



English Language Tutoring for the Ottawa Community *Volunteers Helping Newcomers*

July 22, 2020

Dear learners, tutors, and friends of ELTOC,

We hope you and your families are all well and enjoying the summer months safely as we continue to navigate through these unprecedented times of COVID-19. As socially responsible members of the community, we have all had to adapt to preventative measures including wearing masks, keeping our physical distance, practicing good hand hygiene and limiting the size of social gatherings. By us all putting community health and safety first and foremost, Ontario is now able to start moving into Stage 3 of reopening the economy.

ELTOC is also continuing to keep the health and safety of our learners, tutors and staff first and foremost in mind. Our risk assessment committee, which we spoke about previously, has recently completed an in-depth hazard analysis of workplace and tutoring services and has made recommendations to our Board about what we believe is acceptable to maintain safe operating and volunteer environments. These recommendations include:

- 1) A safe return to the physical office for staff on a part time rotational basis, with staff continuing to work online the remainder of week, including with tutors and learners. This addresses and manages workplace hazards while meeting operating needs. With current knowledge about this virus and how it spreads, the risk reflected in a partial return to the office is considered to be low. Timing for reopening the office is expected to be in September and is dependent on public authority regulations, clarity around offices reopening and ELTOC having all infection controls, such as masks, sanitization stations and physical distancing processes in place.
- 2) Continue to provide tutoring service via online platforms, mainly using Zoom and WhatsApp, with staff mailing or dropping off materials to tutors and learners when required, for the foreseeable future. This addresses the high risk level assessed for in-person visits and the challenges, including language barriers and consistency, associated with rigorous infection control and management.

We have conveyed these recommendations to our funder IRCC, whom we thank for keeping communication open and supporting us through these uncharted waters. These recommendations and control measures align with the Ontario Public Health Guidelines and other government authorities and reflect some of the current thinking of similar organizations with whom the committee has consulted.



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This is a first step only in the recovery process. ELTOC's Covid-19 plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, likely quarterly, to reflect changes in public authority directives and guidelines. Future consideration may be given to providing in-person tutoring services for select literacy learners in more open public places with appropriate infection controls, training and management but that is not in the immediate plan.

ELTOC has already demonstrated, through the ingenuity and dedication of staff, tutors and learners that we can adapt during these challenging times and operate remotely, safely and efficiently. ELTOC will continue to work to expand and improve its online tutoring capacity and will work closely with tutors and learners in helping them decide how to move forward and support them in their decisions.

Tutors, we ask you once again to please contact your learner(s) and let them know that this letter has been posted on our website. At the top right of the page, they can use the SELECT LANGUAGE option to have the information translated into another language.

Thank you all for your patience, understanding and support. We can take pride in knowing we have come this far together and that we will get through it.

Please stay safe.

Sincerely,

Giselle Leduc, Executive Director and the ELTOC Board of Directors