

For Immediate Release  
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## **KINGSTON ORGANIZATIONS ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY KINDNESS**

**Kingston, ON** – The introduction of COVID-19 to our country and our community has brought about unprecedented challenges. The last few months have been hard, and we know that residents are trying to adapt to these challenges the best that they can. Collectively, we want to encourage residents to be kind to one another as we gradually and safely re-open parts of our community.

There are many reasons why people from across the region, the country and in some cases even from the United States would be in Kingston: some are here for essential work related travel, for example, we have people from the United States that have been here working on the Third Crossing; others have been here to attend a funeral; we have many students who are here from other parts of the world to study; we have military personnel posted in Kingston; and there are lots of people who have license plates or personal identification that have never been changed to reflect their permanent address in Kingston. Whatever the reason, we should avoid making assumptions or being inhospitable because of where a person is from. The risk of COVID-19 across Canada remains significantly low and with the addition of the new mandatory mask order in the KFL&A area and with the closure of the US Border, this will continue to lower the risk.

We also acknowledge that different messages on a federal, provincial and municipal level can cause confusion and lead to uncertainty. The province is encouraging people to support local, as are we through our Love Kingston initiative. We want to encourage the buying power we have as locals to support our economy. However, there are no formal restrictions barring people from travelling regionally or throughout the country. Many people both here in Kingston and throughout the province will take the opportunity to travel regionally over the summer, and again, the risk is now very low across Ontario.

With respect to the current outbreak, we understand that people are concerned and anxious about what's happening. In this case, the outbreak was caught early which has helped to minimize the impact. Over 4700 people have been tested so far and 33 have tested positive for COVID-19. The community took swift action to get tested and to self-isolate in order to contain the outbreak, and compared to the rest of the province, KFL&A area still has a very low infection rate. This has been an eye-opening experience for many of us, and certainly a valuable learning opportunity.

The best things we can do to protect our health and those around us is to ensure that we continue to follow best practices: wear a mask, practice physical distancing, wash our hands frequently, and keep to our social circle. If you do travel outside of the KFL&A area, ensure you do a risk assessment.

As a community, we can anticipate that there will be future waves of the virus until a vaccine is available. We're not alone in experiencing these waves, and other parts of Ontario as well as Canada and the world will experience them. As circumstances continue to change, we will adapt and change with them. We have worked incredibly hard to limit the spread of the virus and we should be proud of our efforts. Let's continue to work together, support one another and demonstrate our resiliency.

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