

# PREMIER FORD ANNOUNCES STAGE ONE OF THE GRADUAL REOPENING OF ONTARIO

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15 May 2020

As part of the [Framework for Reopening Ontario](#), on May 14, 2020, Premier Doug Ford announced the following reopening of businesses to take place on Saturday, May 16, 2020, just in time for the Victoria Day long weekend:

- Golf courses will be able to open, with clubhouses open only for washrooms and restaurants open only for take-out;
- Marinas, boat clubs and public boat launches may open for recreational use;
- Private parks and campgrounds may open to enable preparation for the season and to allow access for trailers and recreational vehicles whose owners have a full season contract; and
- Businesses that board animals, such as stables, may allow boarders to visit, care for or ride their animal.

In addition, subject to public health indicators continuing to improve, Premier Ford announced that Ontario's first formal stage of reopening will begin on Tuesday, May 19, 2020, and will include:

- Retail services that are not in shopping malls and have separate street-front entrances with measures in place that can enable physical distancing, such as limiting the number of customers in the store at any one time and booking appointments beforehand or on the spot. The Government confirmed that retail services do not include restaurants for in-person dining.
- Seasonal businesses and recreational activities for individual or single competitors, including training and sport competitions conducted by a recognized national or provincial sport organization. This includes indoor and outdoor non-team sport

competitions that can be played while maintaining physical distancing and without spectators, such as tennis, track and field and horse racing.

- Animal services, specifically pet care services, such as grooming and training, animal shelters, and regular veterinary appointments.
- Indoor and outdoor household services that can follow public health guidelines, such as housekeepers, cooks, cleaning and maintenance.
- Lifting essential workplace limits on construction.
- Allowing certain health and medical services to resume, such as in-person counselling and scheduled surgeries based on the ability to meet pre-specified conditions as outlined in [A Measured Approach to Planning for Surgeries and Procedures During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), as well as resuming professional services such as shifting Children's Treatment Centres from virtual to in-person.

Premier Ford warned that while the above-mentioned businesses will be permitted to open, these businesses should only open if they are "ready." The Minister of Labour reminded employers that "Ontario's labour laws are clear – businesses must protect the health and safety of workers: that includes protecting them against workplace hazards, including infectious diseases like Covid-19". The Minister of Labour confirmed that ministry inspectors are on the ground inspecting workplaces. As a result, employers should carefully review whether they are legally permitted to reopen as well as the [government-issued safety guidelines based on industry sector](#).

With the first stage of business re-openings around the corner, the Government reminded Ontarians that physical distancing rules remain in place and where physical distancing measures cannot be followed, the Minister of Health recommended the use of a face mask. To help businesses locate personal protective equipment (PPE) for their workers, the Government announced [The Workplace PPE Supplier Directory](#), an up-to-date list of Ontario companies and business associations that are ready to supply personal protective equipment.

Employers are strongly encouraged to seek specific legal advice with respect to creating a return to work plan in accordance with labour and health and safety requirements. For all questions related to employer-side employment law, including all questions related to employers and Covid-19, the Gowling WLG Employment, Labour & Equalities Group would be pleased to assist. [To find out more about our Group and how to contact a specific lawyer, click here.](#)

pleased to discuss resolutions to specific legal concerns you may have.

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**Related** Employment, Labour & Equalities, COVID-19: How will coronavirus impact your business?

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