

Ontario increases pot shop approvals to 30 a week

Ontario's cannabis regulator says it's issued 489 store licences, with another 940 applications in the queue

VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA, February 17, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Ontario's cannabis regulator says it's upping the pace of licensing weed stores for the third time in less than a year, with the latest pushing authorizations to 30 per week, from 20.

The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario said in a blog post Tuesday that the change takes effect immediately.

In the first two years that Canada legalized recreational cannabis, major producers said a slow retail rollout in Canada's biggest market hurt sales and allowed the illicit trade to thrive.

With a population of 14.5 million, Ontario hit 100 legal cannabis stores just last June. By comparison, Alberta had over 400 stores open then to serve 4.4 million people.

The Ontario government took steps to open up its legal pot shop market in December 2019, when there were less than 50 stores. That initiative included a plan to authorize up to 20 stores per month starting in April, but the push didn't start until September. Tuesday's announcement marks the third time that Ontario has sped up store authorizations.

Read more: [Ontario speeds up cannabis retail approvals amid applicant frustration](#)

There are now more than 430 licensed stores open for business, according the AGCO.

The regulator says it's received more than...

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