

THE VOICE OF NORTHERN BUSINESS



Timmins
CHAMBER.



Chambre de
commerce
du Grand Sudbury
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Thunder Bay
Chamber
of Commerce

May 18, 2021

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Dear Premier Ford:

RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS PROTOCOL

Thank you for your continued leadership during these difficult and unprecedented times. We are following up on letters sent to you in March in which numerous Chambers of Commerce recommended revisions to the colour-coded COVID operating framework to ensure it keeps Ontarians safe, builds business confidence and does not unduly harm our economy. These recommendations were recently adopted as official policy of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

As your Government is preparing to lift current Lockdown and Stay At Home measures in the coming weeks, we again recommend that the COVID operating framework be updated through the creation of a Responsible Business Protocol that includes:

1) A Safe Operating Framework (by business sector) – The framework should advise business owners on operating guidelines for their establishment that protect their staff and clients from COVID-19 exposure.

Once a safe operating framework has been established by Ontario for each sector, the safety measures for each business should not vary based on what product you sell, geographic area or establishment size etc. This framework differs from the current one in that Ontarians can take comfort in knowing that the key issue is not business safety but community contact.

2) A Community Contact Reduction Framework (based on regional virus spread). As the cases rise in a particular region, the government should enforce a reduction in community contacts. We know it is not the business itself that becomes less safe. It is the contact between community members that is less safe. As such, we recommend that the new protocol establishes a framework that identifies how individual contacts must be reduced and would outline capacity restrictions, across the board, for public-facing businesses.

Example: In the Green level, all public-facing businesses would operate at 100% customer capacity (because they are already implementing safe operating protocols as per point #1) and as the case level rises in that region, capacity is reduced by 20% (for example, yellow = 80%, Orange = 60%, Red = 40%, Grey = 25%). This allows more businesses to stay open and changes the message to the community.

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We firmly believe that this Responsible Business Protocol, together with a safe operating framework by sector and community contact reduction framework, fairly applied across all sectors is a much better way to combat COVID, build consumer and business confidence, and not unduly harm the economy.

Thank you for your consideration. We welcome the opportunity for further discussion.

Sincerely,

Debbi Nicholson
Greater Sudbury
Chamber of Commerce

Peter Chirico
North Bay & District
Chamber of Commerce

Rory Ring
Sault Ste Marie Chamber of
Commerce

Charla Robinson
Thunder Bay Chamber of
Commerce

Keitha Robson
Timmins Chamber of
Commerce

- c. Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
Hon. Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
Hon. Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction
Hon. Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade
Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance and President of The Treasury Board
Hon. Michael Tibollo, Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ontario