



To: Premier Doug Ford
Hon. Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General

Cc: Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier, Minister of Health
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Health

Re: Need for Ontario-wide clarity on enforcement protocols, public health measures, outdoor safety

April 23, 2021

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Jones,

Ontarians remain confused about many public health measures and how and where to get vaccinated. While rescinding Friday's changes to the stay-at-home order were necessary, there remains confusion due to a need for clear communication. Clearer communications from the province will increase our chances of success at curbing the spread of this virus and reducing the strain on our health system.

Everyone in Ontario needs clear communication on what they are allowed to do, and what they must do to stay safe and help keep others safe. People must know they can get vaccinated despite the current stay-at-home order and feel confident they will not face enforcement measures in doing so. Clarification on the importance of outdoor exercise, including on playgrounds, is also needed.

This must be communicated through clear messages to both law enforcement and the general public, especially since many police services noted they would not follow enforcement measures laid out last week. People must know they are safe and can leave their homes to get vaccinated without being stopped or facing repercussions.

For people already marginalized and who face barriers to getting out for essential reasons – whether essential workers, those who have faced systemic racism from enforcement in the past, or those marginalized by poverty or under-housing during the pandemic – this trust is critical.

We also welcome the announcements this week from the Premier and Ministers that paid sick leave for COVID-19 is being developed by the government, and we look forward to learning the details in the near future.

We understand the difficulty of communicating in this environment as variables are constantly shifting. That is why clear direction from the province is essential. Once clearer messages are communicated to law enforcement and the public, we will support amplifying your messages. We will help increase the public's confidence in safely leaving their homes for exercise and mental health. And as primary care associations, we will continue to do our part to build confidence in all vaccines available and ensure everyone in Ontario can get vaccinated as soon as possible. But the clarity on overall messages must first come from you. For all of us, this is essential to stopping the spread of COVID-19 as soon as we can.

Sincerely,

Leanne Clarke, CEO, Ontario College of Family Physicians
Jennifer Clement, Past-President, Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic Association
Sarah Hobbs, CEO, Alliance for Healthier Communities
Caroline Lidstone-Jones, CEO, Indigenous Primary Health Care Council
Kavita Mehta, CEO, Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario
Dr. David Schieck, Ontario Medical Association, Section on General & Family Practice