

March 30, 2020

## Message from the Mayor – Pelee Island Ferry Services in Response to COVID-19

As we are all aware, the MV Pelee Islander will begin service between Pelee Island and Leamington, ON. on April 1, 2020.

The Township of Pelee, the Province of Ontario and the Owen Sound Transportation Company's top priority is to continue to protect the health and well-being of all Ontarians and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

I reach out to you to encourage everyone to work together as a community, to think of the best interests of your neighbours on Pelee Island or on the mainland and to follow the protocols put in place to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

**Ferry users are asked to limit their travel for essential needs only.**

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, physical distancing measures will limit the number of MV Pelee Island passengers that can be accommodated on each crossing.

Priority service will be given to Pelee Island permanent residents and essential service providers.

Information is included below on additional measures being taken to ensure the safe transportation to and from the mainland and while on the ferry vessel.

Please be assured that we are continually monitoring and working collaboratively with all parties to address the spread of COVID-19.

Additional information is also available at:

[http://www.ontarioferries.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200323 OSTC Bulletin Pelee-Island v09.pdf](http://www.ontarioferries.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/200323_OSTC_Bulletin_Pelee-Island_v09.pdf)

## Notice to Pelee Island Transportation Service Ferry Customers:

April 1, 2020:

In response to COVID-19, **physical distancing measures** will limit the number of passengers that can be accommodated on each crossing. Ferry users are asked to limit their travel to **essential needs** only. Priority service will be given to Pelee Island permanent residents and essential service providers. Ferry schedules may change in response to changing conditions, additional recommendations and restrictions.

Please take the following precautions:

- DO NOT travel if you are ill, unless the purpose of travel is for a medical appointment.
- Take turns with a neighbor shopping for each other's groceries and general goods, where possible. Reducing vehicles by taking one vehicle instead of two frees up a space for someone who may have an urgent need for transportation. Carpooling is NOT physical distancing. Please limit car occupants to members of a single household. At the ferry:

OSTC is making changes to its operating procedures in response to the need for physical distancing to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

1. Ferry travelers will be asked to practice physical distancing by remaining in their vehicles during the crossing. Ferry crew will only drive vehicles on and off the vessel if there is a safety reason to do so. In that event, crew will take protective measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 between vehicles. Please follow the instruction of the crew member.
2. NO smoking is allowed inside vehicles or anywhere on the vessel.
3. Vehicles must remain off throughout the crossing. Vehicles may not be turned on to generate heat for occupants. Please dress accordingly.
4. There is a limit of twenty (20) foot passengers per crossing; twelve (12) can be accommodated in passenger lounge and eight (8) on the upper outer deck, weather permitting. All foot passengers are asked to maintain proper physical distancing in the passenger lounge. NOTE: this is only possible if vehicle passengers REMAIN in their vehicles and do not use the passenger lounge. At no time will more than 12 persons be permitted in the passenger lounge. Please stay in your vehicles so that foot passengers may be accommodated.

**FOOT PASSENGERS MUST MAKE A RESERVATION BY CALLING 1-800-661-2220.**

5. There will be NO food or beverage service and no access to drinking water on the vessel. Please bring your own food and non-alcoholic beverages.
6. We have increased the intensity and frequency of surface cleaning on the ship and in the terminals; keep in mind that we are unable to clean washrooms after individual usage, but we will be cleaning more often.
7. Our staff may be wearing additional protective gear for your protection and their own.

OSTC and Pelee Island Transportation continue to watch the development of COVID-19 and the status of Ontario's declaration of emergency. Due to the evolving situation, we are unable to predict what our service will look like in future and will make further announcements, as appropriate.

**Notice to Sandusky Service Ferry Customers:**

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Due to the recent joint announcement between the Canadian and US government restricting border crossings to essential travelers, weekend service to/from Sandusky, Ohio scheduled for May is on hold and will not be initiated until the Canadian and US governments re-open the border to non-essential travelers. Initiating the 2020 service to Sandusky, Ohio will also be subject to ensuring that sufficient service is provided to Ontario customers as a priority, Sandusky pier rehabilitation work is complete, and the dock is safe and functional.

