

GIGNUL MASENYGUN

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY AND COVID-19



June 22 – Special statement from Dr. Sarah Funnell, Associate Medical Officer of Health

Kwey, Aniin, Shé:kon, Ainngai, Taanshi

This past weekend we celebrated both National Indigenous Peoples Day and Summer Solstice, a time of celebration and new beginnings. Many Ottawans enjoyed the weekend outdoors to enjoy the beauty of the traditional unceded Algonquin territory.

June is also Indigenous History Month, a time to learn about and acknowledge the rich diversity of cultures and traditions of First Nations, Inuit and Mé-

tis peoples.

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) is committed to reconciliation. We work in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and communities to advance Indigenous health equity and address anti-Indigenous racism. Currently we are working with partners to better understand how COVID-19 is affecting Indigenous communities, including the health and social effects of closures and physical distancing on First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

As part of our pandemic response, OPH has launched [a new webpage](#) that highlights COVID-19 resources for First Nations,

Inuit, and Métis community members. Resources include information developed by Ottawa Public Health and local provincial and national Indigenous organizations. Several of the resources are available in a number of Indigenous languages that reflect the diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Ottawa.

Please take the opportunity to learn about First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, anti-Indigenous racism, and to reflect on a personal commitment to address past and current injustices.

Meegwetch, Nia:wen, Qujannamiik, Marsee



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WEARING MASKS NOW RECOMMENDED IN COMMON AREAS OF APARTMENT BUILDINGS

QUESTION

My landlord just posted a flyer from the Province of Ontario in the lobby of my apartment building. The flyer says people should wear masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19 when physical distancing is a challenge. Does that mean that I and all the other tenants should be wearing masks in the hallways, the elevator and the laundry room?

ANSWER

Yes, that is the recommendation of the Ontario government and Ottawa Public Health. That is a reversal of the position the public health authorities took until a few weeks ago. The reversal is as a result of new research and information.

There are some exceptions, but in general in apartment buildings or condo towers, residents are recommended to wear masks in all common areas. The masks should be non-medical masks to preserve the supply of those masks for medical personnel. The masks can be washable and reusable, or disposable.

Masks should not be placed on children under the age of two, on anyone unable to remove the mask without help or on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious.

Masks should also not be shared between people. Landlords should consider speaking to any tenants with disabilities to develop strategies to help with physical distancing when in common areas.

In order for a cloth mask to be effective, it should fit well and cover a person's nose and mouth, and the mask should be replaced when it gets dirty or even slightly wet. Don't use plastic or other materials that you can't breathe through as a face covering. Only reuse masks that can be cleaned. If you can't clean the mask, throw it out at the end of the day. Remember when wearing a mask to only touch your mask or face if your hands were just washed.

Besides in building common areas, people should wear a mask if they are caring for someone who is sick, or are sick themselves and going out in public to go to an appointment, clinic or hospital. (Other than that, if you are sick you should not be going out in public.)

Some retail stores are requiring customers to wear masks. As well, unless things change, it appears that OC Transpo users will be required to wear masks to ride city buses or the O-Train.

The Ottawa Public Health website has more information on:

- {} How to wear a mask properly
- {} How to wear a mask with glasses
- {} How to wash, reuse and discard masks
- {} When to take off your mask
- {} How long you can wear a mask
- {} Masks and the heat

The website can be found by Google searching "Ottawa Public Health COVID-19 masks."

Many tenants in apartment buildings are eager for amenities such as swimming pools, party rooms and fitness rooms to be reopened or opened for the season. As of now, the guidance from OPH is that those facilities should still be kept closed. Even when they do reopen, there will be new rules for how they are to be used. For example, the number of people permitted in a swimming pool or fitness room will probably be restricted to a lower number than before the pandemic began.

**BY: DICKIE & LYMAN LLP
WHO PRACTICE LANDLORD/
TENANT LAW AND OTHER
AREAS OF LAW**

HOW DO I PRACTICE PHYSICAL (SOCIAL) DISTANCING?

Stay at home as much as possible. All Canadians should be practicing physical (social) distancing. Even if you don't have symptoms of COVID-

19, you could become infected by others.

{} Stay at home unless you have to

go to work. Talk to your employer about working at home if possible

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CERB MAY MEAN A RENT INCREASE FOR THOSE LIVING IN RENT-GEARED-TO-INCOME UNITS

QUESTIONS

I have lived in social housing in Ottawa for many years. My main income is from the Ontario Disability Support Program, but last year I made about \$500 a month by taking part-time work. That job disappeared because of COVID-19, although, for now, the government is giving me Canada Emergency Response Benefit money. But the province has cut my ODSP cheque, and the city has raised my rent. That doesn't seem fair. Why can the province and the city take most of my CERB money?

ANSWER

The federal government called on the province not to claw back their assistance payments because of the receipt of federal assistance, and some are going along with that. However, in other provinces the government is cutting social assistance payments by the full amount of any federal assistance, since social assistance is seen as the last backstop for a person, and they are obliged to obtain whatever other income they can before the backstop is paid.

Ontario decided on a compromise: people who are receiving ODSP can

keep part of their CERB. Assuming you are a single adult, your ODSP would be around \$1,200 per month. With \$500 in earnings, that would have made your income about \$1,700 per month before COVID-19.

Since CERB pays \$2,000 every four weeks, losing all your ODSP would have still left you ahead in income. Instead, Ontario is still paying some of your ODSP so that you will receive a total of about \$2,300 per month. That is obviously much better than the \$1,700 you got before COVID-19.

The issue with your rent is likely coming up because you live in a rent-geared-to-income unit. That is a benefit since your rent is limited to no more than 30 per cent of your income.

Before COVID-19 struck, when your income was \$1,700 per month, your rent would have been calculated at \$510 (and you had \$1,190 left to pay for your other needs). Now that your income is \$2,300 per month, your rent should be \$690 (and you have \$1,610 left). Although your rent went up, you are still much further ahead.

If you did not have a rent subsidy, your rent would not go up with the change of your income. But your rent would have been higher in the first

place. Suppose the full rent is \$750 per month. Before COVID-19, you would have had \$950 left after you paid your rent, \$240 less than you actually had. With your CERB money, you would have \$1,550 left after you paid your rent, \$60 less than you actually have.

The whole point of gearing rent to income is that rents are brought down by a subsidy when a person's income goes up (up to the market rent level).

Your bigger concern is when you stop receiving CERB and you have to return to living on the money provided by ODSP and whatever part-time work you can find them.

Until recently, many people were nearing the end of their eligibility for CERB. However, the program has been extended by eight weeks and is now available for a maximum of 24 weeks. **Recipients need to continue to apply for each four week period.**

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HOW DO I PRACTICE PHYSICAL (SOCIAL) DISTANCING?

🚫 Avoid all non-essential trips in your community

🚫 Do not gather in groups

🚫 Limit contact with people at higher risk (e.g. older adults and those in poor health)

🚫 Go outside to exercise but stay close to home

🚫 If you leave your home, always keep a distance of at least 2 arms

lengths (approximately 2 metres from others)

🚫 Household contacts (people you live with) do not need to distance from each other unless they are sick or have travelled in the last 14 days.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Strawberry-Avocado Tossed Salad

Ingredients

1/4 cup olive oil
8 tsp sugar
8 tsp honey
2 tbsp cider vinegar
2 tbsp lemon juice
1/4 tsp salt
4 cup torn romaine lettuce
2 medium ripe avocados, peeled and thinly sliced
20 strawberries, sliced

Directions

In a small bowl, whisk together the oil, sugar, honey, vinegar, lemon juice and salt.

Divide romaine lettuce among 4 salad plates. Top each with avocado and strawberries. Drizzle with dressing. Sprinkle with pecans.

CANADA DAY AND COVID-19

OTTAWA – You are being invited to celebrate Canada's 153rd birthday virtually this year.

The federal government has announced that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person birthday festivities in Ottawa and Gatineau on July 1 will be cancelled.

In a statement, Minister of Canadian Heritage Steven Guilbeault said the government has “decided to celebrate Canada Day differently this year, in a way that will allow us to come together virtually to share our pride in being Canadian.”

The big Canada Day festivities were scheduled to be held at Major's Hill Park this year, after renovations to Centre Block forced officials to move the party off of Parliament Hill.

Guilbeault says Canadian Heritage

is now working with Canadian artists and artisans to put together a virtual program, “reflecting our diversity and values, and showcasing the immense talent our country has to offer.”

Details on the virtual Canada Day celebrations on July 1 are expected to be announced soon.

In a message on Twitter, Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson said “the cancellation of Canada Day celebrations on the Hill is regrettable, but it's the right decision to keep everyone safe.”

Watson adds “I look forward to welcoming you all back to Ottawa in 2021!”

**HAPPY CANADA DAY
TO ALL GIGNUL AND MADAWAN
TENANTS!**

DANGERS OF CARELESS SMOKING

The Ontario Fire Marshal's Office says careless smoking is the leading cause of fire injuries and fatalities and is the fourth leading cause of preventable home fires in Ontario.

If you or someone you live with smokes, follow these safety tips:

- ☞ Smoke outside whenever possible.
- ☞ Never smoke in bed or when you are feeling drowsy or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

☞ Never smoke while using assisted oxygen devices.

☞ Dispose smoking materials properly. Use sturdy, deep ashtrays and make sure cigarette butts and ashes are fully out. Never discard your smoking material in garbage, potted flowerpots or beds, recycling or other plastic containers.

☞ It is best to dispose cigarettes in a bucket of sand or water.

☞ Before going to sleep, check un-

der and around sofa cushions and upholstered furniture for smoldering cigarettes.

☞ Keep matches, lighters and smoking materials out of the reach of children up high and preferably locked up and never unattended.

They're also reminding you to make sure you have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms in your home.

Any Ottawa resident who feels they need a test, even if they are not showing symptoms, can go for **testing** at the **COVID-19 Assessment Centre** or **COVID-19 Care Clinics** and should not be turned away, unless volumes are significant. If volumes are significant, priority will be given to residents from **high-risk groups** and those **showing symptoms**.