

February 10, 2021

Dear Colleagues and Learners:

On Monday, the Premier announced that Ontario's State of Emergency would end on Tuesday, February 9 – allowing for a gradual reinstatement of a regionalized system of assessment and restrictions.

The existing stay-at-home order and shutdown measures will remain in effect in individual communities and regions until they transition back to the province's revised COVID-19 response framework. Ottawa and Perth are scheduled to return to this system on Tuesday, February 16 while Pembroke returns today (Wednesday, February 10). As part of the revised framework, non-essential retail will be allowed to open in some zones with strict capacity limits and other new safety measures.

We are assessing the impact of this announcement on College programming, service delivery and operations, and will update the community of any significant changes. Any academically-related changes will be communicated on a program-by-program basis. As February 16 draws closer, we will have more detailed information surrounding potential impacts for the Ottawa and Perth campuses as they return to the response framework. As of today, Pembroke campus will be able to operate largely as it had through the Fall Term.

As the Premier himself stated, "we can't let our guard down now." With the presence of new, more transmissible COVID-19 variants in Ontario, we must remain steadfastly committed to health and safety guidelines – and continue to do all we can to protect our college communities, colleagues, neighbours, friends and family. Our campus access policy remains unchanged. The only people attending campuses should be students participating in hands-on instruction and authorized employees who support these activities. The government has also made it clear that a new emergency shutdown could be considered based on caseload and hospital capacity, so we need to remain vigilant to keep each other safe.

Just a reminder that the College maintains a site that tracks all COVID-19 cases on our campuses. Since the start of the Fall 2020 term, we have had a total of 19 cases involving our community campuses – none of which were determined to be related to on-campus transmission and all of which are resolved.

Looking ahead, the College community is advised to limit travel during the upcoming Mid-Term Break Week (for most programs) from March 1 to March 5. For those required to travel to their

home communities, you can find Ottawa Public Health's COVID-19 holiday and travel guidelines [here](#). Key travel safety tips were also included in my [December 10 holiday message](#).

This unprecedented year has been marked by innovation and challenges, and the College wants to hear from our learners about your experience. In the coming days, I will be sending details about our annual Student Satisfaction and Engagement Survey, a vital feedback survey that will launch February 15th. In terms of employee input, I encourage participation in the [Pulse survey](#) received over email; participation has been extended to Tuesday, February 16.

February is Black History Month, I want to congratulate everyone who organized and participated in Taking a Stand: Disrupting Black and Indigenous Racism – our recent week of events aimed at addressing racism and celebrating Black and Indigenous culture. The dialogue, experiences and ideas shared throughout this vital week explored what we can do to create an anti-racist society and college community. Members of the executive team and I had the pleasure to attend many of the events; the insights provided by speakers and attendees will help us determine what actions we need to take to effect positive change and improve our efforts to be an inclusive institution where everyone belongs. And we will continue to have candid conversations on how to understand one another and overcome our own biases – as well as explore ways to honour our diversity.

I encourage you to explore [local programming](#), including our Students' Association's [Influential Sounds](#) live stream, hosted by Angelique Francis, which will be available to the entire community starting February 17. As members of Pride at Work Canada, all employees are also invited to a presentation on [Queer Teachings from Black Lives Matter](#) on February 17.

I also want to recognize [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#) on Thursday, February 11 and wish a happy, safe celebration to all those marking the Lunar New Year on Friday, February 12.

And finally, a quick reminder to everyone that the College will be closed on Monday, February 15 for Family Day. Please take some time to refresh and recharge with your loved ones, in a safe and socially-distanced manner.

As always, stay well everyone.

Sincerely,



Claude Brulé
President, CEO
Algonquin College