

Ontario moves into 'shutdown' mode

The Ontario government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts, is imposing a provincewide emergency brake as a result of an alarming surge in case numbers and COVID-19 hospitalizations across the province. The provincewide emergency brake will be effective Saturday, April 3, at 12:01 a.m. and the government intends to keep this in place for at least four weeks. Measures include, but are not limited to: Prohibiting indoor organized public events and social gatherings and limiting the capacity for outdoor organized public events or social gatherings to a 5-person maximum, except for gatherings with members of the same household (the people you live with) or gatherings of members of one household and one other person from another household who lives alone. Restricting in-person shopping in all retail settings, including a 50 per cent capacity limit for supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience stores, indoor farmers' markets, other stores that primarily sell food and pharmacies, and 25 per cent for all other retail including big box stores, along with other public health and workplace safety measures. Prohibiting personal care services. Prohibiting indoor and outdoor dining. Restaurants, bars and other food or drink establishments will be permitted to operate by take-out, drive-through, and delivery only. Prohibiting the use of facilities for indoor or outdoor sports and recreational fitness (e.g., gyms) with very limited exceptions. Requiring day camps to close. Limiting capacity at weddings, funerals, and religious services, rites or ceremonies to 15 per cent occupancy per room indoors, and to the number of individuals that can maintain two metres of physical distance outdoors. This does not include social gatherings associated with these services such as receptions, which are not permitted indoors and are limited to five people outdoors.