

Ministry of Health

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Dear Ontario Camps Association and Overnight Camp Operators,

Nothing is more important right than the health and safety of all Ontarians, including our children. During these unprecedented times, the province continues to take action to protect our most vulnerable, and aggressively work to stop the virus spread in our communities based on public health advice and the best available evidence.

We also recognize the importance of camps in general to the development, physical and mental well-being as well as long-term resiliency of Ontario's children and youth.

As all 34 public health units have transitioned back to the [COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open](#) (the "Framework"), the province continues to review the evidence and consult with public health experts, and local medical officers of health to determine if and when additional changes to the Framework, including relaxing of the existing measures can be recommended.

We recognize and acknowledge that many sectors, including overnight camps, are seeking government confirmation of being able to operate in 2021. We are also aware that there is considerable planning and preparatory work in order to support safe re-opening and operations.

As you are aware from ongoing discussions with this office, there is generally support for planning to re-open overnight camps for children and youth in Ontario in 2021, subject to specific conditions. We continue to work on further instruction and guidance for specific conditions that will need to be met that will include but are not limited to the implementation of a suite of comprehensive public health and workplace safety measures. We look forward to continuing our consultation with the OCA over the coming weeks to complete this work.

As part of planning for re-opening, the sector needs to be prepared to respond to the COVID-19 epidemiological context and uncertainty. Unfavourable changes in epidemiological trends (increase case counts, outbreaks or circulating variants of concern), may result in changes to operating requirements, including the potential to reverse or modify plans to re-open. Overnight camps also need to be aware of and abide by any local municipal bylaws or direction from local public health units.

We look forward to continued dialogue and planning.

Sincerely,



David C. Williams, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Chief Medical Officer of Health