

Date: June 6, 2020

Re: Extension of COVID-19 Measures to June 30, 2020

Over the past two months, Community Living Toronto (CLTO) has taken rapid and necessary steps to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these changes came about as a result of information that has been updated or amended as we have adapted to the crisis. We have extended these measures twice to align with public health guidance.

Earlier this week, the provincial government extended the Declaration of Emergency to June 30, 2020. Today, CLTO is extending our own closures and other COVID-19 measures to June 30 to align with the provincial timeline.

This extension is essential to ensuring the continued safety of both the people we support and our staff. Despite our national, provincial, and local progress in flattening the curve, daily news reports confirm that the fight is far from over. This is especially true in congregate living settings, such as group homes and long-term care homes. So far, we have managed to keep COVID-19 out of most of our sites and have kept people as safe as possible. The measures we put in place over the past two months and the hard work of our staff have produced this result.

Group Homes

We have realigned our work to focus all of our efforts on keeping the people we support and our staff safe from COVID-19. Active screening measures are in place in all our sites and staff have been asked to limit their employment in the vulnerable people sector to CLTO. Home and family visits have been suspended until June 30, 2020 to limit the possibility of spreading COVID-19 through movement in-and-out of our sites.

Day Programs

Day programs across CLTO were suspended in accordance with Public Health guidance around physical distancing and limiting journeys outside the home to essential needs only. This measure is extended until June 30, 2020.

Respite

Our respite programs have been suspended to protect both individuals in support and staff from exposure to COVID-19. This closure has been applied across CLTO respite programs, including Lawson, McMillan, TREADD, and Ennerdale. This was necessary to protect the health of everyone involved. In accordance with advice from Public Health authorities, respite services across the Association will remain closed until June 30, 2020.

CLTO Offices

CLTO has taken steps to significantly limit the number of people entering our administrative offices across the city, including our Head Office at 20 Spadina and all regional offices. Only essential staff are permitted entry to our offices, and anyone entering must wear a mask and be actively screened before proceeding into the building. All in-person training remains suspended across the Association. These measures will remain in effect until June 30, 2020.

Individualized Supports, LIGHTS, APSW, and Supported Independent Living

Many individuals supported or affiliated with CLTO live independently in the community with some or infrequent services from CLTO. We have recommended that people living independently take measures to limit the number of visitors entering their homes and that they practice physical distancing as much as possible. We have provided PPE to households or visiting staff where physical distancing is not possible.

Events Across CLTO

On the advice of Public Health authorities and in compliance with City of Toronto restrictions on gatherings and permitted events, we have cancelled all events across the organization up to July 1, 2020. Our flagship event, Community Rocks, has been postponed from November 2020 to November 2021.

Employment Supports

As much as possible, our employment supports continue to match individuals seeking work. We also continue to support individuals who are working in a CLTO-facilitated placement.

Shadow Lake

As summer approaches, many members of the CLTO community look forward to time at our camp at Shadow Lake. In accordance with provincial direction and public health guidance, all scheduled Shadow Lake sessions scheduled for this summer are cancelled. Refunds for those who have already registered will be issued automatically. The Shadow Lake team will offer virtual camp sessions starting June 8, which will include small and large group programming and a kit that will be mailed home with camp gear such as a t-shirt and activities to do from home. Please consult the Shadow Lake Centre Facebook page for the latest.

Virtual Offerings

We are working hard to develop online offerings to help ease the pain of social isolation at home during the pandemic. Every day, we host fun activities on Facebook Live from our Community Living Toronto page. Highlights include stretching sessions with Batman and Wonder Woman, cooking classes, and movie of the week recommendations. We are also developing virtual programming to help fill the void left by our closed day programs. Beyond these measures, we are also ensuring that all of our group homes have the technology they need to keep the people we support happy and connected to their families and friends. Please contact your supervisor to arrange phone calls, Facetime chats, or other virtual connections with your family member.

This is a disappointing result forced on us by the COVID-19 pandemic. We must remain vigilant to preserve the safety of the vulnerable population we support and our staff as the economy begins to reopen. While we cannot say exactly what will happen beyond June 30, it is clear that we

will not be able to reopen our services or return to family visits as we know them right away. We are working on a staged plan to loosen some restrictions when the time is right. Unfortunately, it is impossible to say exactly when that will be. In the meantime, we remain committed to keeping the people we support and our staff safe through this unprecedented time. We will update you frequently over the coming weeks. We appreciate your patience and understanding.