



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

October 1, 2020

Dear learners, tutors, and friends of ELTOC,

The summer months seem to have flown by far too quickly and the fall is now upon us. We hope you and your families continue to be well and were able to take advantage of the good weather in the safe and responsible ways that are our new normal. What we have learned from Ontario entering Stage 3 of reopening the economy is that the vigilant practice of preventative measures in addressing COVID-19 is more critical than ever. We would like to thank you all for keeping our safety practices at the forefront when working, tutoring or learning. It has required significant adaptability on the part of many to safeguard our operating and program environments and you have risen to the occasion.

We would like to confirm that ELTOC is continuing to operate online as we go forward into the fall and there will be no in-person tutoring nor any in-person meetings until further notice based on the following:

- Sadly, despite the vigilance of many, Ontario is entering into a second wave which our public health and government officials are saying will be “worse than the first”. It will be our collective action that will determine the complexity and intensity of this wave. ELTOC is fortunate to have socially responsible staff and tutors who have followed our preventative measures to date. We are asking you to continue to do so and, through virtual means, keep our learners updated on these safety protocols.
- It has been reported that our learner demographic (newcomers in particular) are disproportionately represented in being impacted by COVID-19. While there are various theories – front line workers, lower income, high density living conditions, communication issues – the fact remains that no matter how careful we may be in implementing safeguards, we are dealing with a most vulnerable population in terms of COVID-19 and must keep safety standards to the highest level.

Consistency is important in implementing safety measures so that we share the same understanding and there is no confusion in messaging. It is not the time to start considering on a case by case basis; therefore, there will be no exceptions to the following: there will be no in-person contact between tutors and staff, tutors and learners and staff and learners. ELTOC’s program will continue to operate online and our staff will continue to work remotely as well as access the office safely when required under the direction of our Executive Director and in accordance with established safety procedures.



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We would like to acknowledge the continued support of our funder, IRCC, who recently sent a memo recognizing the online efforts undertaken by not for profit organizations supporting the newcomer community and confirming their ongoing financial commitment for this year. We share that recognition with each and every one of you, as it is because of your resilience and adaptability that ELTOC has been able to continue to operate at the safety levels expected by our funder. IRCC has further shown their commitment to ELTOC by approving our hiring of a Technology ESL Education Counsellor with in-depth experience in online learning who will be a valuable resource to our current ESL Education Counsellors going forward, including helping them resolve tutor and learner technology issues.

Tutors, we ask you once again, 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.

We will continue to accelerate together along our learning curve to deliver the best possible remote ESL tutoring program to our learners during these unprecedented times. We are all in this together and are here to help each other through this, no matter how long this will take.

Thank you again for your understanding, willingness to adapt, and tremendous commitment.

Please continue to stay safe.

Sincerely, Giselle Leduc, Executive Director and the ELTOC Board of Directors