

Lifting COVID-19 Elevator Capacity Restrictions

November 2, 2021

Current Situation

Currently, properties in the Financial District have limited elevator capacity to a maximum of four people per cab. Toronto Public Health does not have requirements for the capacity limits for elevators in commercial properties; however, Toronto Public Health guidance recommends users maintain six feet of distance in an elevator. [\[LINK\]](#)

Timing of Lifting Elevator Capacity Restrictions

A significant number of Financial District properties will remove elevator capacity restrictions on Monday, December 6. Landlords will be communicating this change to their tenants the week of Monday, November 8.

Considerations

- As employers ramp up RTO plans, tenants are more frequently requesting landlords communicate when elevator capacity restrictions will be removed to ensure this is not an impediment to returning workers.
- The risk of contracting COVID-19 on an elevator is relatively low [\[LINK\]](#).
- Toronto's vaccination rate is high, and many employers have implemented vaccination requirements for employees returning to the office.
- Mask requirements remain in place in all indoor public spaces.
- Individuals are generally managing their own risk tolerance and making decisions accordingly.
- Many major North American cities are operating without elevator capacity restrictions (Vancouver, New York, Washington DC, Los Angeles).

Key Messages

- The Financial District is ready to welcome workers back to the office.
- To better assist employers in finalizing their Return to the Office plans, properties are proactively lifting elevator capacity restrictions on Monday, December 6. This will ensure returning workers will be able to access floors in a timely fashion.
- As Ontario continues to exit Step Three, capacity restrictions in many types of venues are being reduced or eliminated (e.g., event venues, movie theatres, restaurants). Eliminating elevator capacity restrictions is consistent with this trend.
- Similar to public transit, the risk of contracting COVID-19 during a brief elevator trip is relatively low.
- More than 80% of eligible Ontarians are fully vaccinated and Toronto's mask mandate for indoor public spaces remains in place to provide added protection.
- Many cities internationally are operating without elevator capacity restrictions. Experience in these locations has shown that individuals are managing their own risk tolerance and making decisions accordingly.
- Based on current occupancy, we anticipate it will be some time before elevators are used at pre-pandemic levels.
- This will be monitored in the context of the COVID-19 environment and capacity restrictions may be reimposed if the situation warrants.