



## POLICY UPDATE

March 17, 2020

### **AMO COVID-19 Update: *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* Invoked**

Ontario communities are facing unprecedented challenges as a result of COVID-19. Municipal councils and municipal public servants will play a key role in responding to the crisis, managing in difficult times, and providing leadership to restore economic activity and prosperity when the crisis ends.

This morning, Premier Ford announced that Ontario is making an order declaring an emergency under Section 7.0.1 (1) of the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

The Government has taken this important step so that it has every power possible to contain COVID-19 and protect the health and well-being of Ontarians.

As a result of this declaration and its associated orders, certain establishments are legally required to close immediately, including:

- all facilities providing indoor recreational programs
- all public libraries
- all private schools as defined in the *Education Act*
- all licensed childcare centres
- all bars and restaurants, except to the extent that such facilities provide takeout food and delivery
- all theatres including those offering live performances of music, dance, and other art forms, as well as cinemas that show movies, and
- concert venues.

Further, all organized public events of over fifty people are prohibited, including parades and events and communal services within places of worship.

These orders will remain in place until March 31, 2020, at which point they will be reassessed and considered for extension, unless they are terminated earlier.

The Premier's [announcement](#) also included an emergency relief package including measures to support the health care system.

AMO has been keeping you up to date on to the coronavirus since January by connecting you to Government of Ontario information and developments. We will endeavour to ensure you continue to have the best available information.

AMO staff are now working from home to keep them safe and to support social distancing measures that will slow the spread of COVID-19. Our operations and policy work continue uninterrupted and all key functions and transactional abilities remain in place.

At meetings with Health Minister Christine Elliott and Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Steve Clark, AMO President Jamie McGarvey offered AMO's assistance to support the government's COVID-19 efforts in any way it can.

AMO has also raised a number of issues with the Province, including the need for measures to ensure councils can continue to make key decisions if in-person council meetings are cancelled, and the need to address regulated and time-sensitive processes that will be affected by delays and disruptions resulting from municipal office closures and other social distancing measures.

We will continue to update [AMO's COVID-19](#) webpage to keep you informed.

Over the past week, OSUM, FONOM, and NOMA cancelled their spring 2020 conferences in response to guidance from government on gatherings. As of today, gatherings of 50 or more people are banned under emergency measures.

At this time, planning for the AMO conference in August continues. If it proceeds as planned, lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic will be a key topic of learning and discussion.

Your best source of information about COVID-19 continues to be the [provincial](#) government and [federal](#) government websites. There you will find information on how best to protect yourself and others, facts about the virus, as well as steps taken, recommendations and requirements pertaining to the COVID-19 emergency.

We will keep you informed.

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