

Declaration of Emergency Extended While Ontario Gradually Reopens the Economy

New legislation will allow for more virtual or remote transactions during COVID-19

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is extending the Declaration of Emergency under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*. This additional time will ensure the province has the necessary tools and health care capacity to contain COVID-19, while gradually reopening businesses, services, and amenities safely.

Passed during a special sitting of the Ontario Legislature today, the Declaration of Emergency has been extended until June 2. The declaration will allow Ontario to continue to enforce current emergency orders, such as restricting retirement and long-term care home employees from working in more than one facility and prohibiting events and gatherings of more than five people. Since the emergency was first declared on March 17, the government has taken over 150 actions to help protect individuals, families, and businesses from the impacts of COVID-19.

A full list of emergency orders can be found on [the e-Laws website](#), under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

"We are making steady progress to flatten the curve and get more people back to work safely, including our legislators, but we still have far to go in defeating COVID-19," said Premier Ford.

"Extending the declaration of emergency will allow us to continue to take action to protect Ontarians, while carefully and cautiously reopening more parts of our economy."

The House also passed the *COVID-19 Response and Reforms to Modernize Ontario Act, 2020*, which will help people conduct business while practising physical distancing by:

- Providing authority to address in-person attendance rules for school board trustees' meetings in regulation. This would provide the flexibility in certain emergency situations to allow trustees to meet virtually during school closures;
- Enabling corporations to call and hold meetings virtually, as applicable, and extending the time period in which annual meetings must be held in specific circumstances;
- Allowing designations of a beneficiary to be provided electronically for Retirement Savings Plans, Retirement Income Funds, Locked-in Retirement Accounts, Life Income Funds and Tax-Free Savings Accounts;
- Allowing electronic filing of business registration documents, and the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services to accept copies of business registration documents and e-signatures;
- Allowing for regulations to set out the parameters for remotely commissioning or notarizing a document;

- Extending, on a one-time basis for 2020, the legislated four-year period during which a Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) election is mandated to be held to give more time to support remote voting.

The Expenditure Estimates for the 2020-21 fiscal year were also tabled in the Legislature. This includes program spending to support the \$17 billion announced as part of *Ontario's Action Plan 2020: Responding to COVID-19* to ensure the province's health care system, communities, and economy are better positioned to weather challenges posed by the pandemic.

"Today's legislation is just one step further in the fight against COVID-19," said Government House Leader Paul Calandra. "We are all eager to reopen the economy and return to work, while physical distancing remains an important reality. Today's legislation helps to modernize some of our economic and community activity and make many necessary interactions that much easier and safer."

LEARN MORE

- Learn more about [A Framework for Reopening our Province](#).
- See how [your organization can help fight COVID-19](#).
- Information and advice to [help your business navigate the economy during COVID-19](#).
- Visit [Ontario's website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from COVID-19.