

March 25, 2021

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

The ongoing rise in Ontario COVID-19 cases and hospital ICU admissions are a clear reminder of the need for our continued vigilance in the face of this pandemic – especially when engaging in any kind of activity outside of our households. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to keeping our college community healthy and safe.

As you may be aware, Ontario has introduced less restrictive capacity guidelines for restaurants in its [red-control zone](#) – allowing for 50% capacity for indoor dining spaces subject to appropriate social distancing and table capacities. This change impacts food service operations at our Ottawa Campus (you can review current capacity details [here](#)).

Our Perth Campus also moved into the red-control zone this week – with no impact to academic programming or services – while our Pembroke Campus remains in the less restrictive [yellow-protect zone](#). (Again, a reminder that you should not visit campus unless you are a student participating in hands-on instruction or an employee supporting these activities.)

On March 19, the government announced new, one-time funding to support Ontario colleges and universities impacted by COVID-19. Algonquin College is eligible for this funding and it will be used to offset expenses incurred to respond to the pandemic, including providing greater access to online and remote learning, supports to learners, personal protective equipment and enhanced cleaning of physical spaces. On a related note, yesterday's [provincial budget](#) also included good news for post-secondary students and institutions, with [support](#) for a new Virtual Learning Strategy, and funding for facility maintenance, new equipment, applied research and worker training.

I also want to strongly condemn the rise in anti-Asian racism witnessed in Canada and abroad. I encourage you to read this week's [Inclusion Infusion blog](#) from Human Resource's Inclusion & Diversity team, which examines the issues of racism and xenophobia, and outlines resources available to students and employees impacted by them.

And finally, to our College's Jewish community, Chag Samaech! I wish a happy, safe celebration to all those marking the Passover holiday starting Saturday.

As always, stay well and safe everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claude Brulé", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Claude Brulé
President and CEO
Algonquin College