

A Framework for Reopening our Province

STAGE 3



July 13, 2020

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A Framework for Reopening our Province:

Phase 2: Restart — Stage 3

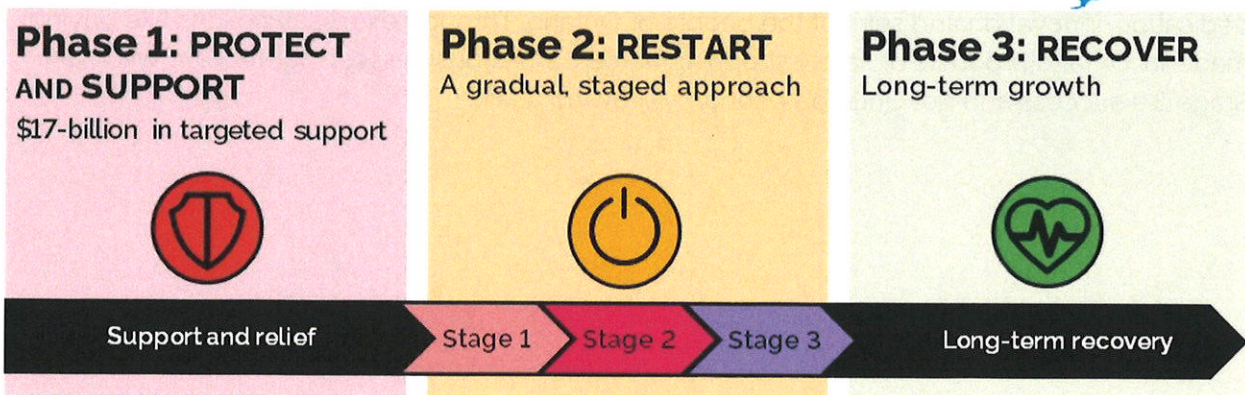
Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ontario has taken coordinated, swift and decisive action to protect and support the health and well-being of people across the province. By working together and following the advice of public health officials, Ontario has made steady progress in the fight against this deadly virus and is on the path to recovery.

The government is continuing its gradual, staged approach to reopening Ontario, restarting the economy and easing the necessary restrictions that were put in place to contain the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak, as outlined in [A Framework for Reopening our Province](#). Guided by public health advice, robust testing and case and contact tracing, and lessons learned through the previous two stages, Ontario is confident and ready to gradually begin entering Stage 3. Building on the regional approach introduced in Stage 2, communities will move into Stage 3 when it is safe to do so, based on trends of key public health indicators.

Ontario's Action Plan in response to COVID-19



A FRAMEWORK FOR REOPENING OUR PROVINCE



A COORDINATED, SUSTAINED RESPONSE AND INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR RECOVERY



Nearly all businesses and public spaces will be able to gradually reopen in Stage 3, with public health and workplace safety restrictions in place, while some high-risk venues and activities will remain closed until they can safely resume operations. Based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts, indoor and outdoor gathering limits will also be increased. Physical distancing remains a requirement for all people who are not from the same household or social circle.

In keeping with the gradual approach to reopening the province, Ontario will continue to monitor key public health indicators and some Stage 3 restrictions will be further eased over time when it is safe to do so.

Together, Ontario has made tremendous progress in the ongoing fight against COVID-19, thanks to the sacrifice and hard work of frontline heroes and volunteers, and the personal responsibility shown by the people of the province. Stage 3 does not mean that the fight against this deadly virus is over — far from it. Everyone must continue to be vigilant and follow public health advice and workplace safety guidelines. This will help limit outbreaks and reduce the risk of undoing the significant progress we have made together over the past several months.

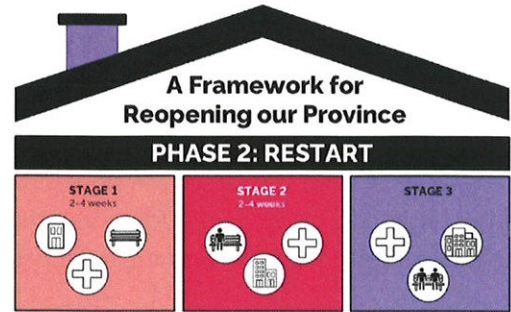
The government's priority is, and will continue to be, protecting people's health and well-being while planning for recovery and growth. That is why it is essential that everyone continues to act responsibly and respectfully towards their fellow citizens by following the advice of public health officials.

As the province moves toward recovery, the government will continue to count on the dedication, innovation and spirit of the people of Ontario. Through everyday actions like buying made-in-Ontario products or safely shopping at local small businesses, together we will make Stage 3 a success and get Ontario's economy growing again.



What Stage 3 Means for You

Stage 3 is another significant step towards fully restarting our economy. In Stage 2, over 90 per cent of economic activity was enabled to resume, which resulted in employment increasing by 377,900 net new jobs in June, including 66,200 jobs in the manufacturing sector.



In Stage 3, more restrictions will be loosened and nearly all businesses and public spaces will reopen, as long as they follow the public health advice and workplace safety guidance necessary to keep everyone safe.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health, public health experts and other officials have advised the following high-risk places and activities are not yet safe to open, due to the likelihood of large crowds congregating, difficulties with physical distancing, or challenges maintaining the proper cleaning and sanitation required to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Amusement parks and water parks
- Buffet-style food services
- Dancing at restaurants and bars, other than by performers hired by the establishment following specific requirements
- Overnight stays at camps for children
- Private karaoke rooms
- Prolonged or deliberate contact while playing sports
- Saunas, steam rooms, bath houses and oxygen bars
- Table games at casinos and gaming establishments.

All other businesses and public spaces will be permitted to be open, subject to ensuring the appropriate health and safety measures are in place, as well as limits on gathering sizes. More information on restrictions and gathering limits in Stage 3 is available below.

As more businesses and activities reopen, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health experts will continue to closely monitor the evolving situation to advise when more regions can enter Stage 3, if public health restrictions can be further loosened, or if they need to be tightened or reapplied.

Protecting our most vulnerable citizens must continue to be the top priority as Ontario enters Stage 3, and everyone will be responsible for taking the actions necessary to help contain the spread of COVID-19.

A Regional Approach

Building on the successful approach taken in Stage 2, each region of Ontario will be permitted to enter Stage 3 when it is safe to do so. The government's decision will be made in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and local public health officials, and based on established criteria, including virus spread and containment, health system capacity, public health system capacity and incidence-tracking capacity.

On Friday, July 17 at 12:01 a.m., the following public health unit regions will enter Stage 3:

- Algoma Public Health
- Brant County Health Unit
- Chatham-Kent Public Health
- Eastern Ontario Health Unit
- Grey Bruce Health Unit
- Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
- Hastings Prince Edward Public Health
- Huron Perth Public Health
- Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health
- Leeds Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit
- Middlesex-London Health Unit
- North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
- Northwestern Health Unit
- Ottawa Public Health
- Peterborough Public Health
- Porcupine Health Unit
- Public Health Sudbury & Districts
- Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services
- Renfrew County and District Health Unit
- Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit
- Southwestern Public Health
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit
- Timiskaming Health Unit
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

The following regions will remain in Stage 2, as additional time is required to assess and monitor any impacts and readiness to move into Stage 3:

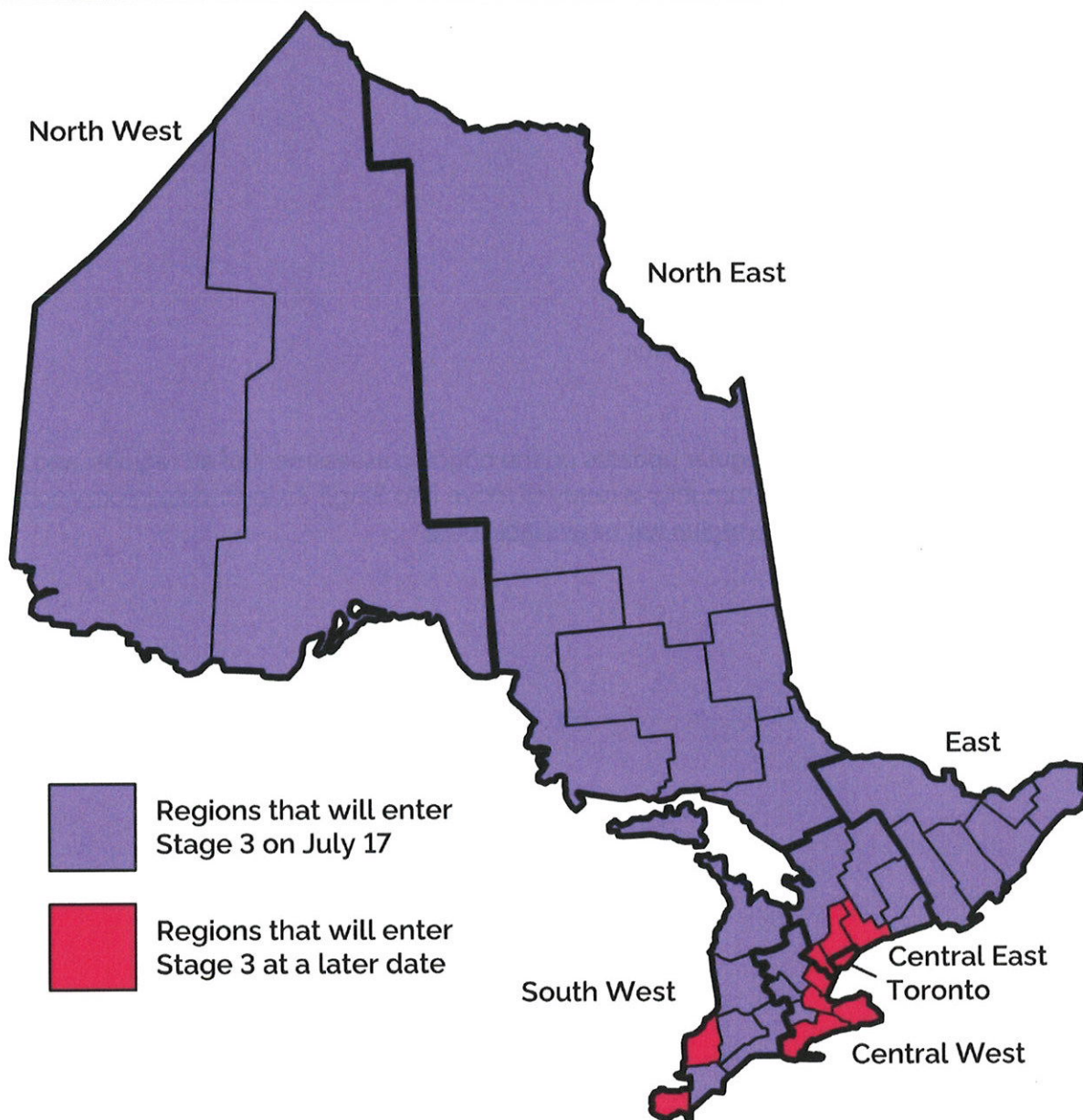
- Durham Region Health Department
- Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit
- Halton Region Public Health
- Hamilton Public Health Services
- Lambton Public Health
- Niagara Region Public Health
- Peel Public Health
- Toronto Public Health
- Windsor-Essex County Health Unit
- York Region Public Health

The government will provide regular updates on the ongoing assessment of all regions, and whether a specific region or community is ready to move into Stage 3. [Up-to-date information about the Stage 3 status of each region will be available here.](#)



Stage 3: A REGIONAL APPROACH

Map of Ontario Public Health Unit Regions



KEY PUBLIC HEALTH INDICATORS



Virus spread and
containment



Health system
capacity



Public health
system capacity



Incidence tracking
capacity

Working Together to Reopen

Collaboration and innovation will continue to be essential for Ontario's successful economic recovery.

The government will work with businesses and sectors that are either not able to reopen in Stage 3, or who are experiencing significant challenges opening with restrictions, to explore how these organizations could safely resume operations as Ontario gradually reopens, while implementing public health and workplace safety measures.



Those that are unable to open or are facing difficulties in operating under the Stage 3 restrictions may visit [Ontario.ca/reopen](https://ontario.ca/reopen) to submit a reopening proposal. The proposal should include details on measures businesses and services will implement to keep patrons and workers safe. Businesses and sectors are also encouraged to use the government's [guide to developing a workplace safety plan](#) and the [Ministry of Health's Guidance Document for Essential Workplaces](#). Government officials will work collaboratively with sectors that are developing plans to safely reopen, where feasible.

What You Need to Know to Stay Safe







As Ontario works towards recovery, acting responsibly and respectfully towards each other will help keep family, friends, colleagues and neighbours safe.

Everyone can make Stage 3 a success by:

	Maintaining physical distancing of at least two metres from people outside of your household or social circle		Wearing a face covering in indoor and outdoor public spaces where physical distancing is a challenge
	Washing your hands frequently with soap and water		Using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available
	Practising good hygiene (covering a cough and sneeze and avoiding touching your face)		Cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often
	Limiting indoor gatherings to a maximum of 50 people, or less, to maintain physical distancing		Limiting outdoor gatherings to a maximum of 100 people, or less, to maintain physical distancing
	Staying at home and away from others if you are feeling ill or have symptoms of COVID-19		Downloading the COVID Alert app, when launched, to be notified if you have been in contact with anyone with COVID-19
	Working from home or remotely as much as possible		Minimizing travel and self-isolating for 14 days after all international travel
	Protecting the most vulnerable by following public health advice		Getting tested if you are worried you have or have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19

Based on community needs, some municipalities and local medical officers of health have exercised their authority for more restrictions or requirements, such as mandatory face coverings in commercial establishments or all indoor public spaces. [Be sure to check your local public health unit's or municipality's website.](#)

Workplaces and businesses can help make Stage 3 a success by developing a COVID-19 safety plan that includes:

	Enabling physical distancing by redesigning spaces/interactions and implementing flow management		Cleaning and disinfecting equipment and high-touch surfaces as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary environment
	Consider recording each patron's name and contact information to support effective contact tracing that helps keep everyone safe		Consider requiring all customers to book an appointment in advance, wherever possible, for the purposes of physical distancing, flow management and contract tracing
	Assigning seating or spaces where possible to ensure physical distancing		Following sector-specific workplace safety guidance and tips available at Ontario.ca/COVIDsafety

Keeping Workplaces Safe

To help people, businesses and communities prepare for Stage 3, the government, in partnership with Ontario's health and safety associations, has released [more than 170 health and safety guidance resources](#) covering a wide range of workplaces.

Throughout Stage 1 and Stage 2, these resources have supported businesses and organizations in the development of their own workplace policies and safety plans to protect their employees and customers.

As restrictions are eased and the province safely and gradually reopens, businesses are strongly encouraged to continue to allow people to work remotely wherever possible to contain the spread of COVID-19. Businesses are also encouraged to review and update their [COVID-19 safety plan](#).

By taking this responsible approach to reopening, Ontario is continuing down its path to recovery, eventually returning to a position of strength as the economic engine of Canada.

Stage 3: Restrictions on Gatherings

NEW Gathering Limits

Based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health experts, gathering limits for regions in Stage 3 will increase. The gathering limit of 10 people indoors or outdoors will continue to apply for regions in Stage 2 until they enter Stage 3. Social circles should continue to be kept at 10 people province-wide, regardless of stage.



Indoor gathering limits will increase to a maximum of **50 people**.



Outdoor gathering limits will increase to a maximum of **100 people**.



In all cases, individuals are required to continue to maintain **physical distancing of at least two metres** with people from outside their households or social circles.



All businesses, services and public spaces **when hosting an event** are subject to indoor or outdoor gathering limits and ensuring physical distancing can be maintained.



People at their place of work, including performers and crews, **do not** count towards gathering limits.



People gathering indoors for religious services, rites or ceremonies, and wedding ceremonies or funeral services, can continue to fill up to **30 per cent of the capacity** of the particular room, as introduced in Stage 2.

When Do Gathering Limits Apply?

Based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other public health experts, gathering limits apply to higher risk settings and activities where people congregate, including:

- All organized or spontaneous indoor and outdoor events and social gatherings (e.g., parties, fundraisers, fairs, wedding receptions, funeral receptions)
- Casinos, bingo halls and gaming establishments
- Concerts and live shows, including performing arts
- Convention centres and other meeting or event spaces
- Facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities (e.g., gyms, fitness studios)



- Festivals
- Recreational attractions, courses and instruction (e.g., fitness classes, music lessons, tutoring)
- Movie theatres
- Real estate open houses
- Sporting and racing events
- Tour and guide services (including boat tours)

Indoor gathering limits apply to events that are fully or partially indoors. Indoor events and gatherings cannot be combined with an outdoor event or gathering to increase the applicable gathering size.



Businesses and sectors unable to open or facing significant difficulties in operating under Stage 3 restrictions are invited to visit [Ontario.ca/reopen](https://ontario.ca/reopen) to work with the province on a reopening plan.

Social Circles

A social circle is a group of up to 10 of the same people who can interact with one another without physical distancing, regardless of which stage of reopening their region is in.

Social or public gatherings may include different social circles, but are subject to gathering limits and physical distancing of at least two metres.

[Learn more about social circles.](#)



Stage 3: Additional Restrictions

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, public health measures and workplace safety restrictions apply to businesses and services permitted to reopen in Stage 3. Businesses and organizations are required to operate in compliance with all applicable laws, including the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and the advice, recommendations and instructions of public health officials.

The following information provides an overview of some of the conditions and restrictions in place.

Amusement Parks and Water Parks

- Amusement parks and water parks are not yet permitted to open in Stage 3.

Casinos and Charitable Gaming Establishments

- Casinos and charitable gaming establishments are subject to gathering limits and physical distancing measures, which apply to the entire facility.
- Staff do not count towards gathering limits.
- Any equipment being used by patrons, including slot machines and electronic gaming machines, must be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary environment.
- Table games must remain closed.

Convention Centres, Meeting and Event Spaces

- Convention centres, meeting and event spaces are subject to physical distancing measures and gathering limits, which apply to the entire facility.



Businesses and sectors unable to open or facing significant difficulties in operating under Stage 3 restrictions are invited to visit [Ontario.ca/reopen](https://ontario.ca/reopen) to work with the province on a reopening plan.

Facilities for Sports and Recreational Fitness Activities

- Examples of facilities for sports and recreational fitness activities include gyms, fitness studios, and community centres.
- Physical distancing must be maintained, except if playing a team sport or as needed for personal training.
- The total number of people permitted in areas containing weights or exercise machines is limited to the number of people that can maintain physical distancing of at least two metres, which cannot exceed the indoor gathering limit of 50 people.
- The total number people permitted in classes or organized activities at any one time is limited to the number of people that can maintain physical distancing of at least two metres, and cannot exceed the indoor gathering limit of 50 people or the outdoor limit of 100.
- Assigned spaces are strongly recommended for organized fitness classes (e.g., by marking circles on the floor to designate where each person should exercise).
- Gathering limits do not apply in all other areas (e.g., pools, tennis courts and rinks).
- Equipment must be cleaned and disinfected between user sets or at the end of a game.
- Any washrooms, locker rooms, change rooms, showers or similar amenities made available to the public must be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Steam rooms and saunas are not yet permitted to open.

KEEP RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES SAFE

Read workplace guidance to help develop and update your COVID-19 safety plan:

- [Facilities maintenance](#)
- [Parks and recreation](#)
- [Live performance sector](#)
- [Outdoor recreation](#)

Fitting Rooms

- Fitting rooms at retail settings were permitted to reopen with restrictions in Stage 1 and Stage 2.
- All fitting rooms may reopen, as long as patrons are not permitted to occupy adjacent fitting room stalls at any one time.
- Cleaning and disinfection between fitting room customers should continue.

Interactive Exhibits at Museums, Attractions and Heritage Institutions

- Attractions and heritage institutions, including museums, galleries, aquariums, zoos, science centres, landmarks, historic sites and similar attractions were permitted to reopen in Stage 2.
- In addition to the exhibits opened in Stage 2, high-contact surfaces such as interactive exhibits and displays may open. They must be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- All special events, instructional classes and performances at these locations are subject to gathering limits and physical distancing measures.

Libraries

- Libraries were permitted to resume limited on-site services in Stage 2.
- In addition to the services resumed in Stage 2, libraries may reopen for all on-site services, as long as materials that are circulated, returned or accessed within the library are disinfected or quarantined before being recirculated.

Live Shows, Performing Arts and Movie Theatres

Concerts, artistic events, theatrical productions, performances, and movie theatres may resume operations, including rehearsals, with the following restrictions:

- Performers must maintain physical distancing of two metres from every other person, except from other performers where necessary for purposes of the performance.
- Audiences are subject to the number of people that can maintain physical distancing of at least two metres and cannot exceed gathering limits of 50 indoors and 100 outdoors. This applies to the entire facility, regardless of the number of theatres or performance stages within the facility.
- Performers and staff are not included in the gathering limits.
- Plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier is required between the audience and singers as well as players of brass or wind instruments.
- Drive-in and drive-through venues, as permitted in Stage 2, are not subject to gathering limits.
- Concessions stands at drive-through venues may be accessed in-person or by drive-through or delivery to vehicles.



Personal Care Services

- Personal care services, including but not limited to hair salons, spas, tanning salons, tattoo studios, diet centres and beauty salons, were permitted to open in Stage 2.
- In addition to the services permitted in Stage 2, all services that tend to a customer's face are permitted (e.g., facials, ear piercing, eyebrow grooming and eyelash extensions).
- Patrons must wear face coverings except while receiving services on an area of their face that would otherwise be covered by a face covering.
- Workers must wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Personal care services must take measures to enable physical distancing between patrons, such as limiting the number of people who may be in the business at any one time.
- Businesses should consider operating by appointment wherever possible.
- Businesses should also consider recording each patron's name and contact information to support effective contact tracing in case of an outbreak.
- Oxygen bars, bath houses, steam rooms and saunas are not yet permitted to open.

KEEP PERSONAL CARE SERVICES SAFE

Read workplace guidance for [personal care services](#) to help develop and update your COVID-19 safety plan.

The [Workplace PPE Supplier Directory](#) has a list of Ontario companies ready to supply PPE.

Playgrounds and Play Structures

- Outdoor playgrounds and play structures are permitted to reopen in Stage 3.
- Physical distancing of at least two metres must be in place at all indoor playgrounds and play structures, except between individuals from the same household or social circle.

Recreational Courses and Instruction

- Examples of recreational courses and instruction include music lessons, language classes, tutoring and art classes.
- All instructional classes are subject to gathering limits.
- Physical distancing must be in place for participants, other than when necessary for instruction. Face coverings are recommended in those situations.
- Equipment must be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier and physical distancing are required for any instruction that involves singing or playing wind or brass instruments.

Recreational Attractions and Businesses

- In Stage 2, outdoor recreational facilities that operate low-contact attractions and activities were allowed to reopen. Indoor recreational activities can resume in Stage 3.
- Examples of indoor recreational facilities and attractions include arcade rooms, escape rooms, bowling alleys, and pool halls.
- Physical distancing of at least two metres must be in place.
- Equipment must be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Karaoke is permitted only outside of private karaoke rooms, which are not yet able to open in Stage 3, with restrictions including barriers, physical distancing and increased cleaning and disinfecting.

Restaurants, Bars and Nightclubs

- All restaurants, bars, concession stands, and other food and drink establishments may open for indoor dine-in.
- Nightclubs are not yet safe to open, except for the purpose of serving food or drinks to patrons in accordance with the conditions that apply to restaurants and bars.
- All patrons must be seated when eating or drinking at the establishment.
- Establishments must take appropriate measures to ensure physical distancing of at least two metres between patrons from different tables, unless separated by plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier.
- Buffet-style service is not yet permitted in Stage 3.
- Singing or music may be performed by a person or group at the restaurant or bar, with restrictions, including barriers between the performers and patrons and physical distancing. Dancing may only be performed by someone working at the establishment with restrictions.
- Karaoke is permitted only outside of private karaoke rooms, which are not yet permitted to open in Stage 3, with restrictions including barriers, physical distancing and increased cleaning and disinfecting.
- Physical distancing of two metres between patrons from different households or social circles also continues to apply to food trucks, food courts, concession stands and tours, including tastings at wineries, breweries and distilleries.

KEEP DINING SAFE

Read workplace guidance for [restaurants and bars](#) to help develop and update your COVID-19 safety plan.

Team Sports and Live Sporting Events

- Prolonged or deliberate contact while playing sports is not permitted.
- Team sports in which body contact between players is either an integral component of the sport or commonly occurs while engaged in the sport (e.g., wrestling, judo) are not yet permitted, unless the approach can be modified to prevent prolonged or deliberate physical contact.
- Amateur and recreational sports leagues may resume so long as they do not allow prolonged or deliberate physical contact between players or if they have modifications to avoid physical contact between players.
- Leagues must contain no more than 50 participants total. If participants in a league exceed 50, the league may divide into smaller groups of no more than 50. Players are not yet permitted to play against players outside of their league or group.
- Spectators at all sporting events, including professional sports, will be subject to gathering limits and physical distancing measures, with assigned seating where possible.

Tour and Guide Services

- For tour and guide services, including boat tours, the number of patrons is subject to gathering limits.
- Physical distancing of at least two metres must be maintained between all individuals, except for those from the same household or social circle.
- The outdoor gathering limit of 100 applies if patrons will be outside for the duration of the tour except to access washrooms, in transit to an outdoor area, or for health and safety reasons.
- As with other gatherings and events, the indoor gathering limit of 50 applies if the gathering is fully or partially indoors.

Beyond Stage 3: A Path to Recovery

The health and well-being of the people of Ontario will continue to guide every step of the government's response to COVID-19. The success of Stage 3 will be critical for Ontario's long-term economic recovery. As more businesses and activities reopen, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health officials will continue to closely monitor the evolving situation to advise when more regions can enter Stage 3, if public health restrictions can be further eased, or if they need to be tightened or reapplied.

With almost all businesses and public spaces reopening in Stage 3, Ontario has put enhanced case and contact management in place to quickly test, trace and isolate cases of COVID-19 to prepare for any future outbreaks, surges or waves. Just as important, people must continue to follow public health advice and workplace safety guidelines to keep each other safe. This is about treating each other with respect and taking personal responsibility, so that we can successfully beat COVID-19 and get on the path to a strong recovery.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone. As more of the province safely and gradually reopens, people are encouraged to support small businesses in their communities, shop local and look for products that are Ontario made. We are all in this together, and together we will emerge stronger than ever before.

The Ontario Spirit will continue to carry us forward as we work towards recovery and begin building a brighter and more prosperous future for every family, in every region of our province.

Additional Resources

- [Find workplace safety guidance documents to prepare for reopening.](#)
- [Work with the government on a reopening plan.](#)
- [Develop your COVID-19 workplace safety plan.](#)
- [Learn more about Stage 2 of reopening.](#)
- [Learn more about Stage 1 of reopening.](#)
- [Learn more about *A Framework for Reopening our Province*.](#)
- [Read Ontario's enhanced case and contact management strategy.](#)
- [Learn more about social circles.](#)
- [Learn more about Ontario's approach to reopening schools for the 2020-21 school year.](#)
- [Learn more about reopening child care centres.](#)
- [Learn more about the first phase of *Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19*.](#)
- [Provide your input on the economic impacts of COVID-19 and the next phase of *Ontario's Action Plan*.](#)
- [Visit Ontario's website to learn more about how the government continues to protect people from COVID-19.](#)

