

June 3, 2021

AMO Policy Update – Blue Box Regulation Released and Province Easing Restrictions on Long-Term Care

Blue Box Regulation for Full Producer Responsibility Transition

The Province today released the regulation to transition the Blue Box to [full producer responsibility](#). This transition will occur between July 1st, 2023 and the end of 2025. It will move Ontario forward with better environmental and economic outcomes.

This is an important milestone for municipalities and for Ontario’s environment. Municipal governments are ready to implement this transition to full producer responsibility smoothly and seamlessly.

“These changes to the Blue Box program reflect the most important advances in waste diversion since the program was created two decades ago,” said AMO President Graydon Smith. “It will save property taxpayers \$150 million a year and lead to better, more innovative, and sustainable packaging practices.”

The final regulation includes the following provisions:

- establishment of a province-wide common collection system that transitions all current municipal programs and expands servicing to:
 - all communities regardless of size (except Far North)
 - all residential dwelling types
 - all schools
 - all publicly run retirement homes and long-term care facilities, and
 - more public spaces.
- an enhanced and standardized list of materials that will need to be collected and recycled
- high, progressive, and enforceable targets
- certainty for planning to ensure a seamless transition.

We expect that the regulation will be posted on the Ontario e-laws site soon.

AMO has scheduled a webinar for municipal staff on Wednesday, June 9th from 12 noon to 2 pm to provide more details on the regulation and how municipalities can ensure they are prepared for the transition. Municipal staff can [register to attend](#) this webinar now.

Province Easing Restrictions on Long-Term Care

Effective Wednesday, June 9th, the Ontario government [announced](#) it is easing some restrictions in long-term care homes. The purpose is to allow residents to have more social connections with family, friends, and other residents. The decision is due to high levels of vaccination in long-term care homes and improvements in key public health care indicators. Changes include:

- Residents who have been fully immunized can leave their long-term care homes for day and overnight social outings and trips.
- Residents with mobility limitations or health conditions (essentially, factors unrelated to weather) that make participating in outdoor visits highly unlikely or impossible may have one general visitor at a time inside the long-term care home, in addition to an essential caregiver.
- Regardless of resident and visitor vaccination status, brief hugs can now take place. Where both the resident and visitors are fully immunized, close physical contact, including handholding, can now safely take place. Residents and visitors are to adhere to public health measures in the home, including good hand hygiene and appropriate masking.

Further specific information is found in an updated Directive #3, as well as the Ministry of Long-Term Care's [visitor policy](#) and [guidance document](#). The government will monitor the ongoing situation in the vulnerable sector to protect health and safety and promote mental health and well-being.

AMO's [COVID-19 Resources](#) page is being updated continually so you can find critical information in one place. Please send any of your municipally related pandemic questions to covid19@amo.on.ca.

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