

Ontario Announces Additional Workplaces that Can Reopen

Date : May 15, 2020

On March 17, 2020, the Ontario government declared a provincial state of emergency under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA), which provides the Lieutenant Governor with the power to make temporary emergency orders believed to be necessary to prevent, reduce or mitigate serious harm to persons or property in times of declared emergency. On May 12, 2020, the state of emergency was extended until June 2, 2020.

The government announced on May 14, 2020 that certain aspects of the mandatory closures will soon be eased, pursuant to its "[Framework for Reopening our Province](#)" (see our previous [Focus Alert](#) on this topic).

Mandatory Closures

As Focus readers may recall, the following mandatory closures were instituted pursuant to the temporary emergency orders:

- Mandatory closure of establishments providing indoor recreational programs, public libraries, private schools, certain childcare centres, bars and restaurants (as it relates to dine-in service only), theaters and cinemas, as well as concert venues.
- Mandatory closure of all places of non-essential businesses.
- Mandatory closure of all outdoor recreational amenities, including playgrounds, sports facilities and multi-use fields, off-leash dog parks, portions of parks and recreational areas containing fitness equipment, as well as picnic sites, benches and shelters in park and recreational areas.
- Mandatory closure of public lands for recreational camping.

Ontario's "First Stage of Reopening"

Ontario's first stage of reopening is set to begin on Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at 12:01 a.m. and will permit the following services and businesses to reopen:

- Retail services that are not in shopping malls and have separate street-front entrances with measures in place that can enable physical distancing, such as limiting the number of customers in the store at any one time and booking appointments beforehand or on the spot.

- Seasonal businesses and recreational activities for individual or single competitors, including training and sport competitions conducted by a recognized national or provincial sport organization. This includes indoor and outdoor non-team sport competitions that can be played while maintaining physical distancing and without spectators, such as tennis, track and field and horse racing.
- Animal services, specifically pet care services, such as grooming and training, and regular veterinary appointments.
- Indoor and outdoor household services that can follow public health guidelines, such as housekeepers, cooks, cleaning and maintenance.
- Lifting essential workplace limits on construction.
- Allowing certain health and medical services to resume, such as in-person counselling and scheduled surgeries based on the ability to meet pre-specified conditions as outlined in *A Measured Approach to Planning for Surgeries and Procedures During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, as well as resuming professional services such as shifting Children's Treatment Centres from virtual to in-person.

Additional Seasonal Services and Activities

Additionally, as soon as 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, May 16, 2020, the following services and activities will be permitted:

- Golf courses will be able to open, with clubhouses open only for washrooms and restaurants open only for take-out.
- Marinas, boat clubs and public boat launches may open for recreational use.
- Private parks and campgrounds may open to enable preparation for the season and to allow access for trailers and recreational vehicles whose owners have a full season contract.
- Businesses that board animals, such as stables, may allow boarders to visit, care for or ride their animal.

In Our View

During the continuing declared state of emergency, the Ontario government is gradually lifting some aspects of its emergency orders. Emond Harnden will continue to monitor and report on these developments as they happen. Consider attending our [webinar next week](#) on return to work issues during the pandemic for a more detailed overview of the many implications to follow. Register [here](#).

For further information or advice on your rights and obligations as an employer when dealing with COVID-19 and similar issues, please contact [Paul Lalonde](mailto:Paul.Lalonde@emondharnden.com) at [613-940-2759](tel:613-940-2759), [Sébastien Huard](mailto:Sebastien.Huard@emondharnden.com) at [613-940-2744](tel:613-940-2744), [J.D. Sharp](mailto:JD.Sharp@emondharnden.com) at [613-940-2739](tel:613-940-2739), [Colleen Dunlop](mailto:Colleen.Dunlop@emondharnden.com) at [613-940-2734](tel:613-940-2734), [Jennifer Birrell](mailto:Jennifer.Birrell@emondharnden.com) at [613-940-2740](tel:613-940-2740).