

Legislative  
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of Ontario



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de l'Ontario

# SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

## FIFTEENTH INTERIM REPORT

2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament  
70 Elizabeth II

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The Honourable Ted Arnott, MPP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Sir,

Your Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight has the honour to present its Report and commends it to the House.

Daryl Kramp, MPP  
Chair of the Committee

Queen's Park  
December 2021



# SELECT COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT MEMBERSHIP LIST

2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament

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\*DONNA SKELLY

CHRISTINE HOGARTH

EFFIE J. TRIANTAFILOPOULOS

ROBIN MARTIN

\*LINDSEY PARK was replaced by DONNA SKELLY on October 20, 2021.

MIKE HARRIS regularly served as a substitute member of the Committee.

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CHRISTOPHER TYRELL  
Clerk of the Committee

ANDREW MCNAUGHT  
Research Officer



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## INTRODUCTION

On August 19, 2021, the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight met for the fifteenth time to receive an update on COVID-19 emergency orders. Issued in the first months of the pandemic under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, these orders have been continued as regulations under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* (“the *Reopening Ontario Act*”).

Ontario’s Solicitor General appeared as the Premier’s designate to provide an oral report and respond to Committee questions. The Solicitor General’s presentation and discussion with Committee members are summarized in the pages that follow. To view the Solicitor General’s full remarks and all questions posed by Committee members, the reader is referred to the official *Hansard* transcript.

Further interim reports and a final report will follow.

It should be noted that this report reflects the situation in the province on August 19, 2021. As of that date, Ontario’s 34 public health units remained at Step 3 of the Roadmap to Reopen, the province’s framework for reopening the economy set out in the *Reopening Ontario Act* and regulations. Although the province was at or near the vaccination thresholds required to move to the next stage of the Roadmap, the Government announced on August 17 that, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, it would be “pausing” the province’s exit from Step 3.

## COMMITTEE MANDATE

On July 13, 2020, the government House leader introduced a motion to appoint a Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight. Following debate, the motion carried on July 15, 2020. The Committee was appointed to receive oral reports from the Premier or his designate(s) on any extensions of emergency orders by the Lieutenant Governor in Council related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rationale for those extensions.

Reporting provisions under the *Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act, 2020* include a requirement that the Premier (or a Minister to whom the Premier delegates the responsibility) appear before and report to a standing or select committee designated by the Assembly, at least once every 30 days, concerning

- (a) orders that were extended during the reporting period; and
- (b) the rationale for those extensions.

Hearings consist of an opening statement from the Premier or his designate(s), followed by Committee member questions. The Committee is authorized to release interim reports summarizing each hearing.

The Committee's mandate is reproduced in full in Appendix A to this report.

## **REPORT FROM THE SOLICITOR GENERAL**

### **Opening Remarks**

Ontario's Solicitor General, the Honourable Sylvia Jones, presented to the Committee on August 19, 2021.

The Solicitor General began by highlighting three ways the Government has responded to what is now recognized as the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- requiring high-risk settings such as hospitals, long-term-care homes, and post-secondary institutions to implement COVID-19 vaccine policies;
- administering third doses to vulnerable populations; and
- pausing the province's exit from Step 3 of the Roadmap to Reopening.

Unlike previous stages of the pandemic, however, the fourth wave has not been accompanied by a corresponding increase in ICU admissions or hospitalizations generally, a fact the Solicitor General attributed to the province's high vaccination rate.

According to the Solicitor General's figures, 81% of the eligible population aged 12 and up had received a first dose, and more than 73% had received a second dose and were therefore fully vaccinated. It was also noted that the province is now reporting cases and hospitalizations on the basis of those who have been fully vaccinated and those who are either unvaccinated or who have had only one dose.

The Solicitor General said that while the province's vaccine rollout appears to have blunted the impact of the latest round of the pandemic, the uptick in new cases is, nonetheless, evidence of the need to continue with emergency orders under the *Reopening Ontario Act*. These measures, she noted, will take on added importance as we enter a new school year.

The Solicitor General concluded her opening remarks with the observation that reaching the 20% of the eligible population that have yet to receive a single dose has become the most "challenging and critically important" part of the vaccine rollout. Closing this gap, she said, will require collaborative efforts, such as "Vax to School" and 24-hour "VAX-A-THONs," two recent municipal and private sector campaigns that encouraged more people to get their shot. Similarly, the province is working with local partners to increase vaccination rates in communities where rates have fallen below the provincial average. For example, the government has provided family

physicians with information that allows them to reach out to their patient base to discuss the benefits of vaccination, and has supported pop-up clinics at convenient locations such as workplaces and places of worship.

The Solicitor General also highlighted the recently introduced GO-VAXX bus program. As outlined for the Committee, the program features two specially retrofitted buses, borrowed from Metrolinx, which are on the road six days a week, operating as fully functioning vaccine clinics. On board are supplies and staff who have been trained, not only to administer vaccines, but also to address vaccine hesitancy by responding to questions and concerns. GO-VAXX buses target areas within the greater Golden Horseshoe region that have been identified by local public health units as having below average vaccination rates, and stop at shopping malls, festivals, farmers' markets, outdoor facilities, and community hubs to ensure easy access to vaccines. As of August 15, 596 vaccines had been administered, of which 16% had been to youth between the ages of 12 and 17, with 40% of those being first doses.

## **Amended Orders**

The following orders under the *Reopening Ontario Act* had been amended since the Committee last met on July 22, 2021.

Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 192/20 (Certain Persons Enabled to Issue Medical Certificates of Death), which authorized registered nurses appointed as coroner investigators to complete medical certificates of death instead of a physician or a nurse practitioner, was allowed to expire. The purpose of the order had been to free up time for physicians and nurse practitioners to focus on patient care during the pandemic. The order is no longer needed because recent amendments to O. Reg. 1094 (General) under the *Vital Statistics Act* will achieve the same outcome.

Other recent amendments concerned exiting the Roadmap to Reopen. These included the addition of a schedule to O. Reg. 363/20 (Steps of Reopening), which will set out the areas of the province that have been designated for leaving Step 3 and entering the Roadmap Exit Step. As outlined by the Solicitor General, exiting Step 3 will be conditional on the following factors:

- 80% of the eligible population aged 12 and over must have received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine;
- 75% must have received a second dose and are fully vaccinated;
- each public health unit must have at least 70% of its eligible population aged 12 and over fully vaccinated; and
- other key public health and health indicators must continue to remain stable or trend downwards.

Amendments to O. Reg. 364/20 (Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step) set out public health and workplace safety measures that will apply at the Roadmap Exit Step. One set of amendments provides that public and private schools must operate in accordance with the Ministry of Education's return-to-school directive that has been approved by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Other amendments prescribe requirements for persons responsible for the operation of a business or organization that is open at the exit step, including:

- operating in compliance with the advice and instruction of public health officials;
- posting signs at all entrances that inform individuals how to screen themselves in accordance with public health guidelines;
- preparing and making available a safety plan;
- collecting patron contact information in certain establishments, such as bars and restaurants; and
- requiring individuals to wear a mask when in an indoor area of a business or organization, and ensuring that they do so.

### **Extended Orders**

Over the preceding month, the following orders under the *Reopening Ontario Act* had been extended a further 30 days, to September 17, 2021. Orders are listed in numerical order and include the Solicitor General's rationale for extension.

- *O. Reg. 74/20 (Work Redeployment for Certain Health Services Providers)* — This order authorizes specified health service providers within the meaning of the *Connecting Care Act, 2019*, to take reasonably necessary measures with respect to work deployment and staffing to respond to, prevent, and alleviate the outbreak of COVID-19, including redeploying staff to other sites within the organization or to other health service providers, long-term-care homes, or retirement homes.
- *O. Reg. 76/20 (Electronic Service)* — This order requires document service in legal matters against the Crown to be done electronically instead of in person. The order is needed to continue access to justice while reducing unnecessary contact between individuals in order to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- *O. Reg. 77/20 (Work Deployment Measures in Long-Term Care Homes)* — This order allows for work deployment measures in long-term care homes to be developed and modified based on staffing priorities and abilities. It allows homes to implement redeployment plans as required. There is significant uncertainty related to the potential impact of a fourth wave, particularly in the long-term-care sector, which is still recovering from earlier waves. The pandemic has affected long-term care homes, which continue to rely on this regulation to help support staffing stability. The regulation is crucial to prevent and manage outbreaks.

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- *O. Reg. 95/20 (Streamlining Requirements for Long-Term Care Homes)* — This order provides long-term care homes with increased flexibility through a temporary suspension of several requirements. It enables homes to better focus resources on providing high-quality resident care and safety needs of residents. The flexibility provided by these provisions continues to be required in long-term care homes due to significant uncertainty related to the potential impact of a fourth wave and the current recovery from earlier waves.
  - *O. Reg. 98/20 (Prohibition on Certain Persons Charging Unconscionable Prices for Sales of Necessary Goods)* — This order is in place so that consumers can continue to file complaints with the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services about price gouging with respect to the necessary goods set out in the order.
  - *O. Reg. 114/20 (Enforcement of Orders)* — This order requires a person to identify themselves by providing their name, date of birth, and address to a police officer or other provincial offences officers if the officer has reasonable and probable grounds to believe the individual has committed an offence under subsection 10(1) of the *Reopening Ontario Act*. Without disclosure of this identifying information, officers would be unable to effectively issue tickets under the Act.
  - *O. Reg. 116/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health)* — This order allows boards of health within the meaning of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* to take any reasonably necessary measure with respect to work deployment and staffing to respond to, prevent, and alleviate the COVID-19 pandemic, including redeploying staff within different locations or in between facilities of the board of health.
  - *O. Reg. 118/20 (Work Deployment Measures in Retirement Homes)* — This order allows flexibility for retirement homes to operate, recruit, and reassign staff. It remains crucial to helping to prevent and manage outbreaks to keep residents safe. Additionally, it ensures residents continue to receive stable services and care.
  - *O. Reg. 121/20 (Service Agencies Providing Services and Supports to Adults with Developmental Disabilities and Service Providers Providing Intervenor Services)* — This order allows developmental service agencies and intervenor service providers to continue with the authority and flexibility they need to redeploy their staff to support critical services for vulnerable individuals. Measures to alleviate staffing pressures continue to be needed as developmental service agencies respond to challenges posed by COVID-19.
  - *O. Reg. 132/20 (Use of Force and Firearms in Policing Services)* — This order allows chiefs of police to authorize members of a police service to perform duties involving use of force and to carry a firearm if the member has successfully completed the required training within the previous 24 months of the authorization, instead of the annual training required under the *Police Services Act*.

- *O. Reg. 141/20 (Temporary Health or Residential Facilities)* — This order exempts the construction or conversion of a building from certain requirements of the *Building Code Act, 1992*, the *Planning Act*, and the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, where the building will be used as a temporary health or residential facility for the purpose of responding to the emergency or for health care or sleeping accommodation by or on behalf of health service providers, governments, and municipalities. There is a continued need for this provision to be in place to enable the province to respond to COVID-19 care, the surgical backlog, and residential space needs.
- *O. Reg. 145/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Service Agencies Providing Violence Against Women Residential Services and Crisis Line Services)* — This order enables residential violence against women and anti-human trafficking service providers, as well as crisis lines under the violence against women support service program, to continue to have the authority and flexibility they need to redeploy their staff to support critical services for survivors of violence against women and victims of human trafficking.
- *O. Reg. 146/20 (Limiting Work to a Single Long-Term Care Home)* — Limiting partially and unvaccinated staff moving across multiple settings continues to be an important component of infection prevention and control practices in long-term care homes. A cautious approach is needed as work is under way on fall preparedness planning and consideration of potential scenarios, including from increasing prevalence of the Delta variant. This order addresses ongoing staffing challenges in the long-term care sector and allows employees who have been fully immunized against COVID-19 to work in another long-term care home, retirement home, or other health service provider location.
- *O. Reg. 154/20 (Work Deployment Measures for District Social Services Administration Boards)* — This order provides district social services administration boards with the flexibility to address staffing shortages and ensure personnel are being deployed to critical areas of need to respond to COVID-19.
- *O. Reg. 156/20 (Deployment of Employees of Service Provider Organizations)* — This order authorizes a local health integration network (LHIN), now operating as home and community care support services (HCCSS), to request that a contracted service provider organization provide health care and related social services in a setting identified by the home and community care support service and authorizes the HCCSS to fund these services. The order is needed to address staffing issues in priority settings (including long-term care homes and retirement homes) in an expedited manner, using existing HCCSS relationships with service providers.
- *O. Reg. 157/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Municipalities)* — Issued at the request of municipalities, this order provides flexibility to redeploy staff to ensure front-line services continue to be delivered in critical areas of need. The continuity of service delivery at the municipal level is critical to the health and safety of Ontario's communities and efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19.

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- *O. Reg. 158/20 (Limiting Work to a Single Retirement Home)* — This order requires retirement home employees to work in only one retirement home, long-term care home, or other health care setting and allows fully immunized employees to work in more than one location to safely increase staffing capacity. Limiting work to a single retirement home remains critical for non-immunized staff to help prevent and contain infection.
  - *O. Reg. 163/20 (Work Deployment Measures for Mental Health and Addictions Agencies)* — This order authorizes mental health and addictions agencies to take any reasonable necessary measure with respect to work deployment and staffing to respond to, prevent, and alleviate the outbreak of COVID-19 to maintain health human resources flexibility.
  - *O. Reg. 177/20 (Congregate Care Settings)* — This order has been extended so that staff movement across multiple employers in developmental services, intervenor services, and violence against women and anti-human trafficking sectors will continue to be limited. This infection prevention measure protects staff and vulnerable clients.
  - *O. Reg. 193/20 (Hospital Credentialing Processes)* — This order enables hospitals to maintain flexible health human resources during the pandemic. It allows hospitals to quickly appoint, reappoint, and grant privileges to physicians and other professional staff—regardless of applicable professional credentialing processes—to prevent and alleviate COVID-19 outbreaks as they occur.
  - *O. Reg. 195/20 (Treatment of Temporary COVID-19 Related Payments to Employees)* — This order ensures that any temporary COVID-related payments received by employees in relation to work performed while the order is in effect are excluded from the maximum increases in compensation set out in the *Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act* during a moderation period. This includes the temporary wage enhancements for personal support workers and direct support workers.
  - *O. Reg. 210/20 (Management of Long-Term Care Homes in Outbreak)* — This order provides the Ministry’s director of long-term care with expanded authority under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act* to issue a mandatory management order to long-term care homes. The director is able to place interim management to effectively protect residents from COVID-19. Maintaining the management order allows the director to swiftly take appropriate action to reduce or alleviate harm to residents and staff in homes that are in outbreak.
  - *O. Reg. 240/20 (Management of Retirement Homes in Outbreak)* — This order ensures measures are in place to allow the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority to act quickly in the case of an outbreak, should an operator be unwilling or unable to manage operations at a home where there is a COVID-19-related risk of harm to residents. It remains crucial to ensure retirement homes are following appropriate COVID-19 measures to ensure resident and staff safety.
  - *O. Reg. 345/20 (Patios)* — This order helps municipalities quickly pass or make changes to temporary-use bylaws that permit restaurants and bars to create or extend their patios to facilitate appropriate distancing and maintain public health measures.

## Concluding Remarks

In closing, the Solicitor General stressed that vaccinations “remain our best defence against COVID-19.” The evidence, she said, is clear: being fully vaccinated significantly reduces the risk of infection, and limits the severity of the disease in the event that you do contract it.

As the province moves toward the end of the pandemic, closing the vaccination gap becomes the critical factor in being able to lift the remaining emergency orders under the *Reopening Ontario Act*. Until that time, the orders will continue to act as another component of the front-line defence against the spread of COVID-19.

## DISCUSSION

The Solicitor General’s concluding discussion with Committee Members on various pandemic-related issues is summarized below.

- **Vaccination Policies (Generally) — Question:** Will Ontario follow other jurisdictions—such as British Columbia and Quebec—and make vaccination compulsory for front-line health care and education workers? **Solicitor General’s Response:** Mandatory vaccine policies, as announced by the Chief Medical Officer of Health earlier this week, are a critical part of the vaccine rollout. These policies will increase protection for the most vulnerable, including frail seniors, compromised-immunity individuals, and young children who are not yet eligible for a vaccine. More generally, they will ensure that everyone understands the value of vaccines and encourage those who are vaccine-hesitant to get vaccinated. Mandatory vaccine policies will have three components: (1) individuals must provide proof that they are fully vaccinated; (2) in the alternative, they must provide proof of a medical reason for not being vaccinated; and (3) if they are not vaccinated, they must submit to regular point-of-care rapid antigen testing. A good example is the University Health Network, which announced a vaccine policy under which staff who choose not to get vaccinated must submit to regular testing. Our approach is working, as demonstrated by the fact that Ontario leads the world in vaccinating individuals who can safely do so, with over 80% first-vaccinated, and over 73% fully vaccinated. At the same time, we are moving to close the vaccination gap through initiatives such as the GO-VAXX bus program, family physicians who are educating patients about the benefits of vaccination, pop-up clinics that serve people where they work or live, and pharmacy vaccination programs.
- **Vaccination Policies (Schools) — Question:** Why has the government announced a vaccination disclosure/rapid testing policy for school boards instead of a mandatory vaccination policy? How many testing clinics will be established? Will clinics be in every school? Once vaccines are approved for children, what is the plan for vaccinating students who are under the age of 12? **Solicitor General’s Response:** The government is taking a balanced approach to reopening schools to maximize health and safety and to ensure that schools remain open to in-person learning for the full school year. Specifically, the government’s plan provides for over \$2 billion in additional resources so that we continue to keep students and staff safe. This includes \$1.6 billion in COVID-19 resources; an \$85.5-million plan to support learning recovery in math and

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reading; and a \$561 million increase in the Grants for Student Needs, rising to \$25.6 billion. As a result of these investments, schools across Ontario report that they have implemented a range of measures to improve ventilation and air quality. The government has also provided Ontario families with \$1.8 billion in direct financial support, and made investments of over \$80 million to enhance capacity and support student mental health in the 2021-22 school year.

- **Ventilation in Schools — Question:** Can the government confirm that as many as 18 school boards will not have air filtration in place come September? How many students will that affect? Will there be classroom-by-classroom inspections, and how is that going to be reported? **Solicitor General's Response:** Our goal as a government has always been to ensure that students can return to classrooms safely. We are doing that with the investments outlined earlier. Again, these include \$1.6 billion in COVID-19 resources; \$85.5 million planned to support learning recovery in math and reading; and an increase of \$561 million in the Grants for Student Needs, rising to \$25.6 billion.
- **Mental Health Resources for Students — Question:** What resources will be available to support the mental health and well-being of students? **Solicitor General's Response:** To date we have hired over 3,795 temporary teachers, 182 temporary regulated mental health workers, and 110 temporary non-regulated mental health workers to support students who have found the online model to be more challenging. We have also ensured that school boards have the resources needed to do things like hire 1,604 temporary new custodians, 850 temporary education assistants, and 422 early childhood educators. These investments allow physical distancing to be layered over other health measures such as screening, hand hygiene, cohorting, enhanced cleaning, and masking. It should also be noted that these resources have been provided on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the province's clinical table, following consultations with a range of stakeholders, including boards of education, teachers' federations, and parents.
- **Temporary Mental Health Workers — Question:** The 182 temporary regulated mental health workers assigned to schools will be out of a job on December 31, 2021, unless their contracts are extended. Does the government intend to renew these contracts? **Solicitor General's Response:** The Minister of Education and the Chief Medical Officer of Health are working to ensure that additional mental health workers and educational assistants will be available as long as students need those services.
- **Third Versus Fourth Wave — Question:** What are the experts saying about the potential effects of the fourth wave? Will it be as "tough" as the third? **Solicitor General's Response:** The Chief Medical Officer of Health has said that the fourth wave is going to be different, mainly because so many individuals are now fully vaccinated. One difference that has become apparent is that while we are not seeing the same pressure on ICU capacity that we saw during previous stages, the patients who are being admitted to those beds are mostly individuals who chose for whatever reason not to get vaccinated. In short, it appears that the fourth wave is going to be a disease of the unvaccinated. Accordingly, we will need to focus on persuading the last cohort—"that last mile"—to do the right thing to protect their friends and neighbours.

- **Vaccination Rates — Question:** How do vaccination rates in Ontario compare with rates in other jurisdictions? What steps is the government taking to close the vaccination gap? **Solicitor General's Response:** Ontario is a leading jurisdiction; in fact, we now have sufficient vaccines to vaccinate everyone and can focus on the final cohort (the “last mile”). This in turn means that we will need to change how we approach offering vaccines to individuals. As noted in my opening remarks, this includes creative measures such as the GO-VAXX bus program. In addition, the province is pursuing the following:
  - At the request of family practitioners, the province is providing lists of rostered patients who have not yet received a vaccine. This allows practitioners to contact their patients to have one-on-one conversations on issues relating to vaccine hesitancy. Also, from the beginning, we have made vaccines available through doctors' offices.
  - As a matter of convenience, we have ensured that people can go to their local pharmacies to get vaccinated.
  - Public health units have also implemented some creative options. For example, many have adopted the drive-in model that was in place at Canada's Wonderland before it reopened, and Peel's public health unit set up a 24-hour “doses after dark” clinic to reach those who cannot access clinics during traditional hours.
- **Effects of Vaccination — Question:** What are the numbers telling us about the effects of vaccination? **Solicitor General's Response:** At the beginning of the pandemic, we had three priorities: to prevent mortality, to prevent serious illness, and to prevent transmission. As we received more vaccines and vaccination rates went up, we saw a decline in hospitalizations and deaths. This has allowed us to focus on the third priority, preventing transmission, even as we deal with a fourth wave driven by the more transmissible Delta variant. As an example, during a recent one-month period in the Region of Peel, every individual with COVID-19 in a Peel hospital had had either no vaccination or only one dose. These kinds of results speak to the benefits of being fully immunized, and it is hoped that as the effects of vaccination become more widely known, those who may be vaccine-hesitant will be encouraged to get their shots.
- **Exiting Step 3 — Question:** What should the public be looking for in terms of the numbers and other factors the province will take into account when deciding whether to exit Step 3? To what extent do we need to learn to live with the virus? **Solicitor General's Response:** As we loosen restrictions, we are, in effect, recognizing that we will need to live with COVID-19. At the same time, the pressure to lift restrictions is less today than at earlier stages of the pandemic, since most businesses can operate in some form under the terms of the current reopening framework. Moreover, in light of the prevalence of the highly transmissible Delta variant (almost 80% of new cases in Ontario), we need to be cautious. Critically, we need to consider the fact that approximately 20% of the eligible population has yet to receive even one dose, and that children under the age of 12 still do not have access to an approved vaccine.

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- **Vaccine Passports — Question:** You and the Minister of Health have been in regular contact with the federal public safety minister regarding international border and travel issues. Could you provide an update on the development of a vaccine passport? What role is Ontario playing in this process? **Solicitor General's Response:** The federal government is aware that the United Kingdom and other countries are working to ensure that travellers use one vaccine passport, and that Canadians will not be able to use 13 different certificates from 13 different provinces and territories when attempting to enter other countries. Ottawa will also need to address whether other countries will admit Canadians who have received mixed-dose vaccines. Ontario will continue to press the federal government on all of these issues.
  - **Municipal Noise/Construction Bylaws — Question:** Emergency orders issued at the beginning of the pandemic superseded municipal noise and construction bylaws. More than a year later, these orders remain in place, and urban residents, particularly in the City of Toronto, are dealing with construction noise, "without limits." When is the government going to restore municipal bylaws? **Solicitor General's Response:** The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing requested these orders to address the fact that pandemic-related restrictions such as physical distancing requirements would disrupt important construction projects. Among other things, extending the hours during which construction and related activities can occur ensures that new homebuyers will be able to move into their homes and that businesses will continue to receive the deliveries that allow them to operate. Extended hours continue to be necessary to ensure that the provincial economy does not grind to a halt.
  - **Masking Guidelines — Question:** What is the current advice regarding the wearing of masks? **Solicitor General's Response:** In short: outside is safer, so masks are generally not needed unless you cannot physically distance; inside, we still encourage people to wear a mask.

**APPENDIX A:  
TERMS OF REFERENCE\***

That a Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight be appointed to receive oral reports from the Premier or his designate(s) on any extensions of emergency orders by the Lieutenant Governor in Council related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rationale for those extensions; and

That the Committee shall have a membership of up to eleven Members, comprised as follows:

- Up to seven members of the Government party
- Up to three members of the Official Opposition
- Up to one Independent Member; and

That the House Leaders of each of the Recognized Parties shall indicate in writing to the Clerk of the House, their Party's membership on the Committee; and

That the Government House Leader, in consultation with the Independent Members, shall indicate in writing to the Clerk of the House, the Independent Member on the Committee; and

That the deadline for indicating Committee Membership with the Clerk of the House shall be Thursday, August 20, 2020; and

That the Committee shall meet at the call of the Chair as follows:

- Up to 30 minutes for the Premier or his designate(s) to make an opening statement
- Up to 60 minutes for Members of the recognized Parties to pose questions to the Premier or his designate(s) in 3 rounds of 10 minutes for each Party
- Up to 10 minutes for the Independent Member to pose questions to the Premier or his designate(s) in 2 rounds of 5 minutes each
- Report writing in closed session; and

That the Clerk of the Committee shall convene the first meeting of the Committee no later than Thursday, August 27, 2020 to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, but no Sub-committee shall be appointed; and

That for business conducted under this order of reference, the provisions of Standing Orders 38 (b), (c), and (d) and 134 (c) and (d) shall be suspended.

That the Committee is authorized to present interim reports summarizing each hearing to the House, or deposit interim reports with the Clerk if the Legislature is not in session; and

That the Committee's final report shall be a compilation of all interim reports; and

That the Committee shall be dissolved 30 days following the Government House Leader indicating in writing to the Speaker that the Committee is no longer required; and

That the Committee's final report shall be tabled in the House, or deposited with the Clerk if the Legislature is not in session, before the Committee is dissolved; and

That if the Committee fails to meet this deadline the cumulative interim reports shall be deemed to be the Committee's final report and deemed to be tabled on the date that the Committee is dissolved; and

That an Order shall be placed on the *Orders and Notices Paper* for discussion of the Final Report of the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight following its presentation to the House.

*\* Votes and Proceedings, July 15, 2020, 42nd Parliament, 1st Session*