



## Province announces 28-day lockdown

In light of the ongoing increase in COVID-19 cases, the province has announced that all of Ontario will begin a shutdown at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 26. The restrictions will remain in effect until Saturday, Jan. 9 for public health unit regions in northern Ontario, and until Saturday, Jan. 23 for regions in southern Ontario. For the purpose of the lockdown, southern Ontario is defined as everything **south** of the North Bay Parry Sound Health Unit.

During the lockdown:

- Ontarians should stay home to the fullest extent possible.
- Trips outside of the home should be limited and only for essential purposes (accessing health care and medication, grocery shopping, child care, exercising in the community where you live either alone or with those in your household, walking pets and supporting vulnerable community members to meet the needs above).
- Employees should work remotely to the greatest extent possible. Employers should enable and support workers to work remotely and accommodate household needs related to virtual education and dependent care.
- Only essential workplaces may remain open.
- Elementary school students in southern Ontario and all students in northern Ontario will participate in remote learning from Jan. 4-8, and return to in-person learning on Jan. 11. Secondary school students in southern Ontario will continue to learn remotely until Jan. 25.
- Child care will remain open throughout the shutdown period.

**Veterinary practices are considered essential workplaces and may remain open.**

**Veterinary practices may only provide services that:**

- are necessary for the immediate health and welfare of the animal, or
- are provided through curbside pick-up and drop-off of the animal.

**As requested by OVMA, the province has not imposed an “urgent care only” restriction on veterinary practices during this shutdown. Veterinary practices can still offer a full range of services, as long as the client does not enter the practice.**

Other businesses that provide for the health and welfare of animals, including farms, boarding kennels, stables, animal shelters and research facilities, and businesses that provide pet training exclusively for service animals, may also remain open.

Businesses or organizations must ensure that masks or face coverings are worn by any person (including members of the public and employees) in the indoor area of the business or organization, with limited exceptions. Aside from masking, social distancing and hand hygiene are imperative in reducing the spread of the virus.

For more information on the lockdown, visit the [government's website](#).



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