

May 19, 2021

The Hon. Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Re: Recommendations for Ontario's Reopening Plan

Dear Premier,

On behalf of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and our 60,000 members, thank you for your continued leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As vaccinations continue to roll out across Ontario, a transparent and predictable plan to gradually return to a more normal life would instill public confidence while protecting the physical, mental, and economic health of Ontarians.

The OCC recently joined the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, along with several other business associations, and [wrote to the Prime Minister](#) urging him to work closely with Premiers to develop a clear and consistent pan-Canadian approach to reopening our communities, schools, and businesses. The Ontario Chamber Network also passed a resolution last month calling on the Province to establish a Safe Operating Framework.

Principles for a safe and transparent reopening include:

- **A clear and transparent roadmap to re-opening with evidence-based metrics.** Businesses would like to see transparent thresholds for a measured re-opening of Ontario's economy. Other jurisdictions like Saskatchewan and Quebec released plans clearly linking the lifting of restrictions to vaccination timelines. How will public health measures adapt when a sizable majority of Ontarians will have received their first vaccine dose? Ontario's Chief Medical Officer said he would like to see the number of new daily COVID-19 cases "well below" 1,000 before easing public health restrictions. Will this be a threshold for Ontario's reopening?
- **Safe and equitable operating guidelines.** The framework should advise business owners on operating guidelines for their establishment to protect their staff and clients from COVID-19 exposure. Safety standards should apply equitably to all businesses regardless of products or establishment size.

- **Rapid testing to accompany vaccination deployment.** Rapid testing is a critically important tool to keep workplaces as safe as possible during the pandemic as we wait for vaccinations to roll out. It will be an essential part of curbing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities so that we can accelerate the path to economic recovery.
- **Smart travel policies.** Ontarians also want to know when it will be safe to travel again to see friends and loved ones. To avoid rising levels of confusion and frustration, the Ontario government should work with the federal government to collaborate with officials in the United States and other countries to set benchmarks that would enable the easing of border restrictions and travel quarantines.

As business and community leaders we stand ready to work with you to ensure a safe, transparent, and sustainable re-opening that avoids another spike in cases and prolonged public health restrictions.

We would be happy to discuss this issue further and look forward to continuing to work with you and your government on solutions that support the health of Ontarians and our economy.

Sincerely,



Rocco Rossi
President and CEO
Ontario Chamber of Commerce

CC: Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
Hon. Victor Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Hon. Prabmeet Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction