

YMCA Phase 3 Re-Opening Update

The YMCA of Central East Ontario has been preparing to welcome members back to our facilities since the moment we closed. Although Phase 3 Re-Opening for Ontario will come into effect on Friday, July 17th, 2020 we have made the decision to delay reopening our facilities for members until September 1st, 2020.

We understand that many of you are anxious for us to open as quickly as possible and that you miss us and your friends at the YMCA and we are grateful that you miss us. We miss you as well. We are currently in the process of opening our Child Care Centres and offering Day Camp Programs to support working parents, who require care to enter back into the workforce and begin re-energizing and stimulating our economy. This remains our immediate focus and priority at this time. At the YMCA of Central East Ontario, we believe our number one priority is to ensure the health and safety of all of our members, our families and our staff that choose our YMCA to meet their health and fitness needs. While the Government of Ontario has announced that health, fitness and aquatics centres and community centres can open, we need time to understand the guidelines to provide members with a safe and enjoyable experience upon return.

“We need to see and understand fully the necessary policies and guidelines and ensure we take the time to implement these properly. We want to ensure our staff understand and are trained to meet expectations upon your return. Our commitment is to put people first - both our valued YMCA members and employees. We want to welcome you back as safely as possible,” said YMCA of Central East Ontario President and CEO David Allen. In the meantime, we’re busy getting ready and doing everything possible to ensure our facilities meet the highest standards of health and safety and modifying our policies and programs to ensure proper physical distancing practices can be maintained. Each of our Health & Fitness Centres has been and will undergo additional thorough deep cleaning during our closure and we’re modifying spaces, access points, traffic flow through our facilities and more. Here are just a few of the safety measures you’ll see when you visit the Y: • Glass barriers at Membership Desks • Health screenings upon entry • Contactless scan-in stations • Single one-way directional entry and exit • Physical distancing measures to maintain 2 metres between other people

- Increased sanitization and disinfection
- Increased hand-sanitizing stations
- Controlled building access and class sizes to support physical distancing

We all have a shared responsibility to support the safety of ourselves and those around us as we continue to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

We want to remind all of our members that membership fees were put on hold when we announced our closing on March 16th, 2020. We assure you we will not re-activate membership payments until such time as we have reopened.

Our decision to open on September 1st is based on the timelines we are seeing in other provinces where YMCAs have re-opened or are planning to re-open.

NEW INITIATIVES

Keep an eye out for emails from us, or visit us anytime at ymcaofceo.ca, or on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter for the latest updates on our progress. We are also exploring other exciting initiatives to keep you engaged over the summer months including parking lot cycle fit classes, outdoor fitness classes and registered visits to your YMCA to tour and use of the conditioning centre equipment.

“We want to be fully transparent as to the reason for our delay in re-opening. In addition to recalling staff, understanding the guidelines, training staff and finalizing our new safety protocols, learning from other YMCAs opening across the country and the time it took to be prepared. We are also aware of the number of members who are ready to return to physical spaces for their health and fitness needs continues to be low as there is still some fear and anxiety. This places additional financial challenges upon our organization in supporting the full operational costs of running our YMCA facilities,” said Allen.

The YMCA of Central East Ontario is a charity dedicated to helping communities connect, belong and thrive. The closure of our physical spaces, programs and services as a result of COVID-19 has come at a significant cost to our YMCA, just as it has for many businesses in our community and placed us in a financial position where we have to be extremely prudent to ensure we can continue to serve our members and communities for years to come.

We can't wait to open the doors of our YMCA health, fitness and aquatic centres to all valued members, volunteers and families.

Until then, Be Well, Be Safe and Stay Healthy