



# Briefing Note

**Date:** Friday, December 4, 2020

**Prepared for:** ONWA Senior Management, Staff, Chapters, Councils & Community Partners

**Prepared by:** Policy, Research, and Evaluation Portfolio

**Purpose:** COVID-19 Provincial and National Updates for Week of November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 4<sup>th</sup>

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## **COVID-19 Numbers as of 2:30 P.M. <sup>1</sup> on Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020<sup>2</sup>**

- **Globally:** 66,051,718 cases (+4,321,831); 1,520,354 deaths (+74,945); 45,708,850 recovered
- **US:** 14,701,133 cases (+1,396,046); 284,750 deaths (+14,792); 8,624,288 recovered
- **India:** 9,606,810 cases (+257,525); 139,700 deaths (+3,510); 9,056,668 recovered
- **Brazil:** 6,496,050 cases (+286,646); 175,432 deaths (+3,868); 5,725,010 recovered
- **Canada:** 400,301 cases (+45,079); 12,470 deaths (+651); 318,053 recovered
- **Ontario:** 123,526 cases (+12,310); 3,737 deaths (+142); 104,792 recovered

## **Press Conference Highlights: November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

- COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to increase across the country at alarming levels.
- Click [here](#) for some general advice to consider when planning your holiday season.
- It is important for everyone to continue with [individual precautions](#) to keep ourselves, our families and our communities safer. Limit contacts to only those within your household.
- Consider getting the flu shot this year and downloading the [COVID Alert](#) app.
- Federal government is responsible for acquiring vaccines and distributing amongst the provinces.
- Provincial governments are responsible for the logistics to ensure that everyone in their province who needs or wants a vaccine, receives one.

### **Canada wide updates:**

- Nationally, as of December 4<sup>th</sup>, 69,255 active cases; average of 6,200 cases daily; average of 74,600 tests completed daily; average test positivity rate of 7.4%.
- Troubling rise of severe cases continues. Nationally, as of December 4<sup>th</sup>, average of close to 2,500 people hospitalized with COVID-19, including almost 500 in ICU; and an average of 87 deaths daily.
- [Supporting Canadians and Fighting COVID-19: Fall Economic Statement](#) 2020 released this week.
- The federal government has negotiated seven agreements with promising vaccine developers. Four of which already have vaccine candidates under Health Canada review.
- The federal government is collaborating closely with provincial/territorial governments, Indigenous partners, and private sector partners to ensure efficient vaccine roll-out plans are in place.
- Pending regulatory approval, the federal government expects vaccines to start rolling out in early 2021. The initial supply, being referred to as Track 1, will be limited, with only 3 million people expected to be vaccinated.
- These doses of the vaccine present extreme logistical challenges because they must be kept at low (-20°C) and ultra-low (-80°C) temperatures.

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<sup>1</sup> Increases in case and death counts are calculated from the previous briefing note to the current briefing note. As such, these numbers reflect weekly increases since the week of November 23-30.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>



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- The federal vaccine rollout plan has three key components: regulatory approvals, distribution, and administration.
- **Regulatory approvals:** 4 vaccine candidates (Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, and Johnson & Johnson) are currently under Health Canada review; expect a final decision from Health Canada in 7-10 days.
- **Distribution:** Ordered 126 freezers total (34 received; 92 on the way) to store the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines that need to keep at low and ultra-low temperatures. This means that, together with existing federal capacity, Canada has the capacity to store 33.5 million frozen doses of vaccines. The Canadian Armed Forces and the Public Health Agency of Canada are working closely together on distribution strategies and execution.
- This week the Canadian Armed Forces have been running simulations to ensure that when a vaccine is approved and ready to be delivered, the distribution process will run smoothly.
- **Administration:** Currently, Canada has a supply of needles, syringes, gauze, and swabs to accommodate 25 million doses of an administered vaccine, with more supplies en route.
- FedEx Express Canada and Innomar Strategies have been awarded federal contracts for end-to-end COVID-19 vaccine logistics solutions.
- Canada's National Advisory Committee in Immunization (NACI) has released [updated guidelines](#) for initial sequencing of key populations of COVID-19 immunizations.
- Priority populations include: residents and staff of congregate living setting that provide care for seniors; adults 70 years of age or older, starting with those 80 years of age or older; healthcare workers and personal support workers whose work involves direct contact with patients; and adults in Indigenous communities where infection can have disproportionate consequences.
- Ultimately, the provinces and territories are in control of determining who their priority populations are and how their COVID-19 vaccines will be delivered.
- December 1, 2020 is World AIDS Day and marks the start Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week.
- Last month, Health Canada approved the first HIV self-test kit that uses a one-minute test, with a finger-prick of blood, to provide results to individuals in the comfort and safety of their own home.
- Introduced Bill C-15 An [Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) to the House of Commons. The legislation would mandate the federal government, in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, to take all measures to ensure the laws of Canada are consistent with the declaration.
- Minister Marc Miller of Indigenous Services Canada announced that the federal government will not meet its 2015 election campaign promise to end all long-term boil water advisories on-reserve by March 2021. Minister Miller also announced an additional \$1.5 billion in funding to continue working towards their commitment.
- The Canada Emergency Business Account has been expanded to provide small businesses with access to a second loan of up to \$20,000, on top of the initial loan of \$40,000. Like with the initial loan, \$10,000 of this loan is forgivable if paid back by the end of 2022.

### Ontario specific updates:

- Provincially, as of December 4<sup>th</sup>, active cases - average of 1,769 cases daily, with an average test positivity rate of 7.4%; 87% of cases are concentrated in red and lockdown areas.
- Hospitalizations are up 20% over last week; COVID-19 patients in ICU is up 34% over last week.
- Large number of outbreaks are occurring across the province in various regions, including locations where it was rare to report outbreaks in the past.



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- A little less than a third of total outbreaks are reported in vulnerable sectors (long-term care homes, retirement homes, congregate care settings, group homes, and hospitals); a little less than a third are in schools and daycares; and the rest is split between workplaces and public facing locations (restaurants, short-term accommodation, places of worship, and recreational fitness centres)
- All of these outbreaks speak to the large nature of widespread community transmission.
- Some hospitals are having to delay surgeries or allocate to other facilities. The healthcare system is coping but some institutions are not.
- Three regions are moving to new levels in Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework: Middlesex-London Health Unit & Thunder Bay District Health Unit are moving from yellow-protect to orange-restrict. Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit is moving from green-prevent to yellow-protect. Takes effect on Monday, December 7, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.
- [Application portal](#) for Ontario's Support for Learners Initiative is now open until January 15, 2021. For every child aged 0-12, eligible parents will receive \$200 in support. For every child or youth aged 0-21 with special needs, eligible parents will receive \$250 in support. Open to families whose kids are at school, at home, or in childcare.
- Top priority is to keep schools safe and open, which is why the Ontario government is investing an additional \$380 million to help with additional education expense during COVID-19.
- Expanding testing schools – especially in hot spot areas.
- Students will be provided with refresher training on COVID-19 safety protocols the first day back after the holidays.
- Ontario's vaccine distribution strategy will be ready by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The government is working with McKesson and Shoppers Drug Mart who have the necessary warehousing capacity and expertise on getting the vaccine to their networks, including hospitals. Also speaking with delivery companies, like Purolator.
- Ontario is still working on determining its priority populations. However, it is fair to say that the most vulnerable populations will likely be targeted first.
- Backgrounds on the newly announced members of the Ontario COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force can be found [here](#).
- The Ontario government announced an investment of over \$115 million to help 850 patient with high complex care needs transition to home and community care so they can receive care in the comfort and safety of their own home. These are patients who are currently hospitalized but no longer need to be. This will help to alleviate capacity pressures on hospitals.
- The investment will provide patients with up to 11 hours of care at home, funding for nurses and personal support workers to provide home care, and support meals on wheels services, housekeeping, and transportation to medical appointments.
- Funding also includes \$14.5 million to expand virtual care across province to ensure healthcare providers can provide quality care to patients in their home. This will greatly benefit northern and rural communities where access to healthcare is a challenge.
- Investment will fund new technology for video conferencing, secure messaging, remote patient care, and monitoring and symptom management at home to support COVID-19 patients and other vulnerable patients. It will also allow people to connect virtually for routine check-ups, symptom monitoring, referrals to other providers, and when necessary, access an in-person or virtual medical assessment.
- Ontario still has many fundamental questions related to vaccine roll-out that the federal government has not been able to answer: What vaccines will Ontario receive? How many vaccines will Ontario receive? And when will the vaccines arrive?



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- Premier Ford indicated that without the answers to these questions, it is very challenging to develop a COVID-19 vaccination distribution plan. However, they are working hard to prepare for all scenarios to have clear plans for infrastructure and supply chains in place the day the vaccine arrives in Ontario.

## Updated Ontario Public Health Regions by Zone as of December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

- For more information about restrictions in your community's zone: [COVID-19 Response Framework](#).

Prevent	Protect	Restrict	Control	Lockdown
Weekly incidence rate less than 10 per 100,000 and less than 0.5% positivity	Weekly incidence rate 10 to 24.9 per 100,000 and 0.5-1.2% positivity	Weekly incidence rate 25 to 39.9 per 100,000 and 1.3 to 2.4% positivity	Weekly incidence rate 40 or higher per 100,000 and 2.5% or higher positivity	Trends continue to worsen after Control restrictions implemented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algoma Public Health</li> <li>• Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit</li> <li>• North Bay Parry Sound District</li> <li>• Porcupine Health Unit</li> <li>• Renfrew County and District Health Unit</li> <li>• Timiskaming Health Unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chatham-Kent Public Health</li> <li>• Eastern Ontario Health Unit</li> <li>• Grey Bruce Health Unit</li> <li>• Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit</li> <li>• Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Public Health</li> <li>• Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Public Health</li> <li>• Lambton Public Health</li> <li>• Northwestern Health Unit</li> <li>• Peterborough Public Health</li> <li>• Public Health Sudbury and Districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brant County Health Unit</li> <li>• Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit</li> <li>• Huron Perth Public Health</li> <li>• Middlesex-London Health Unit</li> <li>• Niagara Region Public Health</li> <li>• Ottawa Public Health</li> <li>• Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit</li> <li>• Southwestern Public Health</li> <li>• Thunder Bay District Health Unit</li> <li>• Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Durham Region Health Department</li> <li>• City of Hamilton Public Health Services</li> <li>• Halton Region Public Health</li> <li>• Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services</li> <li>• Windsor-Essex County Health Unit</li> <li>• York Region Public Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peel Regional Health Unit</li> <li>• Toronto Public Health</li> </ul>



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## Daily New COVID-19 Cases in Ontario this Week

Date	# of new cases
November 30	1,746
December 1	1,707
December 2	1,723
December 3	1,824
December 4	1,780

## COVID-19 Related Press Releases November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### Provincial

- [Ontario Providing Additional Financial Support for Young Learners](#) – November 30, 2020
- [Ontario Supports Local Manufacturers Producing Masks for Adults and Children](#) – December 1, 2020
- [Ontario Collaborates with Industry Experts to Plan the COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout](#) – December 1, 2020
- [Ontario Expanding Innovative Home and Community Care Services](#) – December 2, 2020
- [Investing in Ontario's Tourism Industry During COVID-19](#) – December 3, 2020
- [Ontario Appoints Members of Ministers' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force](#) – December 4, 2020
- [Ontario Supports Businesses, Workers and Families during COVID-19](#) – December 4, 2020
- [Ontario Moving Three Regions to New Levels in COVID-19 Response Framework](#) – December 4, 2020

### Federal

- [Government of Canada Releases Supporting Canadians and Fighting COVID-19: Fall Economic Statement 2020](#) – November 30, 2020
- [Joint Statement from the Minister of Health and the Minister of Indigenous Services on World AIDS Day](#) – December 1, 2020
- [Statement on UK's authorization of its first COVID-19 vaccine, manufactured by Pfizer/BioNTech](#) – December 2, 2020
- [Government of Canada announces \\$1.5 billion in new investments for clean drinking water in First Nations communities](#) – December 2, 2020
- [New investments in clean water on reserves](#) – December 2, 2020
- [Government of Canada introduces legislation respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) – December 3, 2020
- [Government of Canada and partners invest \\$1.8M in strengthening pandemic preparedness in long-term care and retirement homes](#) – December 4, 2020
- [Government expands Canada Emergency Business Account loans](#) – December 4, 2020