



## COMMUNIQUÉ

### Task Force clarifies Directive 55 regarding Cigarette, Tobacco and Convenience Stores

For immediate release

**(Kahnawake - January 15, 2021)** The Kahnawà:ke Covid-19 Task Force wishes to clarify the distinction between cigarette/tobacco stores and convenience stores, as well as the reasoning behind their different treatments in Directive 55.

“The Task Force decided to close retail stores, which includes cigarette/tobacco stores, as they often cater mainly to non-local clients and are therefore at risk of increasing the spread of the COVID-19 virus to the community,” said Ratsénhaienhs Frankie McComber, the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke’s Lead Liaison to the Task Force. “Convenience stores are focused primarily on providing essential products to locals so that they need not leave the community.”

Convenience stores are at a much lower risk of attracting non-locals and therefore, as the rate of infection is higher amongst our near neighbours, at lower risk of bringing the virus into the community.

It is important to note that **the sale of tobacco products to non-locals is prohibited from any store in the community** at this time, and owners and employees can face fines and even criminal sanctions. The Peacekeepers will continue to issue tickets to those defying this order.

A small number of retail businesses in the community have requested to be recategorized as convenience stores. Any other store owner may do the same by making a request to the Task Force and allowing for the inspection of the premises. *(Note: For the purposes of Directive 55, a convenience store may be defined as: a small, local store in which a significant portion of the visible stock is limited to food, essential toiletries, products for household cleaning or emergencies and newspapers and magazines).*

We urge all community members to respect these directives as they are based on decisions made to protect our community from further cases of COVID-19 at a time when numbers are significantly increasing on the outside.

This Directive is being reviewed on a weekly basis.

#### Suggested Media

##### Instructions:

Please run at your discretion.

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