

Seven more regions enter Phase 2 of provincial reopening, Peel not included

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Premier Doug Ford announced back on June 8 a list of regions in the province that will enter Stage 2 of relaunching the economy ,allowing more businesses to reopen.

Effective as of Friday (June 12), a total of 24 regions moved into Stage 2. Additionally, the restrictions for social distancing were extended from gatherings of give to 10 people for all regions, even those remaining in Stage 1.

Stage 2 of reopening the province includes, outdoor dining to be permitted, the reopening of personal care services such as hair salons and tattoo parlours, tourism services, water recreational facilities, beach and camping ground access, drive-in theatres and drive-through services as well as allowing weddings and funerals to go ahead, with a limit of 10 guests.

On (June 15) Premier Ford declared seven more regions to move in Stage 2, with Peel Region, Toronto and Windsor-Essex the only exemptions as public health agencies are still undergoing assessments of the regions.

?Thanks to the collective efforts of our frontline health care workers and the people in these regions to stop the spread of COVID-19, more businesses will be able to open their doors and thousands of people will be able to go back to work and put food on the table,? said Premier Ford. ?With the public health trends improving day by day across the province, I am hopeful all regions of Ontario will enter Stage 2 very soon. But we must remain on our guard to prevent any potential surge or secondary wave by continuing to follow the sound advice of our public health officials.?

Peel has a total of 5,546 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Of those, 2917 are in Brampton, 2,478 in Mississauga and 149 here in Caledon.

Mayor of Brampton Patrick Brown, as well as Mayor of Mississauga Bonnie Crombie, both agree with keeping Peel in Stage 1 until the time is right. Crombie took to Twitter stating, ?This is the right decision. Given the progress Mississauga has made, I remained hopeful but the given rates across the entire Region remain the second-highest in the province, it's clear we have more work to do.?

With no specific timeline on when Peel residents can expect to enter Stage 2, Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones says she is hopeful for a gradual reopen for Peel as the number of confirmed cases decrease.

?What we're really looking at the numbers and what we are seeing is a trend in decrease in the number of positive cases in Peel region, and more importantly, we're seeing less need for the hospital,? said Jones. ?It's one thing to be tested positive and to self-isolate, it's quite another to have go into a hospital and use an ICU bed and worst case, ventilator. And as those numbers continue to go down, I am hopeful that we will see the gradual reopen continue.?

With the community following physical distancing, using personal protective equipment and staying home when ill, it has made all the difference when avoiding the spread of COVID-19, but to keep in perspective our new normal.

?I think it's important for people to understand that the reopening doesn't mean everybody goes back to doing things the way they used to. We've already seen it in our grocery stores, we've seen it in our businesses when people are being asked to wear masks and they can social distance,? she explained. ?There is a new reality that says we have to be careful, that we don't get complacent and find ourselves in another outbreak.?

She added, ?If people put down their guard too much, then we're at risk of a second outbreak.?

When asked what it will take for the Province to reopen Peel Region, MPP Jones says it was a case of watching, and reacting to, the

numbers.

?It really is watching the numbers increase or decrease,? commented Jones. ?As we see those numbers continue to decrease, I'm hopeful that we can make some changes and relax some of the restrictions.?

For more information, visit peelregion.ca.