

COVID-19 RESOURCE FOR CHARITIES & NFPS

ONTARIO MOVES INTO STEP 3 OF REOPENING REGULATIONS

JULY 16, 2021

AFTER COMPLETING Steps 1 and 2 of Ontario’s three-step plan for reopening the economy in response to a province-wide shutdown spurred on by the COVID-19 pandemic, Ontario has now moved into “Step 3” of reopening. As of 12:01 a.m. on July 16, 2021, the Step 3 regulations are in force province-wide, further relaxing the rules that place capacity restrictions on workplaces and further increasing capacity limits for public events and gatherings. Amending regulations were filed on July 9 and July 14, 2021 under the [Reopening Ontario \(A Flexible Response to COVID-19\) Act, 2020](#) to update and amend the Step 3 rules in Ontario [Regulation 364/20, Rules for Areas in Step 3](#) (“O Reg 364/20”). This *COVID-19 Resource* page discusses those changes to O Reg 364/20 that may be of interest to charities and not-for-profits.

As the province moves more closely to a full reopening, O Reg 364/20 does not contain a blanket provision requiring businesses and places to be closed. Rather, Schedule 2 sets out those businesses and places that may open when they have met certain conditions. Where those conditions have not or cannot be met, those specific businesses and places must remain closed. Beyond these Schedule 2 businesses and places, the “General Rules” in Schedule 1 set out the only other restrictions for opening which include, for example, requirements that all persons must be able to comply with physical distancing and public health guidance, and people generally must wear masks indoors unless they are exempt. Businesses and places must therefore remain closed unless they comply with the Schedule 1 General Rules.

Further, unlike in Steps 1 and 2, which prohibited workplaces from requiring staff to work onsite except where “the nature of their work requires them to be on-site at the workplace”, that restriction has been removed from Step 3.

Capacity limits for organized public events and social gatherings have been gradually increased from Step 1 through to Step 3. **Indoor** gatherings “for the purposes of a wedding, a funeral or a religious service, rite or ceremony” itself have been increased from 15% capacity of a room in Step 1 and 25% capacity of a room in Step 2 to no set capacity limit under Step 3, provided that all persons occupying the room must be able to maintain physical distancing of two metres from all other persons in the room (except members of their household or caregivers), and must be able to comply with public health guidance on physical distancing. Indoor social gatherings *associated with* those weddings, funerals, and religious services, rites, or ceremonies are now limited to a maximum of 25 people. **Outdoor** gatherings for weddings, funerals, and religious services, rites, or ceremonies themselves may be held with no capacity restrictions, provided that all persons attending comply with public health guidance on physical distancing. Outdoor public events and social gatherings, including gatherings *associated with* those weddings, funerals, and religious services, rites, or ceremonies are now allowed up to 100 people.

The provincial government updated its “Roadmap to Reopen” public policy information webpage on the Ontario.ca website: [Reopening Ontario](#), which presents colour-coded summaries for the province’s three-stage plan based on a percentage of vaccinated adults and “key public health and health care indicators.”

For further information about how this may impact your charity or not-for-profit, call us toll-free at 1-877-942-0001 or email tcarter@carters.ca.