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April 2, 2020

**MEMORANDUM TO:** All OPS Staff

**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 Update

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Over the last few weeks, we all have been challenged to serve the public and support each other under extraordinary circumstances. You continue to rise to the challenge, and I want to thank you for delivering public service excellence in these difficult times. I continue to be inspired and encouraged by the work the OPS is doing together.

The province continues to act to fight against COVID-19. And I wanted to share an update on what this means for our work in the OPS.

**First, Ontario has extended the emergency declaration and associated emergency measures – including the closure of non-essential workplaces for two more weeks.**

As I outlined in my [memo on March 24](#), we are currently delivering services remotely. Only OPS employees that are required to deliver critical services will be asked to come to work in person. I am writing today to confirm this will continue until at least May 1, 2020. Closer to May 1, we will re-evaluate this decision based on public health advice.

**Second, the province has announced that schools and child care centres will remain [closed](#) until Friday, May 1 and to students until at least May 4.** Private schools, licensed child care centres and EarlyON programs will also remain closed. However, designated centres will remain open to support frontline health care workers and first responders.

These steps reflect the best advice from public health officials to keep Ontarians – and OPS staff – as safe and healthy as possible. For those of you providing care to family members, balancing work and caregiving can be challenging. If this is the case for you, I encourage you to speak with your manager about alternatives, or about special and compassionate leave requests.

We have a wealth of resources to support you on [InsideOPS](#), including updated [Questions and Answers](#). I also encourage you to make use of the confidential support services available through the [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#).

**Finally, I would like to reinforce that we're in this together.** Thanks to your ongoing resilience and commitment, Ontarians continue to receive high-quality critical public services during this unprecedented crisis. You are each playing a vital role in our province's work to slow the spread of COVID-19, and I am grateful for your efforts.

I am proud of our organization, and proud that Ontarians can count on us in this time of need. I am confident that we will overcome this challenge together.

Thank you,

Steven Davidson  
Secretary of the Cabinet