



## FACTUM

### Seven in Ten Canadians (72%) Support Four-Week Closure of Non-Essential Businesses as Canada's Biggest City Goes Back Into Lockdown; Support in Toronto at 76%

Majority Also Support Extended School Closures, Plan to Keep Following Safety Regulations Despite Fatigue as Pandemic Drags On

**Toronto, ON, November 27, 2020** – As news broke last Friday that Toronto was going back into lockdown, a new Ipsos survey for Global News was conducted to gauge public opinion about pandemic safety measures and how long Canadians think they can keep up.

#### *Strong Support for Safety Measures*

The results show that most Canadians are broadly supportive of government measures to reduce the spread of the virus. A majority – more than seven in ten (72%) – agree (34% strongly/38% somewhat) they support a pre-planned four-week shutdown of all non-essential businesses in order to get COVID-19 under control. In the newly locked-down GTA, this rises to 76%.

Support is equally strong for closing down schools. More than seven in ten Canadians (72%) back an extended school closure (four weeks instead of two) over the holidays to prevent the virus from spreading any further, with 33% who agree strongly and 39% somewhat. This rises to 75% in the GTA (79% within the 416 region), though parents are not any more likely to support this move than Canadians without kids at home – indeed, parents are directionally less likely to support an extended school closure (68% vs. 73% of non-parents).

Wearing a facemask around others remains widely accepted as a necessary preventive measure. Nearly nine in ten (88%) agree (62% strongly/26% somewhat), saying they support the mandatory wearing of facemasks when in a public place, up 2 points since October. Those living in Ontario (92%) are significantly more likely than those in BC (83%), the Prairies (79%), or Atlantic Canada (81%) to agree.

#### *Doing What We Can*

The survey also finds that most Canadians are continuing to do what they can to keep each other safe during COVID-19. Nearly all (94%) agree (58% strongly/37% somewhat) they are doing their best to abide by public health recommendations and rules regarding COVID-19, in line with a month ago. While the overwhelming majority across all groups tend to agree, women (98%) are more likely than men (91%) to say they're doing everything they can, while Boomers (99%) are significantly more likely than Gen Z (87%), Millennials (92%), or Gen X'ers (95%) to agree.

With 5.4 million downloads as of November 22<sup>nd</sup>, and eight provinces and territories on board, the COVID Alert app – Canada's free exposure notification app – is slowly gaining traction across the country. Addressing one of the persistent public concerns about the app, roughly two in three Canadians surveyed (68%) agree (23% strongly/45% somewhat) they are willing to sacrifice a little of



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their privacy if it aids government in the tracing and tracking of COVID-19 outbreaks. This opinion is strongest among Boomers (77%), and weaker among Millennials (59%) and Gen X'ers (65%).

As the holidays approach, many Canadians would typically be preparing to travel to see family, including many who would travel abroad. That won't be happening this year. Most, though not all, Canadians plan to stay in Canada over the holidays, with just 15% agreeing (and only 3% who agree strongly) they are planning to travel outside the country during the winter months. Winter travel plans are more likely among Gen Z (33%) and Quebecers (27%).

Though the pandemic is entering its tenth month in Canada, a majority say they are just as diligent about following safety measures now as they were when the outbreak began back in March. Seven in ten (69%) say they aren't any less strict in the way they abide by physical distancing protocols during this second wave than they were during the first wave in the spring. However, three in ten (31%) agree (8% strongly/23% somewhat) that they *have* become less strict – a feeling that strengthens to nearly six in ten Gen Z Canadians (57%) and 42% of Millennials.

### *COVID Fatigue Persists, But Most Plan to Stay Vigilant*

Though recent weeks have brought welcome news about vaccines, the pandemic is widely expected to persist well into 2021, and Canadians will need to keep taking precautions for some time yet. Many are fed up with masks, distancing and endless handwashing: nearly half (48%) agree (14% strongly/34% somewhat) they're getting tired of following public health recommendations and rules regarding COVID-19, unchanged since October. Some parts of the country are feeling fatigued more than others: in Quebec, six in ten (61%) agree they are tired of following the rules.

This leaves more than half of Canadians (52%) who disagree, with intentions to keep following safety guidelines for the foreseeable future, in line with the level of resolve seen a month ago. Asked how long they are willing to alter their behaviour, most Canadians (87%) intend to continue taking precautions until the spring, including 25% (-1 pt) who will stay vigilant until they are vaccinated and 46% (-2 pts) who will do so until public health authorities say we can ease up. One in ten (10%; -2 pts) will gradually ease up on their own, but will mostly continue to be vigilant until vaccinated, and a further 6% plan on going back to their normal behaviour once the weather improves in the spring.

Only 3% intend to revert to their normal behaviour as soon as the new year begins, while 9% (+3 pts) say they're losing patience and plan on going back to their normal behaviour very soon.



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### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between November 20-23, 2020, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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