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www.timiskaminghu.com

December 18, 2020

Dear business owner/operator,

I am writing to inform you that Timiskaming will be moving to the [“Yellow - Protect”](#) level of Ontario’s COVID-19 Response Framework. This change will be effective on **Monday December 21, 2020**. This means that stronger protections will soon be in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. This decision was not made lightly and was made by the government of Ontario in consultation with the Timiskaming Health Unit. Factors that were considered include the level of virus circulating within our community, the capacity of our hospitals and other healthcare partners, and the ability of public health to properly follow-up with cases of COVID-19 and their contacts in a timely manner.

While all businesses are required to read the [framework](#) and its accompanying [regulation](#) in order to determine what actions they must take to remain open, I would like to highlight certain sections.

Safety Plans

Restaurants, bars, sport and fitness facilities, meeting and event spaces, shopping malls, personal care services (salons, barbers, tattoo parlors, etc.), bingo halls, gaming establishments, cinemas, and performing arts faculties are now required to have a safety plan. A template for this plan, and other resources to protect workplaces, can be found on the [province’s website](#). You must be prepared to present this plan upon request. If your business does not yet require a safety plan, we still encourage you to be proactive in protecting your employees by developing one.

Lower Music Volumes

Across multiple sectors, the volume of music must now be low enough that a normal conversation is possible. Yelling and speaking loudly can help transmit COVID-19 over longer distances, so it is necessary to keep conversations to a normal level.

Bars and Restaurants

There is now a strict limit of 6 patrons per table and contact information must be collected for every seated patron, even if they are from the same household. Additionally, all establishments must be closed between 12 am and 5 am. Liquor may only be sold between 9 am and 11 pm.

Sport and Fitness Facilities

Spacing between patrons must now be increased to 3 meters. Fitness classes are now capped at 10 patrons indoors and 25 patrons outdoors. Contact information must be collected for everyone who enters the facility. Additionally, these facilities must now be accessible by reservation only.

Nursing and Retirement Homes

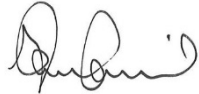
Under [Directive #3](#) there are now additional restrictions on the admission of new residents and transferring residents between facilities.

The next level in the provincial framework, “Orange – Restrict,” comes with additional restrictions.

The keys to defeating this virus have not changed. Avoid non-essential travel, limit contact with people outside your immediate household, wear a mask, and isolate while sick. I encourage everyone who has possible symptoms of COVID-19, even mild ones, to stay home, check the [Provincial Assessment Tool](#) and follow the instructions, which may include testing. The recommendations for children and adults are different. Testing is readily available now at our [Assessment Centres](#) in Kirkland Lake, Englehart, Temiskaming Shores, and Temagami. If you can't get to an Assessment Centre, please call the Health Unit. Test results are available much sooner than they were earlier in the pandemic and are easily obtained through the [provincial lab portal](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the Timiskaming Health Unit at 1-866-747-4305.

Sincerely,



Dr. Glenn Corneil
Acting Medical Officer of Health/CEO