



COVID-19 (Coronavirus) April 7, 2020

Dear Community Members:

To protect the health and safety of our clients, staff and community, Banyan has implemented the following measures:

- Effective March 16, 2020 SNAP® and SURE groups have been temporarily suspended until further notice.
- The Grocer Ease program remains open on a client by client basis... please contact the Program Supervisor for further information.
- The following programs remain available for crisis counselling through telephone support:
 - Counselling and Assessment
 - Mental Health Youth Court Worker Support
 - Substance Abuse Counselling and Support
- In accordance to the Statement from [Minister Elliott and Minister Smith on the Social Services Sector's Response to COVID-19](#) non-essential visitors will not be permitted to enter the following Banyan facilities:
 - Arrell Youth Centre (AYC)
 - Peninsula Youth Centre (PYC)
 - George R. Force (GRF)
- All essential visitors, including vendors, will be asked to complete a COVID-19 screening questionnaire... Individuals with responses marked YES will be turned away and recommended to self-quarantine at home for 14 days, as per Public Health mandate.
- Effective March 25, 2020 the office at 688 Queensdale Avenue in Hamilton will be closed to the public until further notice.

Banyan will continue to provide daily updates on our website. We thank you in advance for your co-operation. With your help, we are doing our part to keep our communities safe.

Keeping You Informed

Official information about the status of COVID-19 and how to respond to symptoms:

- Government of Ontario: Coronavirus Updates
<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/>
- Hamilton Public Health Services: Coronavirus Updates
<https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/covid-19/novel-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Niagara Public Health Services: Coronavirus Updates
<https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/default.aspx>

Resources to assist you during this time:

- Government of Ontario - COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool
<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>
- Mental Health Counselling - For mental health counselling over the phone, you can contact Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 or visit the Canadian Mental Health Association tips to support mental health amid concerns of COVID-19 pandemic at <http://ontario.cmha.ca/>

Recent news headlines regarding COVID-19:

- **April 06, 2019** - Canadians can now apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/04/canadians-can-now-apply-for-the-canada-emergency-response-benefit.html>
- **April 02, 2019** - Ontario Increasing Mental Health Support During COVID-19.
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/04/ontario-increasing-mental-health-support-during-covid-19.html>
- **March 31, 2019** - Ontario Extends School and Child Care Closures to Fight Spread of COVID-19.
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/ontario-extends-school-and-child-care-closures-to-fight-spread-of-covid-19.html>
- **March 30, 2019** - Ontario Extends Emergency Declaration to Stop the Spread of COVID-19.
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/ontario-extends-emergency-declaration-to-stop-the-spread-of-covid-19.html>
- **March 29, 2020** - Prime Minister Announces Support for Vulnerable Canadians Affected by COVID-19.
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/03/29/prime-minister-announces-support-vulnerable-canadians-affected-covid>
- **March 28, 2020** - Ontario Prohibits Gatherings of More Than Five People with Strict Exceptions.
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/ontario-prohibits-gatherings-of-five-people-or-more-with-strict-exceptions.html>
- **March 25, 2020** - Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19.
<https://news.ontario.ca/mof/en/2020/03/ontarios-action-plan-responding-to-covid-19.html>
- **March 23, 2020** - Ontario Protecting the Most Vulnerable During COVID-19 Crisis.
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/ontario-protecting-the-most-vulnerable-during-covid-19-crisis.html>
- **March 23, 2020** - Ontario Closing At-Risk Workplaces to Protect Health and Safety.
<https://news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2020/03/ontario-closing-at-risk-workplaces-to-protect-health-and-safety.html>
- **March 19, 2020** - Ontario Protecting Critical Front-Line Justice Services in Response to COVID-19.
<https://news.ontario.ca/mag/en/2020/03/ontario-taking-action-to-protect-critical-front-line-justice-services-in-response-to-covid-19.html>