

alPHa's members are
the public health units
in Ontario.

alPHa Sections:

Boards of Health
Section

Council of Ontario
Medical Officers of
Health (COMOH)

**Affiliate
Organizations:**

Association of Ontario
Public Health Business
Administrators

Association of
Public Health
Epidemiologists
in Ontario

Association of
Supervisors of Public
Health Inspectors of
Ontario

Health Promotion
Ontario

Ontario Association of
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Association of
Public Health Nursing
Leaders

Ontario Dietitians in
Public Health

February 9, 2021

Hon. Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Bldg Rm 281,
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Re: Paid Sick Leave as a Public Health Measure

On behalf of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) and its member Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health and Affiliate organizations, I am writing today to support the calls for the permanent inclusion of paid sick leave provisions under the Employment Standards Act, as a public health measure to prevent transmission of communicable diseases including COVID-19.

The rapid and steep uptick in COVID-19 cases and the emergence of new variants of concern in the past few months in Ontario have been alarming. Turning the tide of the resurgence while aiming to reopen schools in the coming days and businesses in the coming weeks will require a strong and clear reinforcement of the public health interventions aimed at preventing transmission, such as minimizing social contacts, maximizing physical distancing, and requiring masks.

As with so many other healthy behaviours, we know that limiting such reinforcement to public messaging is not sufficient and it is imperative that your Government exercise policy options that make the healthiest choice the easiest choice. With workplaces having been identified as increasingly significant drivers of COVID-19 outbreaks, we agree that one of these options should be to reinstate guaranteed paid sick leave under the Employment Standards Act, to ensure that workers do not have to choose between their livelihoods and following public health directives.

We hope that you will take this recommendation under careful advisement, and we would be pleased to discuss this with you further. To schedule a meeting, please have your staff contact Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHa, at loretta@alphaweb.org or 416-595-0006 x 222.

Yours sincerely,



alPHa President

COPY: Hon. Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
Hon. Christine Elliott, Minister of Health
Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health

The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership to the boards of health and public health units in Ontario. ALPHA advises and lends expertise to members on the governance, administration and management of health units. The Association also collaborates with governments and other health organizations, advocating for a strong, effective and efficient public health system in the province. Through policy analysis, discussion, collaboration, and advocacy, ALPHA's members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities.