

Update: Loosening of Emergency Restrictions

On April 28th, the Prime Minister and the provincial premiers outlined their shared approach to loosening the emergency measures in a shared and coordinated manner. While individual provinces still have the constitutional authority to proceed with their own plans to reopen the economy, this meeting outlined the shared criteria that each jurisdiction will consider when making their plans to begin loosening restrictions.

This document is being presented to outline what the “Post-COVID Go-Forward” situation is like in jurisdictions across the country. It has been compiled so that our members are better prepared to plan for extended periods of social and physical distancing, the reopening of complementary or competing businesses, and how to better prepare management and staff for what is being called “the new normal” once restrictions begin to loosen.

Below you will find a summary of the criteria agreed upon by the federal and provincial governments and, where the information exists, the plans for individual jurisdictions to begin loosening restrictions. The full statement agreed upon by the Prime Minister and the Premiers can be found here:

<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/statements/2020/04/28/first-ministers-statement-shared-public-health-approach-support>

Federal Criteria to Loosen Restrictions:

- Control and reduction of COVID-19 transmission;
- Increased Testing/Tracing/Isolation Capacity;
- Increased provincial capacity to expand health care for both COVID and non-COVID patients;
 - Including support for primary/acute care, diagnostic services, elective surgeries, and emergency procedures.
 - Adequate procurement of PPE to handle increased case load;
- Increased capacity to support vulnerable populations including seniors, group living residents, the homeless, indigenous peoples, healthcare/essential service employees etc.
 - This includes increased testing capacity and sufficient supply of PPE to limit infection in these groups.
- Ability to increase and ensure preventative workplace measures prior to reopening or expansion of essential service lists;
- Avoiding risk of importation of COVID, including restrictions on non-essential domestic travel eased in a coordinated way. International travel to be re-introduced in later stages.
- Increased community support, including capabilities to manage childcare, schools, and public transportation.



Below is a summary of provincial plans and priorities where such information has been announced.

British Columbia

British Columbia's provincial health officer has stated that restrictions will begin to be lifted after, "a few days of no new COVID cases". Their plan to reopen the economy will happen in two phases, which could begin as early as the first week of May.

Businesses in the province were never ordered closed, as they were in many other jurisdictions, although many did so voluntarily. Parks, golf courses and, outdoor recreational facilities that closed are currently allowed to re-open.

An updated list of businesses considered essential in the province can be found here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/essential-services-covid-19>

Alberta

Alberta announced on Thursday, April 30 their plan to begin slowly reopening sectors of the economy with initial loosening of restrictions beginning as early as May 4th and then slowly rolling out over the coming weeks and months. The full Alberta plan can be read here:

<https://www.alberta.ca/external/covid19-alberta-relaunch-strategy.pdf>

Initial Phase – Beginning May 4th

- Resumption of some non-urgent surgeries and other health-care related services, including dentists, physiotherapists, social workers, and occupational therapists.
- Reopening of some provincial park land for recreational use. Parking lots on public land will be open to vehicles on May 1st with an eventual reopening of most provincial campgrounds by June 1st.
- Reopening of golf courses in the province will begin on May 4th, although pro-shops and club houses must remain closed.
- Bans on gatherings over 5 people remain in effect and all non-essential businesses must remain closed.

Stage One – Beginning as early as May 14

Although "Stage One" of the announced Alberta plan is set to begin as early as May 14th, this will depend on a steady decline in transmission rates of COVID-19 in the province and increased capacity for testing, contact tracing, and border controls.

Measures to reduce restriction in “Stage One” include:

- Reopening of some retail sectors, including clothing furniture, bookstores, and vendors at farmers markets;
- Reopening of certain areas of the service and entertainment sectors will begin. These include:
 - Hairstyling and barber shops, museums, and art galleries.
 - Nightclubs, sporting events and concerts, gyms, rec centres, movie theaters, and spas will remain closed.
- Reopening of daycare centers with strict occupancy limits; and,
- Resumption of additional health care services, non-elective surgeries, and dental procedures.
- Gatherings of less than 15 people will be phased in.

Stage 2 – Date to be determined

The rollout of “Stage 2” will highly depend on the response to the initial stages of the plan and rely on the ability of the health care sector to manage the containment of COVID-19. The loosening of restrictions that could occur in “Stage 2” include:

- The resumption of additional businesses and services that can maintain physical distancing of 2 meters;
- Resumption of in-class education at public K-12 schools.
- Resumption of an increased number of “personal services” like spas, waxing, and tanning salons.
- Reopening of movie theaters and stage productions with restricted capacity limits.
 - Gyms, nightclubs, arenas, and rec-centres will remain closed
- Gatherings of more than 15 people will be phased in, but exact numbers will be determined at a later date.

Stage 3 – Date to be determined

“Stage 3” of the reopening of Alberta has no specific rollout date and will depend on further containment of COVID-19 in the province. However, when that occurs, “Stage 3” will see a greater reduction in restrictions and will allow for the following:

- Full resumption of retail and commercial businesses;
- The reopening of larger entertainment centres, sporting events, and conferences will be permitted (with some capacity restrictions remaining in place);
- Nightclubs, gyms, and rec-centres will reopen with increased hygiene and capacity limitations in place.

All non-essential businesses in the province currently remain closed. An updated list of essential services can be found here, this list will be updated regularly by the Government of Alberta as restrictions begin to lift: <https://www.alberta.ca/essential-services.aspx>

Saskatchewan

On April 23rd, Saskatchewan released their 5-step plan to reopen the economy that will see some restrictions begin to loosen on May 4th. Their 5-step plan includes:

Phase One – Beginning May 4, 2020

- Re-opening of medical services restricted under the current public health order on May 4th. These services include:
 - Dentistry, Optometry, Physical Therapy, Opticians, Podiatry, Occupational Therapy, and Chiropractic treatment.
- Staggered resumption of low-risk outdoor recreational activities including:
 - Fishing and boat launches (May 4th), golf courses (May 15th), parks and campgrounds (June 1st)

Phase Two – May 19, 2020

- Re-opening of retail businesses and select personal services that were previously ordered closed (including vape shops).
 - The full list of businesses scheduled to reopen in Saskatchewan on May 19th can be found in the detailed “Re-Open Saskatchewan” website at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2020/april/23/~//link.aspx?id=402D2D88BC4A4C52AFE1DC49B30ECFE1&z=z>

Phase Three/Four/Five – Dates to Be Determined

- The third, fourth, and fifth phases will include the reopening of remaining personal services, along with the re-opening of restaurant-type facilities, gyms and fitness facilities, licensed establishments, and childcare facilities and will be followed by additional loosening of restrictions as the situation permits.

Manitoba

On April 29th, Manitoba announced an extremely detailed 3 phase plan to begin reopening the economy with the restoration of some services beginning on May 4th. The full plan is quite detailed, and we

encourage all members to familiarize themselves with new requirements for each phase. The full Manitoba plan can be read here:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/approach.html#phase-one>

Phase One – Beginning May 4th

- Reopening of some retail businesses, such as vaping supply shops, clothing and shoe stores, and sporting good/adventure stores;
 - Similar businesses may reopen if occupancy levels are maintained in order to allow staff and customers to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres, except for brief exchanges;
 - All businesses will be required to limit occupancy to 50 per cent of normal business levels. These requirements will be enforceable under public health orders;
- Reopening of hair salons and barber shops may occur if they are able to maintain an occupancy level sufficient to allow staff and customers to maintain physical distancing requirements;
- Takeout, delivery, and patio service at restaurants will remain available but dine-in will remain prohibited in Phase One;
- Businesses may continue to provide goods by delivery or pick-up that have been ordered online, by telephone or other remote means.

The full details and guidelines for “Phase One” can be read here:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/phase-one.html>

Phase 2 – No Earlier than June 1st

Critical public health measures and travel restrictions will remain in place during ‘Phase 2’, including mandatory self-isolation for entrants to the province and limitations on travel to northern parts of the province.

Further loosening of restrictions will be dependent upon the capabilities of the province to contain the spread of COVID-19 but could include:

- Expansion of public gatherings to more than 5 people
- Restoration of dine in services at restaurants capable of maintaining physical distancing requirements



- Restoration of non-contact sports and children's activities where physical distancing can be maintained.

Further details on the rollout of "Phase Two" of Manitoba's plan can be read in detail here:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/restoring/phase-two.html>

Phase 3 – Date to be Determined

During "Phase 3", public health measures will be further eased based on public health data and surveillance capabilities. Physical distancing measures will remain in place, but some travel restrictions may be eased. More details on the rollout of the third phase will be developed over the coming weeks but will include:

- The reopening of performing arts venues;
- The reopening of additional non-essential businesses, including (but not limited to):
 - Bars, Spas, public pools, fitness centres, movie theaters, and casinos (amongst others);
 - and,
- Increased capacity limits for gatherings and public events.

Currently, all non-essential businesses remain closed in the province. An updated list of essential services in Manitoba can be found here and will be updated as the plan to reopen the province rolls out.

<http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/soe.html>

Ontario

On April 27, the Ontario government unveiled its three-phase plan to begin loosening restrictions and slowly re-open the economy. While it has been announced that all public schools will remain closed until at least May 29th, specific dates to roll out each of the three phases have yet to be fully detailed. The Ontario plan is laid out in three phases and can be read in full here:

<https://files.ontario.ca/mof-framework-for-reopening-our-province-en-2020-04-27.pdf>

Beginning on May 4th, certain retail businesses and public facing services will be permitted to resume. The full list of businesses permitted to reopen on May 4th include:

- Automated and self-service car washes;
- Garden centres, nurseries with curbside pick-up and delivery as well as lawn care and landscaping services;
- Additional businesses essential to construction projects that include:

- shipping and logistics;
 - broadband, telecommunications, and digital infrastructure;
 - any other project that supports the improved delivery of goods and services;
 - municipal projects;
 - colleges and universities;
 - childcare centres;
 - schools; and
 - site preparation, excavation, and servicing for institutional, commercial, industrial and residential development;
- Golf courses may prepare their courses for the upcoming season, but not open to the public; and,
 - Marinas may also begin preparations for the recreational boating season by servicing boats and other watercraft and placing boats in the water.

On May 6th the Ontario Government announced further loosening of restrictions to permit the opening of the following retail locations.

- Beginning on May 8th nurseries and garden centers will be permitted to open their retail stores to the public.
- Beginning on May 9th hardware stores and safety supply stores will also be permitted to open their retail locations to the public.
 - In both instances, retailers must have policies and procedures in place to ensure that social distancing and other public health requirements can be met.
- Beginning on May 11th, other retail stores that were not previously deemed essential will be permitted to open for curbside pickup services only.
 - Only stores that have direct exterior access will be permitted to open, and for curbside pickup only. Customers will not be permitted to enter the retail store.

Quebec

Quebec Premier Francois Legault announced on April 27 that the province will begin to reopen elementary schools and daycare centres in the province beginning on May 11th but only if the health care capacity of Quebec hospitals remains stable.

On April 28, the government announced the gradual reopening of various sectors and businesses. The reopening's will occur in phases according to geographic zones. Over the coming weeks the resumption of activities will slowly be authorized. However, measures must be implemented to ensure the health and safety of workers and customers.



Starting on May 4, 2020, retail stores with a direct exterior access can resume their activities, except those in the City of Montreal which can reopen on May 25.

Starting on May 11, 2020, all construction industry worksites can resume their activities.

Starting on May 11, 2020, manufacturing companies in all regions of Québec can resume their activities. However, they must at all times throughout the day limit staff per shift on a given site to a maximum of 50 workers and 50% of the employees exceeding the limit of 50 workers. Some examples include:

- a manufacturing site that employs 60 workers on a shift must operate with a maximum of 55 employees;
- a manufacturing site that employs 500 workers on a shift must operate with a maximum of 275 employees.

Starting on May 25, 2020, manufacturing companies throughout Québec will be authorized to resume their operations with no restriction on the number of employees present to ensure such operations.

New Brunswick

New Brunswick loosened some restrictions on April 24 after its seventh straight day with no new cases of COVID-19. As part of the first stage, parks and beaches have been reopened, as have golf courses, universities and colleges, and certain religious services with restrictions. Fishing and hunting are also allowed. Households can socialize again, but only with one other household.

The second stage could begin within two-to-four weeks and would include the reopening of daycares, offices, restaurants, ATV trails, campground, and allow elective surgeries to proceed. Restaurants remain closed except for delivery and takeout, and retail stores (except those listed as essential, like c-stores) remain closed for the time being.

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia's chief medical officer of health has said there are no immediate plans to lift any COVID-19 restrictions. Dr. Strang said the province is currently working on a plan about the gradual lifting of restrictions that is expected to be announced next week.

Convenience stores are listed as an essential service and all non-essential businesses remain closed. Nova Scotia's essential services can be found here:



<https://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20200324003>

Prince Edward Island

Prince Edward Island Premier Dennis King announced on April 28, that all public schools have cancelled in-person classes for the remainder of the year. However, the province will begin to ease some public health measures imposed amid the COVID-19 pandemic beginning May 1.

Phase 1 of easing in the province includes resuming elective surgeries, reopening medical services including physiotherapists, optometrists and chiropractors, construction services, and childcare for essential service workers. Non-contact outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, cycling, golfing, shooting ranges, fishing, and boating are also allowed.

Entry to the Island is still extremely restricted and all people entering the Island are ordered to self-quarantine for 14 days and this measure is expected to continue for the foreseeable future and will likely be catastrophic for the tourism sector on the island, a major component of the PEI economy.,

Further plans to further loosen restrictions, including limited easing of social gathering restrictions and further retail openings and open up the economy will be announced in the coming days.

Newfoundland

The Premier of Newfoundland has not yet set a time for the province to reopen the economy, despite the province reporting no new case numbers or single digit increases for the last 2 weeks. All non-essential businesses remain closed. Newfoundland and Labrador's essential services, of which convenience stores are listed, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/covid-19/public-health-orders/>