

Thursday, February 17, 2022

Dear Colleagues and Learners,

This week, the Province of Ontario announced that it is moving forward with its next step in their reopening plan to cautiously lift some public health measures a few days earlier than expected, with additional restrictions being removed effective today (February 17, 2022).

The changes include increasing social gathering limits to 50 people indoors and 100 people outdoors, and increasing organized public event limits to 50 people indoors, with no limit outdoors. The Provincial announcement can be found [at this link](#).

The Province has indicated that its decision is based on COVID-19 positivity rates falling and new admissions to hospitals and Intensive Care Units declining week over week.

The Province also announced this week – that if indicators continue to improve – it intends to take additional steps to ease public health measures effective March 1, 2022. This includes lifting capacity limits in all remaining indoor public settings. Ontario also plans to lift proof of vaccination requirements for all settings at that time. Should that be the case, this means that as of March 1 - as per Provincial direction - vaccine passports at the College will be discontinued. However, **all screening requirements will remain in place for those who need to attend our campuses.**

For now, masking requirements will remain in place. A specific timeline to lift this measure will be communicated at a later date.

As a result of this announcement, a number of changes to non-academic services are being made at the College. You can check the full list of changes at each campus at the following links: [Ottawa](#), [Perth](#) and [Pembroke](#).

As was announced in my [communiqué on January 28](#), most courses that are currently virtual will continue in that fashion for the second half of the winter term. However, recognizing that some programs have an essential need for on-campus instruction, a very limited number of courses are moving to face-to-face delivery on campus, starting the week of March 7. Physical distancing will continue to be required for those courses that move to on campus in-person delivery.

All specific program-level and service-level decisions about academic and service delivery for the second half of the term are being communicated directly by the program team to learners. Please note that not every program will take the same approach. Should you have any questions or require additional clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out to your respective [program contacts at this link](#).

I know the last two years have been difficult and the pandemic has left many of us weary. This announcement from the Province comes as welcome news as we cautiously move forward together.

As we continue to monitor the situation and wait for further direction from public health officials, we will review our plans and continue to place the health and safety of every learner and employee as our top priority. Any additional changes to operations will be communicated directly to the entire College Community.

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