



SPEAKING NOTES

COVID-19 Community Update – Chair Karen Redman

February 12, 2021

Welcome

Welcome everyone to this week's community update.

This morning, we will get our weekly update from medical officer of health Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang and Vaccine Task Force Chair, Deputy Chief Shirley Hilton. Today we have two returning special guests. Dr. Sharon Bal and Lee Fairclough. Together with Dr. Wang, Dr. Ball and Lee represent what we refer to as the Tri-Ad. I look forward to their update on their individual roles as members of the Tri-Ad as well as the ways they are working together to address health inequities in the community through our pandemic response and vaccine roll out.

Return to Reopening of Ontario framework

The province announced earlier this week that Waterloo Region will shift from the stay-at-home order back to the emergency colour coded restriction framework on February 16.

While we anticipate to find out later today what level the Region will be assigned but under the revised framework, we know this is no way a "return to normal" yet. Regional council continues to lobby for sick benefits for those self isolating and for the province to amend the Reopening Ontario Act. We asked the province to reduce frustration among businesses and enforcement agencies by ensuring timely enforcement responses built on consistent application of the law.



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We're also asking for capacity limits to be more equitable across businesses so that it's fair for small businesses, restaurants and big box stores alike.

We are thankful to the province for their continued support and resources to help us with enforcement. Yesterday Labour Minister announced that provincial inspectors will return to Waterloo Region as businesses reopen over the next few weeks. We are appreciative of the commitment from the Ministry for enhanced support for workplaces and the additional enforcement blitzes the Ministry has conducted so far.

Enforcement update

This update is from February 4 to February 10 and includes actions from our local enforcement partners.

There have been 5 enforcement actions since the last media update

- 4 for the reporting period Feb 4 to Feb 10
- 1 charge was from the previous reporting period, that was not reported at the time of the update
- City of Waterloo By-Law issued 1 ticket at a private residence for gathering. Charged under the Re-opening Ontario Act - Total payable is \$880.00
- 1 ticket was issued by City of Kitchener By-Law at a private residence for a gathering. Charged under the Re-opening Ontario Act - Total payable is \$880.00
- GRT issued one ticket for failing to comply with the Face Covering by-law. \$240 fine.
- Corporate Security issued 2 tickets at Regional facilities for failing to comply with the Face Covering by-law. \$240 fine.



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Family Day

This weekend some of you will be celebrating Valentine's Day as well as Family Day. I hope you will find ways to connect safely with family and loved ones that don't live in your household. We are not at a point yet where we can gather with anyone who doesn't live in our household. The rural townships and our cities have put together some great programming to enjoy Family Day virtually this year so be sure to check that out.

Many in our community are also celebrating the lunar new year this weekend. Although I will miss attending the community festivities in person this year, my family is looking forward to enjoying some local take out that my husband and I will deliver to each of our children and their families at home so we can all celebrate the year of the Ox.

Dr. Wang's COVID-19 public health update

Deputy Hilton's Vaccine Task Force update

Dr. Sharon Ball & Lee Fairclough

Closing Remarks

Our 2nd annual State of the Region takes place in 2 weeks on Friday, February 26. This free, virtual event in partnership with the Rotary Clubs of Waterloo Region is a chance to learn more about Council's vision beyond COVID-19, network and engage with Regional Council. Go to the Region's website for more information or to register.