



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

Media Release from Barrie-Innisfil MP John Brassard

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update 6

For Immediate Release March 20 – Barrie-Innisfil Member of Parliament John Brassard will continue 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.

A "limited" Parliament will re-convene in Ottawa next week, to allow MPs to approve a multi-billion-dollar emergency economic package introduced by the government. The magnitude of this financial plan has never been seen before in this country; and it means there will be support for individuals, families and businesses that are struggling today and worrying about the future.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly turned our lives upside down and I know that many people are experiencing high levels of anxiety and uncertainty," Brassard said. "I would like to assure people that I am working with all levels of government, all political parties and community leaders to help individuals, families and businesses in Barrie-Innisfil and across Canada to navigate our new reality."

As officials work to contain the spread of COVID-19, Brassard is once again urging everyone to do their part to keep their families, their neighbours and their community safe.

"Social distancing is a new concept for many, but it is something we must incorporate into our daily lives, as we work together to contain the spread of the virus," he said. "Also, remember to wash your hands frequently."

Brassard also recognizes the healthcare workers, first responders and others who are going above and beyond during the crisis.

"Whether it's the doctors and nurses at our hospitals, first responders or the dedicated staff at our grocery stores and pharmacies and take-out restaurants, there are many people who are working extremely hard to meet our needs and keep our community running in extremely difficult circumstances," he said. "I truly appreciate their dedication and passion."

Follow these steps 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
- Do grocery shopping online

On Friday:

- 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. Barrie-Innisfil businesses who have the capacity to mobilize, should contact my office at john.brassard@parl.gc.ca
- New protocols were enacted for people illegally crossing the border arriving from the United States in Quebec. They will now be turned back at the border.
- The government is in talks with Canadian airlines to help repatriate thousands of Canadians stranded in countries around the world, including the first flight to Morocco this weekend – more information is expected in coming days.
- Airlines have announced the suspension of service soon to many destinations
- Canada and the United States will suspend all non-essential travel across the border at midnight tonight. This decision will not affect shipments, trade or business.
- More than 500,000 Employment Insurance applications have been filed just this week alone, and staff is working around the clock to process requests for assistance.

"The number of people filing employment insurance applications is clear evidence that Canadians are suffering financially, and we can expect increasingly difficult days ahead," Brassard said. "I want to assure everyone that we are here to help in any way we can."

- M.P. Brassard was involved in the daily conference call with the leadership team of the Conservative Party of Canada
- M.P. Brassard was also involved in a conference call late Friday afternoon with Barrie Mayor Jeff Lehman, Barrie-Springwater-Oro-Medonte M.P. Doug Shipley, Barrie-Innisfil M.P.P. Andrea Khanjin and a representative of Minister Doug Downey's office, Minister Downey was in a Cabinet meeting, to talk about local issues related to health, social, the economy, and business.

Earlier this week:

- 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 of the federal government's announcement are available [here](#). Anyone with questions regarding Employment Insurance claims related to COVID-19 should 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.
- Barrie's dedicated COVID-19 assessment centre at 490 Huronia Road will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. until Sunday, 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.
- Parks Canada has suspended visitor services at all national parks and historic sites until further notice.

Brassard is encouraging Barrie-Innisfil residents to visit johnbrassard.com for the latest information on the pandemic and Canada's response. While the Barrie-Innisfil Constituency Office remains closed to in-person traffic, anyone needing assistance can call 705-726-5959 during regular hours or email

Follow these steps to protect yourself:

- Wash your hands frequently, for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick
- Stay at least two metres away from anyone who is coughing or sneezing
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve
- Stay at home if you are sick

Brassard's constituency office remains closed to the public until further notice; however, staff will respond to phone calls, emails and social media inquiries. If you need assistance, call 705-726-5959 or email John.brassard@parl.gc.ca.

For information about international travel, contact the Government of Canada COVID-19 information line at 1-833-784-4397 or visit www.Canada.ca/coronavirus

The [Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Promos/Novel-Coronavirus) has information on COVID-19 testing, symptoms and more: <http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Promos/Novel-Coronavirus>.

For more information, contact: Office of MP John Brassard at 613-992-3394 John.Brassard@parl.gc.ca