

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

Due to a rise in COVID-19 cases, Ottawa is moving into the [red-control zone](#) on Ontario's pandemic response framework as of Friday, March 19 at 12:01 a.m. (Pembroke and Perth Campuses continue to operate in the less restrictive [yellow-protect zone](#).)

Ottawa's status change, [announced](#) Thursday by the provincial government, increases various local restrictions relating to gatherings and capacity for a range of facilities. (You can review the full list of red zone restrictions [here](#).)

"Our government is taking immediate action to contain COVID-19 and protect individuals, families and workers by enhancing public health measures in Ottawa," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

The city's change in status will have no impact on academic programming at our Ottawa Campus. There will be minimal impact to operations and campus services. Primarily, the capacity of our food and fitness related facilities will be reduced, although they are still permitted to operate (you can review capacity details [here](#))

As our region faces the combination of rising COVID-19 cases with the compounding effects of the presence of variants of concern, we cannot afford to let our guard down. Our existing campus access policy remains in place in all our campus communities. The only people who should be attending campuses are students participating in hands-on instruction and authorized employees who support these activities.

I understand there may be frustration with new restrictions, but it's important to remember that we can limit their impact and duration through our daily, individual efforts. Our steadfast commitment to health and safety guidelines reduces the potential for virus transmission within our community.

As Dr. Vera Etches, Ottawa's Medical Officer of Health, aptly stated: "The faster we act, the better. It's in our control."

The key word in her statement is *our*. We can only do this together. With vaccination programs in Ontario and Canada making progress, our continued patience and vigilance will be rewarded in the future. As the vaccine rollout continues, I encourage all members of the College to inform themselves about the importance and efficacy of the vaccine. Information can be found at the [Ottawa Public Health website](#), among many other reliable information sources.

As always, stay well and safe everyone.

Sincerely,

Claude Brulé

President and CEO