



City of Sarnia

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: January 12, 2021 RELEASE DATE: Immediate
FROM: City of Sarnia Primary Control Group
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Update

The Sarnia Primary Control Group (SPCG) met electronically today with Lambton Public Health (LPH), Lambton County, Bluewater Health, and Point Edward regarding developments related to COVID-19.

The group received an update from Lambton County's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Ranade, regarding the COVID-19 situation in Sarnia-Lambton and discussed the immunization process for COVID-19 vaccines locally.

LPH has noted that as vaccine supply increases, the local immunization campaign will expand accordingly. Timelines are approximate and subject to vaccine supply availability. Updates and more specifics will be added as information becomes available.

LPH's Phase 1 of the plan is projected to start early February and will be to vaccinate the most vulnerable group, the residents and staff of Long Term Care and Retirement Homes. Lambton Public Health staff are actively working with these groups to ensure that residents and staff are ready to receive the vaccine.

Long Term Care Homes are currently gathering consents, preparing lists of staff and residents and providing dates and times so that as soon as we know when vaccine will arrive, a schedule will be in place to bring the vaccine to the Long Term Care and Retirement Homes.

Additional priority groups that will follow vaccination of Long Term Care and Retirement Homes.

As vaccine supply increases at the later phases the general population will have access through multiple locations, multiple immunizers including primary care providers and pharmacists, etc.

Please note that LPH is not maintaining a waiting list for the vaccine. Vaccination is part of the solution to reduce community transmission. It is important to continue to follow public health advice and take everyday actions to help stop the spread of the virus.

For more information visit: <https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccines/>

Provincial Update:

In response to a doubling in COVID-19 cases over the past two weeks, the real and looming threat of the collapse of the province's hospital system and alarming risks posed to long-term care homes as a result of high COVID-19 transmission rates, the Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts, is immediately declaring a second provincial emergency under s 7.0.1 (1) of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMPCA).

Additional information is available online, and further details are provided below. <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/59922/ontario-declares-second-provincial-emergency-to-address-covid-19-crisis-and-save-lives>

Effective Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 12:01 a.m., the government is issuing a stay-at-home order requiring everyone to remain at home with exceptions for essential purposes, such as going to the grocery store or pharmacy, accessing health care services, for exercise or for essential work.

This order and other new and existing public health restrictions are aimed at limiting people's mobility and reducing the number of daily contacts with those outside an immediate household. In addition to limiting outings to essential trips, all businesses must ensure that any employee who can work from home, does work from home.

These new public health measures will help stop the spread of COVID-19 by reducing concerning levels of mobility as the province continues its vaccine rollout and ramps up to mass vaccination when the federal government is able to provide the necessary supply to do so.

The following additional public health measures will come into effect Thursday, January 14, 2021, including the provincial declaration of

emergency under the EMCPA, orders under that Act, and amendments to regulations under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020*:

- Outdoor organized public gatherings and social gatherings are further restricted to a limit of five people with limited exceptions. This is consistent with the rules during the lockdown during the first wave of COVID-19 in spring 2020 and will allow individuals and families to enjoy time outdoors safely.
- Individuals are required to wear a mask or face covering in the indoor areas of businesses or organizations that are open. Wearing a mask or face covering is now recommended outdoors when you can't physically distance more than two metres.
- All non-essential retail stores, including hardware stores, alcohol retailers, and those offering curbside pickup or delivery, must open no earlier than 7 a.m. and close no later than 8 p.m. The restricted hours of operation do not apply to stores that primarily sell food, pharmacies, gas stations, convenience stores, and restaurants for takeout or delivery.
- Non-essential construction is further restricted, including below-grade construction, exempting survey.

New Enforcement Measures

Under the declaration of a provincial emergency, the province will provide authority to all enforcement and provincial offences officers, including the Ontario Provincial Police, local police forces, bylaw officers, and provincial workplace inspectors to issue tickets to individuals who do not comply with the stay-at-home-order, or those not wearing a mask or face covering indoors as well as retail operators and companies who do not enforce. Those who decide not to abide by orders will be subject to set fines and/or prosecution under both the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act*, (ROA) and EMCPA.

In addition, all enforcement personnel will have the authority to temporarily close a premise and disperse individuals who are in contravention of an order and will be able to disperse people who are gathering, regardless whether a premise has been closed or remains open such as a park or house.

Schools and Child Care Centres

By January 20, 2021, the Chief Medical Officer of Health will advise the Ministry of Education on which public health units (PHUs) will be permitted to

resume in-person instruction, based on the most up-to-date data and modelling. Before- and after-school programs can be offered when in-person instruction resumes. Schools in northern PHUs will continue to remain open.

To continue to keep students, staff and communities safe, the following new health and safety measures will be put in place for in-person learning:

- Masking for Grade 1-3 and requirements for mask wearing outdoors;
- Enhanced screening protocols; and
- Expanded targeted testing.

Workplace Safety

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development is taking additional steps to protect workers with the launch of the "Stay Safe All Day" campaign, focusing workplace inspections in areas of high transmission, including break rooms, and providing new educational materials to employers to promote safe behaviour before, during and after work.

Evidence gathered from COVID-19 related workplace inspections to date shows the vast majority of employers and workers are following COVID-19 safety requirements when working. However, when in a break room, a vehicle or not on the clock, there is a tendency to forget about the importance of wearing masks, maintaining physical distance and hand hygiene.

Local Update

City Hall and other facilities remain closed to the public; however, services are available online, over the phone and by email during business hours: <https://www.sarnia.ca/comment/>.

We encourage the community to get outdoors and enjoy the beautiful parks and trails the City has to offer, however it remains imperative that citizens do not treat these spaces as destinations and avoid congregating or gatherings.

Sarnia Transit bus routes are in full operation. We encourage riders to use services for essential trips only, requiring passengers to wear face coverings.

To find the right supports, visit [COVID-19: Support for People](#), which has information about the many available and free mental health services and supports.

Learn more about [COVID-19 symptoms](#), options to [get tested](#), and details about current case counts, outbreaks and trends from the COVID-19 status dashboard and surveillance reports at [LambtonPublicHealth.ca](#).

For more information on COVID-19, visit:

- City of Sarnia website: <https://www.sarnia.ca/covid-19/>
- Facility closures and a list of financial supports and resources are listed on the Lambton County website: <https://www.lambtononline.ca/en/resident-services/covid-19.aspx>
- Lambton Public Health website, including local COVID-19 Testing Assessment Centres: <https://lambtonpublichealth.ca> and [COVID-19 Case Map](#)
- Public Health Ontario website: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/>
- Province of Ontario website: www.ontario.ca/coronavirus
- Visit Ontario's COVID-19 vaccine [web page](#) to view the latest provincial data and information on COVID-19 vaccines.
- Government of Canada website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

As of 11:30 a.m. on January 12 the SPCG can report that:

Summary of COVID-19 cases in Lambton County

Confirmed Cases	1,394
Resolved Cases	1,118
Deaths	28
Active Cases	248
Current Active Outbreaks	15
Incidence Rate per 100,000 - Week of Dec 27-Jan 2, 2021	231

By-Law Enforcement COVID-19 Reporting System

Total number of complaints and inquiries received	1,505
Total number of emails received	1,261
Total number of phone calls received	244
Total number of fines issued	5

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For further information, please contact:

City of Sarnia, Customer Service

customerservice@sarnia.ca or 519-332-0330 Ext. 3131