



Date: April 4, 2020

Re: Response from Essential Workplace Business Information Line

Thank you for your inquiry into the Essential Workplace Business Information Line.

In response to COVID-19, Ontario has been diligently monitoring the developing situation and taking decisive action to contain the spread of this new virus to ensure the health and safety of all Ontarians. Based on the advice of Dr. David Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, and other experts, the Ontario government has ordered the mandatory closure of all non-essential workplaces effective as of Tuesday, March 24th at 11:59 p.m.

On March 30, 2020 Dr. David Williams issued a statement in response to COVID-19 recommending Ontarians stay home except for essential reasons, such as to access health care services; shop for groceries, pick up medication at the pharmacy; walk pets when required; and support vulnerable community members with meeting these needs. Please find the link to Dr. Williams' statement <https://news.ontario.ca/mohlhc/en/2020/03/statement-from-the-chief-medical-officer-of-health.html>

On March 31, 2020 the Ontario government took further action and closed all communal or shared, public or private, outdoor recreational amenities everywhere in Ontario. Please find the link to the Ontario news release <https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/ontario-extends-emergency-declaration-to-stop-the-spread-of-covid-19.html>

Business owners should review the list of essential businesses which are authorized to stay open, determine whether they fit into any of the categories and, if they do, make a business decision as to whether to stay open. Please find a link to the list of essential businesses <https://www.ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces> for your reference.

The Order also specifies when a business that is required to be closed, may access its place of work. Temporary access is permitted for activities including compliance with applicable laws, security, and maintenance and repair. Please refer to Schedule 1 section 1(2) and 1(3) of the Order for more information at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/200082>. The Order has been amended and can be found here https://files.ontario.ca/solgen-oic-closure-nonessential-business-2020-04-03_0.pdf, however sections 1(2) and 1(3) were unchanged.

Business owners, including non-profits and service delivery organizations, must take the necessary steps to keep their employees, clients and customers safe, and ensure that they are following the Emergency Order and the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health.