



John Brassard | Member of Parliament
Barrie—Innisfil
Deputy Opposition Whip

Media Release from Barrie-Innisfil MP John Brassard **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update 7**

For Immediate Release March 21 – Barrie-Innisfil Member of Parliament John Brassard is providing daily updates to residents of Barrie-Innisfil during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic through the media, at johnbrassard.com and on social media sites [@johnbrassardCPC](https://twitter.com/johnbrassardCPC).

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit today confirmed the second death related to COVID-19 at Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre in Barrie. The man, in his 70s, had been in close contact with another man who died at RVH on March 11.

"I was saddened to hear this news, and I offer condolences to the loved ones of both men," Brassard said. Their deaths are tragic and underscore the seriousness of this pandemic. I can't stress enough how important it is for everyone to strictly follow the advice of health officials, including social distancing. Let's be diligent. With a commitment from each of us, we can help flatten the curve of this virus and protect our families, neighbours and community."

There are currently nine cases of COVID-19 in Simcoe Muskoka, including a Bradford West Gwillimbury woman in her late 30s, who the health unit has reported in serious condition.

Barrie's dedicated COVID-19 assessment centre at 490 Huronia Road will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. until Mar. 22. **However, if you have mild symptoms, you are asked to self-isolate** at home instead of attending the testing centre or hospital emergency department. If you have mild symptoms, you will likely **NOT** be tested.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, use the Government of Canada [self assessment](https://www150.com/services/health/self-assessment) or call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 for advice.

On Saturday:

MP Brassard continued working to bring home Barrie-Innisfil residents who are currently stranded around the world.

"I was in contact with the Minister of Foreign Affairs this morning to ask about the Canadians who remain stranded, and in particular the Barrie-Innisfil residents who are desperately trying to get back home," Brassard said. "We are doing everything we can to get citizens safely back to Canada."

The Prime Minister provided an update this morning regarding efforts to repatriate stranded citizens:

- Flights are being arranged by Canadian airlines and the government to bring Canadians home – most from countries experiencing restricted mobility and travel measures.
- A flight has left Morocco and is on its way back to Canada; and attempts are being made to arrange flights to Peru and Spain
- All Canadians still overseas should register with Global Affairs Canada at travel.gc.ca

Parliament will re-convene in Ottawa next week, to allow MPs to approve a multi-billion-dollar emergency economic package to support individuals, families and businesses that are struggling today and worrying about the future.

Brassard encourages Barrie-Innisfil residents to visit johnbrassard.com for the latest information on the pandemic and Canada's response. While his Barrie office remains closed to the public, if you need assistance call **705-726-5959** or email john.brassard@parl.gc.ca or through social media [@johnbrassardCPC](https://twitter.com/johnbrassardCPC).

Follow these steps consistently to stay safe:

- Avoid any unnecessary contact with other people
- Stay at least six feet away from others
- Remain at home as much as you can - only going out for essential needs like food and medication
- Work from home if possible
- Shop for groceries online

Earlier this week:

- The Prime Minister announced a new plan to mobilize businesses and manufacturers to help fight the spread of COVID-19 and boost the healthcare sector's stockpile of life-saving supplies. "Local businesses have already been in contact with me to see how they can help", Brassard said.
- New protocols were enacted for those crossing the border illegally from the United States into Canada. They will now be turned around if they appear at the border.
- The government is in talks with Canadian airlines to help repatriate thousands of Canadians stranded in countries around the world, More information is expected in coming days
- Canada and the United States has suspended all non-essential travel across the border. This decision will not affect shipments, trade or business.
- More than 500,000 Employment Insurance applications have been filed this week, and staff is working around the clock to process requests for assistance. To put it in context, a year ago this week, 27,000 applications were filled out.
- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced \$82 billion in financial aid - \$27 billion in direct support for Canadian families and workers and \$55 billion in economic support for businesses across the country, in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Details are available [here](https://www150.com/services/employment). Anyone with questions regarding EI claims related to COVID-19 call 1-833-381-2725.
- International flights are restricted to just four major Canadian cities – Toronto's Pearson International and airports in Montreal, Vancouver and Calgary. Travellers exhibiting symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19) will not be permitted to board a plane headed to Canada.
- Emergency loans up to \$5,000 will be made available through Global Affairs Canada to assist Canadians who are abroad and having difficulty returning home. For information, call the emergency 24-7 response centre at (613) 996-8885.

For more information:

Government of Canada COVID-19 information line: 1-833-784-4397 or Canada.ca/coronavirus

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit: <http://www.simcoemuskothealth.org/Promos/Novel-Coronavirus>.

Finally, as hard as it is to believe, fraud artists are using this crisis to scam people. Please be mindful and be at a heightened state of alert when the phone rings or if someone comes to the door asking for personal information.