

Ontario Helping Businesses Overcome the Unique Challenges Created by COVID-19

New Website Accepting Proposals for Temporarily Changing Rules and Regulations

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is launching the [COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers](#) website to help businesses overcome the unique challenges created by the global pandemic. Businesses working to retool their operations to produce health-related products, or those that want to continue their operations in this new environment of physical distancing, can submit any potential roadblocks to the website. The province is prepared to allow temporary changes to provincial rules and regulations in order to remove any barriers that are hindering business and negatively impacting Ontario's supply chain.

Today's announcement was made by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, and Prabmeet Sarkaria, Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction.

"With COVID-19, we are facing uncharted territory. As government, we must be prepared to work with businesses and show some flexibility in helping them to overcome challenges they may have never faced before," said Premier Ford. "This website will allow us to listen to and support businesses as they adapt to this new environment. At the same time, it should also make it easier for businesses to retool to produce the health-related supplies and equipment that our frontline workers need."

"During this extraordinary period, we need to do everything we can to support businesses as they struggle to operate as an essential business, or wait for the outbreak to subside," said Minister Sarkaria. "Clearly, it is not business as usual for anyone, and that's why our government is prepared to temporarily adjust our processes, rules, and regulations to accommodate unforeseen circumstances. I encourage everyone to visit our new website if there are any questions or concerns."

The website builds on steps the government has already taken to help businesses respond to COVID-19, including:

- providing \$10 billion in provincial tax deferrals, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board premium deferrals, and other business supports;
- providing more than \$900 million in urgent relief to small businesses and their landlords through a new program, the Ontario-Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance Program (OCECRA);

- providing \$50 million to help businesses such as manufacturers and distilleries retool so they can produce health-related products and supplies, such as ventilators, gowns, face masks and hand sanitizer;
- permitting 24-hour construction for critical infrastructure;
- permitting 24-hour deliveries in every municipality across the province to help grocery stores and pharmacies keep their shelves stocked; and
- allowing restaurants and bars to sell alcohol with food takeout or delivery orders.

In order to help Ontario businesses focus on overcoming today's challenges, the province is also pausing or extending any existing public consultations, delaying non-urgent related consultations while the emergency situation remains in place, and considering extending deadlines for reports and audits.

LEARN MORE

- Visit the [COVID-19: Tackling the Barriers](#) website.
- [See how your organization can help fight COVID-19.](#)
- Learn more about [Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19.](#)
- Visit Ontario's [COVID-19 website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect Ontarians from the virus.
- Read [A Framework for Reopening our Province.](#)

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