

Ford Government Tightens Lockdown on Ontario Businesses: New Truncated List of Essential Workplaces Released

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On Friday April 3, 2020, the Ontario provincial government released a new, truncated list of essential workplaces exempted from the mandatory emergency closure order. This measure was made in conjunction with the provincial government's disclosure to the public of data and models that forecasted a possible 3,000 to 15,000 COVID-19 related deaths in Ontario over the course of the pandemic.

The following are among the changes between the previous list of essential workplaces and the list released on April 3, 2020, which took effect at 11:59 p.m. on April 4, 2020:

- All industrial construction projects, except for critical projects such as hospitals and transportation projects, will be closed. Sites that remain open will be heavily scrutinized and inspected. More details regarding the closure of construction sites can be found [here](#).
- Some businesses that were previously allowed to remain open are now required to operate through curbside pickup or delivery (hardware, vehicle parts stores, pet and animal supplies, office and computer supplies, and safety supplies).
- Cannabis stores have been ordered to close.
- "Hotels, motels, [and] other shared rental accommodation including student residences" remain on the essential businesses list, but there is now an exception for "seasonal campgrounds and any pools, fitness centres, meeting rooms and other recreational facilities that may be part of the operations of these businesses" which must now close.
- Veterinary services are now restricted to "urgent care only".

Businesses not identified on the government of Ontario's revised list of essential workplaces will be required to close their physical locations by 11:59 p.m. on April 4, 2020.

WeirFoulds' employment law and construction law groups are monitoring these developments and will be providing updates as the COVID-19 situation progresses. For more information on how to respond to COVID-19 in your workplace or organization, please contact one of our authors.

The information and comments herein are for the general information of the reader and are not intended as advice or opinion to be relied upon in relation to any particular circumstances. For particular application of the law to specific situations, the reader should seek professional advice.

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