



## MEDIA ADVISORY

For immediate release

March 15, 2020

### COV-19 Update from Waterloo Region Municipalities

#### *Facility Closures and Program Cancellations*

**Waterloo Region** - As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve around the world and in our local community, the health and wellbeing of Waterloo Region residents remains our top priority. All area municipalities continue to work closely with the Region of Waterloo's Public Health experts to monitor and respond to new developments.

Late evening on Friday, March 13th, the Province's Chief Medical Officer of Health provided updated guidance to support public health units in managing and responding to this ongoing issue. Based on this update, Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Region of Waterloo Public Health's Acting Medical Officer of Health, has recommended an increased emphasis on social distancing in order to slow the spread of the virus within the community.

In response, the Region and all area municipalities are making significant changes to services and programming, effective immediately. These changes will remain in effect until April 5, and will be evaluated for potential extension beyond that date:

#### **Facility Closures**

All municipally-run cultural and recreational facilities will be closed to the public from March 16 to April 5. This includes all arenas, pools, community centres and public libraries.

#### **Program Cancellations**

##### *Day Camps*

The Province has issued guidance to licensed childcare providers which requires active screening for program participants, staff and volunteers. Municipally-run children's programs, including March Break day camps, do not have the capacity or resources to enact this recommended practice; as a result, all municipally-run day camps will be canceled from March 16 to April 5.

##### *Recreation Programs and Activities*

All recreation programs and activities offered in municipal facilities including community centres,

pools, etc. are cancelled from March 16 to April 5. Refunds will be provided to registrants for municipally-run programs. Residents are encouraged to contact their respective municipality for more information.

#### *Public Libraries and municipally-operated museums and galleries*

Kitchener, Cambridge, Waterloo and the Region of Waterloo rural library system along with municipally-operated museums and galleries will be closed to the public effective March 16 to April 5.

#### **Municipal Farmers Markets**

Local municipalities recognize that our municipally-operated farmers markets (Kitchener Market and Cambridge Farmers' Market) are an important food source for residents. For that reason, we will be investigating whether or not they can continue to operate while ensuring that a suitable level of social distancing can be achieved consistent with the guidance received from the Medical Officer of Health. A decision about whether or not they will be closed will be made prior to Saturday, March 21.

For more information and to find details related to specific closures and cancellations, visit your respective municipal website.

#### **Other Municipal Services**

Residents are encouraged to delay any non-essential business with their respective municipality or to consider conducting business online or by phone, where possible.

All emergency services and essential regional and municipal services will continue.

#### **Parks, trails and outdoor spaces**

All municipal parks, fields, trails and outdoor spaces will remain open and available for residents to enjoy.

These are challenging times for our community, and the residents and businesses our municipalities proudly serve. As organizations, we recognize that the pace at which decisions and changes are occurring is disruptive and disconcerting, and that these decisions may have significant impact on those we serve. We regret the disruption these changes will have; however the safety and wellbeing of our residents and our community at large is our top priority. Based on the recommendations of our regional, provincial and federal health care leaders, we believe these decisions are in the best interest of our communities, and our collective health.

For more information on closures and cancellations across Waterloo Region, visit

[www.regionofwaterloo.ca](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca)

[www.kitchener.ca](http://www.kitchener.ca)

[www.waterloo.ca](http://www.waterloo.ca)

[www.cambridge.ca](http://www.cambridge.ca)

[www.woolwich.ca](http://www.woolwich.ca)

[www.wilmot.ca](http://www.wilmot.ca)

[www.wellesley.ca](http://www.wellesley.ca)

[www.northdumfries.ca](http://www.northdumfries.ca)

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