selling groceries
- beer, wine and liquor stores
- pharmacies and safety supply stores

There will be 50% capacity limits in these stores with requirements to maintain 2 metres distance while standing in line and flow management.

Malls are open with:

- stores permitted to be open for pick-up or delivery only (in-person shopping is not permitted)
- full access to businesses and organizations permitted to be open (ex. Pharmacies and dental offices)
- food court open for take out only

Retail in-person shopping is not permitted except for curbside pick-up or delivery only.

All residents are encouraged to support local business. Take advantage of delivery, takeout and curbside pick-up from your favourite local shops, especially as we head into the holiday season.

11. Are there any relief subsidies for businesses in Grey-Lockdown?

If you're a business in Peel, take advantage of the provincial funding for temporary property tax and energy cost rebate grants from the province. The rebates will cover the length of time that a business is required to temporarily close or significantly restrict services due to Grey-Lockdown status.

Most businesses can expect to receive their rebate payments within a few weeks of submitting a complete application. A detailed list of eligible businesses, as well as instructions for applying, can be found online: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/businesses-get-help-covid-19-costs>

Ontario will work with the federal government to ensure these supports for businesses in COVID-19 hotspots are available by integrating these rebates with the federal Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS) program.

The Ontario government is providing \$600 million in relief to support eligible businesses required to close or significantly restrict services due to enhanced public health measures, doubling its initial commitment of \$300 million made in the 2020 Ontario Budget.

12. How are long-term care homes affected by the Grey-Lockdown?

If you're visiting a loved one in a long-term care home, take note of visitor policies under the Lockdown measures to include only essential visitors, including up to one caregiver per resident. More info:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-long-term-care-homes-in-areas-visitor-restrictions>

To further protect the health and safety of those in long-term care homes in Grey-Lockdown, staff, essential caregivers and support workers who provide direct care to residents will be tested for COVID-19 on a weekly basis. In addition, support workers will need to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test result in the past week and verbally attest that they have not subsequently tested positive.

13. Are health care services like physiotherapy impacted?

All regulated health professional services can remain open and must follow public health guidance for the service they provide.

14. Are there impacts to public transit?

Transit is an essential need for people to get to work and school. There are no additional restrictions for transit at this time.

15. Where is more detailed information available?

Visit the web page [COVID-19 response framework: keeping Ontario safe and open](#) for helpful links to the new Framework and other important details.

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New regulations are anticipated soon.