



TONY Van Bynen

Member of Parliament Newmarket-Aurora

Message from Tony

As we move towards what we believe will be a "new normal," a sense of hope and optimism is emerging with news of declining COVID cases, along with a rapid increase in vaccine doses. Provinces and territories are sharing their vaccination plans, and here in York Region, plans are in place to vaccinate seniors aged 80+ starting on March 1.

Health Canada has also announced it has authorized the use of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine. Our agreement with them provides for access to 20 million doses. We have secured an additional 2 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine through an agreement with Verity Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc. and the Serum Institute of India. 500,000 of these will be delivered in the coming weeks and the remaining 1.5 million will arrive by mid-May.

This week, Canada received a total of 643,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, 475,020 doses of Pfizer/BioNTech, and 168,000 doses of Moderna. In total, 2,066,400 doses of COVID-19 vaccines (including both Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech) have been delivered to the provinces.

As of today, 82.6% of doses delivered to the provinces have been administered, and as of this week, more than 1,210,461 Canadians have received at least one dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine. Almost half a million Canadians are now fully vaccinated, having received both required doses.

From the beginning of this pandemic, keeping Canadians healthy, safe, and supported has been our top priority. However, many workers and families continue to face challenges during these uncertain times.

To maintain this vital support, today we are increasing the number of weeks that the Canada Recovery Benefit, Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit, Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit, and Employment Insurance Regular Benefits are available to Canadians. With some benefits ending in late March, this increase will ensure that Canadians can continue to pay bills and feed their families.

We are on track to receive six million doses by the end of the first quarter of 2021, 23 million in the second quarter, and 55 million in the third quarter from Pfizer and Moderna alone. All Canadians who want a vaccine will have access to one by the end of September 2021.

Until that time, please be sure to follow the safety protocols outlined by our health agencies, which include practicing physical distancing, wearing a mask, washing your hands, and avoiding unnecessary travel.

Together, we can do this.

[COVID-19 Vaccination in Canada](#)

COVID-19 Facts and Figures



Latest Shipments

This week, Canada received a total of 643,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine – 475,020 doses of Pfizer/BioNTech and 168,000 doses of Moderna.

As of February 18, we've distributed 1,846,340 to the provinces and territories.

We are on track to receive 6 million by the end of Q1, 23 million in Q2 and 55 million in Q3 from Pfizer and Moderna alone. All Canadians who want a vaccine will have access to one by the end of September 2021.

[Vaccine Distribution](#)



AstraZeneca Authorized

Yesterday, February 26, we announced that the AstraZeneca vaccine is authorized for use in Canada. We have secured 20 million doses and they will start arriving in the spring.

The Serum Institute of India's version, CoviShield, has also been authorized and we have secured 2 million doses. Half a million will arrive in the coming weeks.

This means more people will be vaccinated, and sooner.

[Details](#)



Vaccination Tool Kit

The Public Health Agency of Canada has developed a new tool kit with credible information and resources to help Canadians make informed decisions about COVID-19 vaccination.

The tool kit provides general information about COVID-19, an overview of authorized vaccines, an overview of vaccine safety and resources such as provincial/territorial specific resources.

As new information becomes available, the tool kit will be updated.

[Vaccination Tool Kit](#)

New Testing and Quarantine Requirements for International Travelers

In addition to existing mandatory pre-boarding and health requirements for travelers, we have announced further testing and quarantine requirements for those arriving to Canada by air or land.

These measures are some of the strictest travel and border measures in the world. They are in place to protect Canadians from COVID-19 and new variants of concern. We continue to advise Canadians to cancel or postpone any non-essential travel, including vacation plans outside of Canada. Now is not the time to travel.



Arriving by land

As of February 15, travelers are required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 molecular test result taken in the U.S. within 72 hours of pre-arrival, or a positive test taken 14 to 90 days prior to arrival.

As of February 22, travelers are required to take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival and towards the end of their 14-day quarantine.

[Driving to Canada Checklist](#)



Arriving by air

As of February 22, travelers are required to take a COVID-19 molecular test upon arrival and before exiting the airport, and another towards the end of their 14-day quarantine.

All non-essential travelers, prior to departure to Canada, are required to book a 3-day stay at a government approved hotel at their cost.

[Flying to Canada Checklist](#)



Resources

Below are additional resources regarding the new requirements:

- [Hotel Quarantine](#)
- [COVID-19 testing for travellers coming into Canada](#)
- [Mandatory quarantine or isolation](#)

These are updated on a regular basis as new information becomes available.

[Latest Travel Health Advice](#)

Filing your taxes for the 2020 year

As a result of COVID-19, this tax season is like no other, but we are working hard to assist taxpayers experiencing tax-related concerns or financial hardships due to the pandemic. Filing online is the fastest and most secure way to do your taxes, but the CRA will continue to support those who chose to file on paper or by phone. Individuals have been able to file online since February 22, 2021.

To most, including those who owe a tax debt, the deadline to file is April 30, 2021. Filing on time, with the right information, will ensure you continue to receive benefit and credit payments, such as the Canada Child Benefit, the various COVID recovery benefits, the Old Age Security Pension Payments, and the goods and services tax (GST)/ harmonized sales tax (HST) credit.

Here are some key things you should know for this filing season:



Emergency and recovery benefit income

To assist Canadians facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic, a number of taxable COVID-19 benefits were introduced. Canadians who received these payments from CRA should have received a T4A slip and information on how to report these amounts.

Targeted interest relief is being provided to Canadians who are facing income tax debt for the 2020 tax year as a result of having received COVID-related income support benefits. These individuals will not be required to pay interest on any outstanding income tax debt for the 2020 tax year until April 30, 2022.

The CRA will automatically apply the interest relief measure for individuals who meet these criteria.

[More Information](#)



Tax credit for seniors

Seniors may be able to claim:

[Canada Caregiver Credit](#) – an amount of \$2,273, up to \$7,276 depending on relationship between claimant and person receiving care

[Disability Tax Credit](#) – up to \$8,576 pending eligibility

[Medical Expense Tax credit](#) – an amount of \$2,397, or 3 per cent of claimant, or dependent's net income

[Home Accessibility Tax Credit](#) – up to \$10,000 in renovation expenses paid to make the home more accessible

[Age Credit](#) – up to \$7,637 for seniors age 65 or older by December 31, 2020

[Pension Income Credit](#) – up to \$2,000

[Pension Income Splitting](#) – seniors may be able to jointly select with their spouse or common-law partner to split eligible pension income

[More Information](#)



Home office expenses deduction

The CRA made the home office expenses deduction more accessible and easier to claim for Canadians who are working from home. To simplify the process for employees and employers, the CRA introduced a new temporary flat rate method to calculate the deduction.

This method allows eligible employees to claim a deduction of \$2 for each day they worked from home in 2020 due to the pandemic, up to a maximum of \$400 for the year. This method can only be used for the 2020 tax year.

Employees with larger claims for home office expenses can still choose to use the existing detailed method to calculate their home office expenses deduction.

[More Information](#)

Celebrating Black History Month



Community Champion

The Newmarket African Canadian Association is a key player in ensuring Black Canadians in our community, especially youth, are heard, empowered and celebrated through education and conversations. Their leadership has helped elevate the voices of Black Canadians as we build a more inclusive and just Canada for all.

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Music Monday

Our local artist of the month is Glenn Marais, a singer, Juno nominated songwriter and guitar player who pours his heart and soul into his performances. He uses music to educate and inspire people, and in partnership with Lee Pham, he's created Music in Mind, an innovative virtual platform designed to engage and inspire youth and communities.

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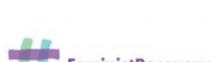


Virtual Celebration

The virtual Black History Month celebration with York Region MPs was a great opportunity to honour the legacy of Black Canadians, acknowledge their contributions, and learn from their stories. It was great to be joined by Minister Chagger, Minister Hussen and inspiring local community leaders, such as Jerishia Grant-Hall.

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Opportunities for Newmarket-Aurora



Feminist Response and Recovery Summit

On March 8 and 9, 2021, the Government of Canada will be hosting Canada's Feminist Response and Recovery Summit to bring together politicians, experts, and feminist leaders to discuss how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting women in Canada.

Registration is free and the deadline is Thursday, March 4, 2021, 11:59 PM.

[More information](#)



Employment Opportunity: COVID-19 Immunizers

Indigenous Nurses Canada is looking for nurses, doctors, nurse practitioners, registered practical nurses, licensed practical nurses, pharmacists, paramedics, dentists, veterinarians, medical laboratory technicians and other health professionals licensed to practice, to administer COVID-19 vaccines in the following Canadian provinces: AB, SK, MB, ON, NB, NS, NF, PE.

[More information](#)



I Read Canadian Day

On I Read Canadian Day, I spent some time reading An Aurora ABC: Stories from Aurora's Forgotten Past by Jacqueline Stuart to learn more about our community. Thank you, Hillary House, for guiding me to this great read!

I Read Canadian Day is an opportunity to celebrate the richness and diversity of Canadian literature.

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