



By now, you've probably heard about the new COVID-19 State of Emergency announced today by the Province.

Broadly speaking the State of Emergency does not have a significant impact on real estate. **Real estate continues to be an essential service, members are permitted to continue to transact business and open houses remain prohibited.**

With that in mind, the State of Emergency does impact real estate in two ways:

1. Short-term rentals for recreational purposes are effectively closed as of January 12th, 2021. If a booking was made prior to January 12th it is permitted to go forward.
2. Renovations started before January 12th will be permitted to continue but those that have not started are not permitted to start. The government has not indicated when the new measures will be lifted.

More importantly, the new restrictions are indicative of the seriousness of the situation we find ourselves in. Unfortunately, government projections are predicting things to get much worse.

So far, MREB been incredibly proud of the commitment our profession has shown to following guidance from OREA and public health officials. That commitment is THE reason why you can continue to serve your clients in the midst of the pandemic.

But we are concerned.

There are **several** Members not following the advice of public health on things like showings and in-person business. This kind of selfish and unprofessional conduct has to stop. Real estate is an essential service to the people of Ontario, and we all have a

responsibility to ensure that business is done safely. So, we want to take this opportunity to restate government rules and OREA's key guidance for Members aimed at keeping you and your clients safe:

- **Masks must be worn at all times.** The additional requirement announced today mandates that masks must be worn outside in public spaces when social distancing is not possible.
- **Open houses are banned. Full stop. No exceptions anywhere in the Province until the lockdown is lifted.**
- Members should **use virtual tools** first and to the greatest extent possible to conduct all business.
- Urgently needed in-person showings are permitted but **MUST** be scheduled in advance. Members should **limit the number of people in the home to one group of two people** (plus the buyer's sales representative) to allow for physical distancing. Also, **PPE should be worn at all times, surfaces & hands should be cleaned and sanitized before and after the showing, and Members should take steps to space out appointments and manage the flow of people inside and outside the home.** Read more about OREA's safe showing practices [here](#).
- As an essential service, real estate offices and Brokerages may remain open however the Government has stated that all **employees who can work from home should do so immediately.** OREA strongly encourages Board and Brokerage offices to close unless it is absolutely necessary to be open. COVID-19 screening guidance for workplaces including Brokerages and Real Estate Board offices can be found [here](#); and
- OREA is working to confirm the impact of the new measures on ancillary services (i.e., staging, photography etc.) and will communicate that to Members as soon as possible.

We understand that these measures are difficult and we all have had to make sacrifices. But this pandemic will end, and life will return to normal.

Until then, let's continue to put the health and safety of our clients and communities first.

Thank you for rising to this important challenge.

For the latest COVID-19 updates, visit www.oreacovid19info.com. If you have any questions, please send them to, executiveofficer@mreb.ca