



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE LEADER
ANNAMIE PAUL

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of the Ontario Legislature
His Worship John Tory, Mayor of the City of Toronto

March 24, 2021

Dear Premier Ford and Mayor Tory,

The pandemic has been a difficult time for Toronto. As one of the regions most impacted by COVID-19 infections, Torontonians have had to endure and sacrifice a great deal.

Even though the pandemic has impacted everyone, the data shows that it has impacted some Torontonians more than others. We now know that women, racialized, Indigenous, immigrant and low-income peoples have been disproportionately harmed by the pandemic, both in terms of lost income, lost employment and loss of life – last November, 79% of Toronto’s COVID-19 infections were amongst racialized peoples.

The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on racialized and marginalized neighbourhoods is precisely why the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has recommended that “[a]dults in racialized and marginalized communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19” be immunized at the same time as adults aged 60-69. In making the recommendation, NACI said that its goal was to make the pandemic response as “equitable, ethical and efficient as possible,” and to “minimize serious illness and deaths.” Toronto Centre/Ward 19 residents fall squarely into this group.

Many residents of Toronto Centre/Ward 13 neighbourhoods are front line and essential workers carrying out the work that has kept our city, province and economy going. Their jobs are precarious, and often do not include sick pay. They travel to work on crowded routes, and often return home to overcrowded, inadequate housing where the risk of infection or infecting is significantly higher.

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Throughout the pandemic, several neighbourhoods in Toronto Centre/Ward 19 have been COVID-19 hotspots. The Toronto Centre/Ward 13 neighbourhoods of Regent Park and Moss Park have rates of infection of well over 300 cases per 100,000 people. In North St. James Town, the March 1 - 21 rate of infection was 736 cases per 100,000 people – the highest rate of infection in the City of Toronto. These residents are the very definition of “[a]dults in racialized and marginalized communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19.”

Even though pilot programs have been established to offer COVID-19 vaccinations at some pharmacies and clinics in Toronto Centre/Ward 13, the program excludes adults under age 60, including racialized and marginalized people living in disproportionately affected neighbourhoods within Toronto Centre/Ward 13. It is time to correct this oversight, particularly, as new variants which cause more serious illness amongst younger adults are becoming predominant in Ontario.

With among the highest positivity rates in Toronto, I am writing to ask you to ensure that, beginning immediately, every adult aged 18+ living in North and South St. James Town, Regent Park and Moss Park have access to a COVID-19 vaccine via the pilot program, as per the NACI recommendation. This request also extends to all communities that are similarly affected by the pandemic, for reasons of equity and ethics.

Thank you for your kind consideration and I look forward to positive news on behalf of your residents in Toronto Centre/Ward 13.

With best wishes,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Annamie Paul', written in a cursive style.

Annamie Paul
Leader of the Green Party of Canada

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