

From: [AMO Communications](#)
To: [Jennifer Willoughby](#)
Subject: AMO Policy Update – Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Sites, ESA Termination and Severance Provisions Extension
Date: Friday, December 18, 2020 2:49:44 PM

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AMO Policy Update



December 18, 2020

AMO Policy Update – Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Sites, ESA Termination and Severance Provisions Extension

Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Rolling Out

Ontario will be distributing [additional doses of the Pfizer vaccine to 17 more hospital sites](#) throughout the province over the next two weeks, including regions with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection. This is part of the initial phase of the government's [three-phase vaccine implementation plan](#) that began on December 14th in Toronto and Ottawa.

Ontario is expecting to receive up to 90,000 Pfizer-BioNTech doses from the federal government before the end of the year to continue vaccinating health care workers and essential caregivers who work in hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes, and other congregate settings caring for seniors.

During this initial phase, Ontario is expecting to receive doses of the Moderna vaccine – once approved by Health Canada – which will allow vaccines to be provided at long-term care homes in lockdown areas, followed by retirement homes, other congregate care settings for seniors, and remote Indigenous communities. In early 2021, additional hospital sites across the province will be administering additional Pfizer vaccines to health care workers, as well as essential caregivers, and long-term care home and retirement home residents.

Extension of Temporary Relief from ESA Termination and Severance Provisions

The Ontario government has extended the temporary relief measures from the termination and severance provisions of the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* (ESA) as of December 17, 2020 until **July 3, 2021**. The temporary measures are found in [Ontario Regulation 228/20](#), Infectious Disease Emergency Leave (IDEL Regulation), and had been set to expire January 2, 2021. The IDEL Regulation [has been amended](#) to define the “COVID-19 period” as that period beginning on March 1, 2020 and ending on July 3, 2021. Additional Hicks Morley information can be found [here](#).

AMO’s [COVID-19 Resources](#) page is being updated continually so you can find critical information in one place. Please send any of your municipally related pandemic questions to covid19@amo.on.ca.

**Season’s Greetings from AMO.
Best wishes for a safe and healthy 2021.**

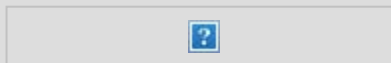
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From: [AMO Communications](#)
To: [Jennifer Willoughby](#)
Subject: AMO Policy Update – COVID-19 Municipal Financial Impacts, Supportive Housing Expansion, COVID-19 Modelling and Emergency Orders Extended, Fall Legislative Session Adjourned
Date: Thursday, December 10, 2020 4:43:02 PM

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AMO Policy Update



December 10, 2020

AMO Policy Update – COVID-19 Municipal Financial Impacts, Supportive Housing Expansion, COVID-19 Modelling and Emergency Orders Extended, and Fall Legislative Session Adjourned

Financial Accountability Office Reports on Financial Impacts of COVID-19 on Ontario Municipalities

Today, the Financial Accountability Office (FAO) released its [report](#) on COVID-19 and Ontario's Municipal Finances, finding that the pandemic will ultimately result in a cost of \$6.8 billion in lost revenues and expenses for municipal governments. The report also affirms the importance of federal and provincial support through the Safe Restart Agreement (SRA) which provides \$4 billion in critical assistance to municipalities which, together with municipal cost saving measures, has mitigated the negative financial impact in 2020. However, support in 2021 is limited to transit impacts in the first quarter.

The FAO report's conclusions are consistent with AMO's understanding of the pandemic's financial impact on municipalities and the importance of access to continued support to avoid service reductions, use of reserves for capital projects, increased property taxes, or resort to deficit budgets.

AMO responded to the report through a [new release](#) acknowledging the financial impacts and noting that AMO and FCM continue to advocate for the extension of the Safe Restart Agreement to address 2021 financial impacts.

Report Highlights:

COVID-19 Impact on Municipal Finances:

- COVID-19 will have a negative impact on municipal budgets of \$6.8 billion ultimately, projected to be \$4.1 billion in 2020 and \$2.7 billion in 2021.
- The pandemic reduced revenues by \$4.7 billion and will likely increase expenses by 2.1 billion over the two years.
- Municipalities saved of \$1.1 billion through layoffs, reduced transit, recreation services, and cancelled programming in 2020.
- The Safe Restart Agreement funding provided \$2 billion to municipalities to date. The remaining \$2 billion is to be provided for those able to demonstrate outstanding general operating pressures in 2020 and transit pressures in 2020 and Q1 of 2021.

2021 Implications:

- Together municipal cost savings and federal and provincial financial support have mitigated negative municipal budget impacts in 2020, but the projected \$2.7 billion (\$0.9 billion transit and \$1.8 billion operating) in 2021 will only be partially offset by SRA support.
- This may require municipalities to access reserves, the availability of which will vary throughout the sector; reduce services or other measures to contain costs; or reduce budget surpluses/run deficits to manage financial needs.

[AMO](#) has cautioned that service reductions or deferring capital investments because of COVID-19 cost pressures would have the affect of undermining Ontario's economic recovery.

Ontario Expanding Supportive Housing

The government announced it is expanding funding for [Supportive Housing](#). Over \$47 million in investments will strengthen supports for individuals with mental health and addictions issues who are either homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless. The initiative is part of the implementation of the Roadmap to Wellness plan.

COVID-19 Modelling and Emergency Order Extension

Solicitor General, Sylvia Jones, announced today that the Province would [extend all Emergency Orders](#) under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020 (ROA) until January 20, 2021. These include orders related to the reopening stages and areas currently in lockdown.

Later in the day, the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, released updated pandemic modelling showing growth in cases, ICU bed occupancy, and mortality. The modelling suggests that relaxing current public health restrictions would increase cases, ICU demand and mortality, and noted that current restrictions were much less restrictive on mobility than during the spring.

In addition, the presentation noted that inadequate housing, multi-generational housing, and the prevalence of essential workers outside of health care settings all

presented risks for case growth.

Ontario Legislature Adjourned

The Fall session of the Legislature wrapped up on Tuesday. The next session will begin on February 16th, 2021.

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From: [AMO Communications](#)
To: [Jennifer Willoughby](#)
Subject: AMO Policy Update - Lockdown 2.0: Province-Wide Lockdown Starts December 26, Communities Strategy and Enforcement, New School Protocols, Child Care, Small Business Grant
Date: Monday, December 21, 2020 3:22:32 PM

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AMO Policy Update



December 21, 2020

AMO Policy Update – Lockdown 2.0: Province-Wide Lockdown Starts December 26, Communities Strategy and Enforcement, New School Protocols, Child Care, and Small Business Grant

Province-Wide Lockdown Starts December 26

Today, the Province [announced](#) an Ontario-wide lockdown starting at 12:01am as of Saturday, December 26, 2020. The current [COVID-19 Response Framework](#) will be paused when the Province-Wide Shutdown comes into effect.

Lockdown measures include, but are not limited to:

- **Restricting indoor organized public events and social gatherings, except with members of the same household** (the people you live with). Individuals who live alone may consider having exclusive close contact with one other household.
- **Prohibiting in-person shopping in most retail settings.** Curbside pickup and delivery can continue. Discount and big box retailers selling groceries will be limited to 25 per cent capacity for in-store shopping. Supermarkets, grocery stores and similar stores that primarily sell food, as well as pharmacies, will continue to operate at 50 per cent capacity for in-store shopping.
- **Restricting indoor access to shopping malls.** Patrons may only go to a designated indoor pickup area (by appointment only), essential retail stores that are permitted to be open (e.g. pharmacy, grocery store), or, subject to physical distancing and face covering requirements, to the food court for takeout purchases. Shopping malls may also establish outdoor designated pickup areas.
- **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.

The impacts of these time-limited measures will be evaluated throughout the 14 days in Northern Ontario and 28 days in Southern Ontario to determine if it is safe to lift any restrictions or if they need to be extended.

Note that the essential business definition has changed based on learning from earlier experience (i.e. regulated health professionals, construction etc.). For more information, call the "[Stop the Spread](#)" [business information line](#).

High Priority Communities Strategy and Enforcement

As part of this announcement, the government is providing \$12.5 million to implement a [High Priority Communities Strategy](#) to take a tailored, community-based approach to fund community agencies in 15 priority neighbourhoods in Durham, Peel, Toronto, York, and Ottawa.

Additional funding of \$42 million will also be available to establish isolation centres. The Province will work with local municipal partners to establish new isolation centres to help those who may need to isolate following testing.

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development is leading a multi-ministry COVID-19 Safety Team. The team will partner with local authorities to carry out additional enforcement blitzes in sectors where they are needed most.

New School Protocols and Child Care

All publicly funded and private elementary and secondary schools will move to teacher-led remote learning when students return from the winter break on January 4, 2021. [Seven Health Units](#) will resume in-person instruction on January 11, 2021, for both elementary and secondary students.

For schools in all other Public Health Unit regions, elementary school students can return to in-person on January 11, 2021, and secondary school students will continue learning remotely until January 25, 2021, at which point they may resume in-person learning.

During this period child care centres, authorized recreational and skill building programs, and home-based child care services will remain open. From January 4-8, 2021, before and after school programs will be closed and emergency child care for health care and frontline workers will be provided. School boards will be required to make provisions to continued in-person support for students with special education needs who cannot be accommodated through remote learning from whom remote learning is challenging.

New Ontario Small Business Support Grant

Today the government also [announced](#) a new Ontario Small Business Support Grant, which will provide a minimum of \$10,000 and up to \$20,000 for eligible businesses. Further details, including how to apply will be announced in January 2021. The other supports for businesses during COVID-19, including property tax and energy rebate programs for eligible businesses in Control or Lockdown regions (or previously in modified stage 2 regions), will continue.

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From: [AMO Communications](#)
To: [Jennifer Willoughby](#)
Subject: AMO Policy Update – LTC Staffing Plan, CA Working Group, Poverty Reduction Strategy, Mental Health and Addiction Services Funding
Date: Thursday, December 17, 2020 2:46:38 PM

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AMO Policy Update



December 17, 2020

AMO Policy Update – Long-Term Care Staffing Plan, Conservation Authorities Working Group, Poverty Reduction Strategy, and Mental Health and Addiction Services Funding

Long-Term Care Staffing Plan Released

The Province announced the release of its anticipated [long-term care staffing plan](#) that sets out actions to hire more staff, improve working conditions for existing staff, drive effective and accountable leadership, and implement retention strategies.

The plan is called, "[A Better Place to Live, A Better Place to Work: Ontario's Long-Term Care Staffing Plan](#)". Included in the plan are six key areas of action to be delivered over four years, not least of which is an investment of up to \$1.9 billion annually by 2024-2025 to create more than 27,000 new positions for personal support workers (PSWs), registered nurses (RNs), and registered practical nurses (RPNs) in long-term care to meet the government's [2020 Ontario budget commitment](#) to increase hours of daily direct care to an average of four hours per day for each long-term care resident.

Other actions include accelerating and expanding education and training pathways to train the new staff, supporting continued professional development and growth of long-term care staff, and finding ways to improve working conditions, increasing effective and accountable leadership, and measuring progress on these actions.

AMO staff will be reviewing the staffing plan in its entirety to inform its future work under our Health Task Force to the Long-Term Care Commission as well as consultation on future regulations.

Ontario's Working Group on Conservation Authorities

The Province has announced a [Conservation Authorities Working Group](#). Hassaan Basit, President and CEO of Conservation Halton, will chair this group to provide input on proposed regulations development under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, and on how conservation authorities are governed.

The working group will be formed early in the new year and will provide input to help the Province develop regulations that will focus on:

- the mandatory core programs and services conservation authorities would be required to provide,
- the agreements between municipalities and conservation authorities and the transition period associated with non-mandatory programs and services, and
- how local members of the community can participate in their conservation authorities through community advisory boards.

AMO has been calling for such a group to undertake this work and welcomes this process. AMO has also requested representation on this working group.

Ontario's New Poverty Reduction Strategy

The government [released](#) a new [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) to guide cross ministry actions over the next five years. The objective is to help more people get back into employment and participate in the Province's economic recovery.

Key government initiatives are to help connect people experiencing poverty with education, skills training, health, and other supports. In many cases this involves joint efforts with municipalities and District Social Service Administration Boards delivering critical human services in communities such as social assistance, housing, and homelessness prevention programs.

New Mental Health and Addiction Services

As part of the ongoing response to COVID-19, the government is providing [\\$147 million of funding](#) to increase access to supports. This allocation builds on the provincial [Roadmap to Wellness Plan](#).

This welcome funding will add more staff, accommodations, virtual supports, housing and short-term accommodation, and other supports to continue providing safe in-person services where appropriate. It will also include supports specifically for Ontario's frontline workers.

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From: [AMO Communications](#)
To: [Jennifer Willoughby](#)
Subject: AMO Policy Update – New Stronger Public Health Measures
Date: Friday, December 11, 2020 2:21:18 PM

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December 11, 2020

AMO Policy Update – New Stronger Public Health Measures

The Ontario government, in consultation with provincial and local public health, is moving seven public health regions to new levels with stronger public health measures, including Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and York Region Public Health moving into Grey-Lockdown. The regional levels and specific public health measures are in the [Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework](#).

Based on the latest data, the following public health regions will move from their current levels in the framework to the following levels **effective Monday, December 14, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.:**

- Grey-Lockdown
 - Windsor-Essex County Health Unit; and
 - York Region Public Health
- Red-Control
 - Middlesex-London Health Unit;
 - Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit; and
 - Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
- Orange-Restrict
 - Eastern Ontario Health Unit
- Yellow-Protect
 - Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.

All other public health regions will remain at their current levels. Please see [COVID-19 Regional Public Health Measures and Restrictions](#) for the full regional list.

For long-term care homes, [visitor restrictions](#) apply to those homes in the public health unit regions that are in the Orange-Restrict level or higher. In addition, long-term care homes must implement recently [enhanced testing requirements](#).

Trends in public health data continue to be reviewed weekly to determine if public health units should stay where they are or be moved into different levels. Public health units will stay in their levels for a minimum of 28 days, or two COVID-19 incubation periods, at which time, the government will assess the impact of public health measures to determine if the public health unit should stay where it is or be moved to a different level. The government and the Chief Medical Officer of Health will continue to consult regularly with local medical officers of health on local context and conditions to help inform the classification of their public health unit regions.

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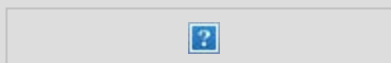
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From: [AMO Communications](#)
To: [Jennifer Willoughby](#)
Subject: AMO Policy Update – Phase 2 ReStart Agreement Municipal Funding
Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 10:52:26 AM

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AMO Policy Update



December 16, 2020

AMO Policy Update – Phase 2 ReStart Agreement Municipal Funding

This morning, AMO President Graydon Smith joined Mayor John Tory, Member of Parliament Adam Vaughan, and the Honourable Minister Steve Clark for a major announcement on [additional relief funding](#) for Ontario's municipal governments.

The Ontario government is allocating the second phase of the Safe Restart Agreement (SRA) funding to municipal governments in the amount of \$695 million. Minister Clark noted that the government is helping to ensure that every single municipality in Ontario is entering 2021 without an operating deficit from 2020.

This \$695 million in relief funding is broken out into two sections:

- First, \$396 million will be allocated to 48 individual municipalities that have demonstrated the need for additional assistance in covering operating deficits for 2020.
- The remaining \$299 million will be allocated across all 444 municipalities to help provide additional financial relief to help support operating budgets in 2021.
 - AMO understands that 20% (\$59.8 million) of this allocation will be provided to all municipalities on a per household basis (like Phase 1 SRA funding).
 - The remaining 80% (\$239.2 million) is to be allocated through a new methodology that proportionally reflects COVID-19 case counts with data provided by Ontario's 34 Public Health Units. More information on this methodology and the associated allocations will be provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

AMO is pleased that the remaining Safe Restart Agreement funding is being provided to municipal governments at this time. *“This funding will ensure municipalities in every part of Ontario are in a better position to maintain vital municipal services in 2021 and*

to proceed with capital investments essential to Ontario's economic recovery", said AMO President Graydon Smith.

In addition, Minister Clark indicated that the Province is notionally allocating \$1.3 billion for municipal transit systems above and beyond the initial allocation of \$700 million made under Phase 1 of the SRA. More details about this funding will be available in January 2021.

This financial relief package and, notably, the early support in 2021 follows AMO's direct advice to create greater certainty around the financial needs of municipal governments. This will help ensure municipalities continue to protect our communities and play an essential role in Ontario's economic recovery as we enter the coming year ahead.

For more information: [Phase 2 of SRA Funding - Municipal Allocations](#).

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From: [AMO Communications](#)
To: [Jennifer Willoughby](#)
Subject: AMO Policy Update – Social Services Relief Funding, Vaccine Rollout Planning
Date: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 2:01:20 PM

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December 15, 2020

AMO Policy Update – Social Services Relief Funding and Vaccine Rollout Planning

Province Allocates \$120 Million in Social Services Relief Funding

The Ontario government is allocating \$120 million in [Social Services Relief Funding \(SSRF\)](#). The funding will help municipal governments, District Social Service Administration Boards, and Indigenous community partners with their COVID-19 responses to protect the health and safety of vulnerable people. This includes the homeless and low-income people in Ontario's communities. Funds can be used to maintain critical services, protect people in shelters, expand housing options, and help support outbreak management planning. The total government allocation for the SSRF is \$510 million.

Vaccine Rollout Planning and Coordination

Some municipal CAOs/senior staff are reaching out now to their hospitals and public health units within their public health unit regions to set up vaccine rollout regional planning and coordination tables. These efforts can support the limited Phase 1 process now underway and help prepare for future steps in the vaccine rollout. Municipal staff may be able to assist in a number of ways such as public communications, providing facilities, aiding in transportation, managing parking and traffic control.

There will be a number of unexpected issues that arise throughout this distribution process and working together will allow quick local and coordinated problem solving and operational action when needed. We encourage the municipal sector to reach out now and assist your public health and health care partners to make 2021's vaccine distribution process as well planned, transparent, and seamless as is possible.

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