

WORKSAFE BC GUIDELINES POSTED

With Phase 2 of BC's Restart set to begin on Tuesday, May 19 WorkSafe BC shared updated guidelines for the following sectors today:

- restaurants, cafes and pubs;
- salons and personal services;
- museums, art galleries and libraries, real estate;
- education;
- health services;
- retail;
- in-person counselling;
- parks and outdoor spaces; and
- office space.

To view the guidelines, visit: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/about-us/covid-19-updates/covid-19-returning-safe-operation>

Employers resuming operations are required to develop a six-step COVID-19 Safety Plan that outlines the policies, guidelines, and procedures they have put in place to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Additional details can be found on the WorkSafe BC site.

GYMS & FITNESS CENTRES ABLE TO REOPEN

An order by Interior Health's Chief Medical Health Officer closing all fitness centres, gyms, yoga studios or similar personal training facilities will be lifted on May 19.

The order, issued April 2, is being rescinded in accordance with B.C.'s Restart Plan Phase 2. This will allow these facilities to re-open as long as they can meet requirements to protect staff and clients against the spread of COVID-19. Any facility wishing to resume operation must develop a plan based on measures laid out by the Provincial Health Office.

Link:

- **WorkSafeBC Guidelines Support Safe Reopening:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020LBR0015-000895>
- **Gyms and Fitness Centres Able to Reopen May 19:** https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/MediaCentre/NewsReleases/Documents/PSA_COVID19_MHO%20Order_Gym_Fitness_Spa_Closures_May15_2020.pdf

NEW PROVINCIAL UPDATES

- There are 359 active cases in BC currently.
- There has been one new acute-care outbreak at the Abbotsford Regional Hospital.
- There has also been one new community outbreak with two confirmed cases at the Oppenheimer Group, a fruit and vegetable processing plant in Coquitlam. The public health investigation is ongoing and active contact tracing is underway.
- The Province announced plans today for K-12 students to be able to voluntarily return to part time classes starting June 1, with the goal of returning to full-time classes in September 2020, provided it is safe to do so. For kindergarten to Grade 5, this means most students will go to school half time (such as alternating days), while grades 6 to 12 will go to school about one day a week. Children of essential service workers and students needing additional supports will have the option to attend school full time. Families that decide not to send their children to class may continue learning from home.



Current Situation in BC

(as of 3:00pm PDT May 15, 2020)

Cases:

- Total confirmed cases in BC (since January): 2,407
- New cases since May 14: 15
- Hospitalized cases: 51
- Intensive Care: 12
- COVID-19 related deaths: 140
- Recovered: 1,908
- Long term care/assisted living homes affected: 15
- Acute care affected: 5

Confirmed cases by region:

- Vancouver Coastal Health: 878
- Fraser Health: 1,164
- Island Health: 126
- Interior Health: 181
- Northern Health: 58

News release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EMBC0026-000898>

BEARS ARE AWAKE

Bears are out of hibernation and there have been a number of grizzlies exploring across the region. Prevent human/bear conflicts by being bear safe and managing attractants. For tips and more information, visit the resources section on www.wildsafebc.com.



PROVINCIAL UPDATES - CONTINUED

- Agriculture, seafood, and food processing businesses in British Columbia can begin to access consulting and planning services to help with COVID-19 response and recovery, through a program offered by the federal and provincial governments. Applications are now being accepted of the latest intake of the BC Agri-Business Planning Program.
- The Province has purchased the Comfort Inn Hotel on Blanshard Street to provide more affordable homes for people in Victoria.
- The Minister of Citizens' Services and responsible for Multiculturalism has issued the following statement in response to the increase in hate crimes and incidents towards people of Asian heritage in BC.

Links:

- **COVID-19 Joint Statement:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0026-000897>
- **Minister of Health Statement on Long Weekend Travel:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0026-000899>
- **Optional In-Class Instruction Starts June 1:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0026-000890>
- **Helping Agriculture, Food Businesses Plan for Recovery:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020AGRI0018-000886>
- **Minister's Statement on Hate Crimes:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020TAC0021-000885>
- **Province Buys Hotel in Victoria to Create Affordable Homes:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020MAH0026-000889>

All municipalities within the region have activated Emergency Operations Centres through the Regional Emergency Operations Centre. The regional district, municipalities and First Nations communities are working in this integrated model to coordinate and communicate throughout this pandemic response.

NEW FEDERAL UPDATES

- As of 7:00pm EDT today, there have been 74,602 total cases in Canada, with 1,236,746 patients tested.
- The Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy will be extended by an additional 12 weeks to August 29, 2020. The Government will consult with key business and labour representatives over the next month on potential adjustments to the program to incent jobs and growth, including the 30 per cent revenue decline threshold.
- Minister of National Revenue has announced benefit payments will continue for an additional three months for those who are not able to file their 2019 returns on time. Eligible Canadians who are presently receiving the Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax credit and/or the Canada Child Benefit will continue to receive these payments until the end of September 2020. The tax filing deadline has been extended from April 30 to June 1, 2020.
- The Prime Minister today announced \$450 million in funding to help Canada's academic research community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding will provide wage supports to universities and health research institutes and support them to maintain essential research-related activities during the crisis.
- The Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, kicked off the hiring period for Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) 2020. Starting today, thousands of opportunities are being posted to the Job Bank website for jobs available across the country. Thousands more will be posted over the coming weeks and months, with a target of approximately 70,000 placements.

Links:

- **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Extended:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/05/government-extends-the-canada-emergency-wage-subsidy.html>
- **Support for Research Staff:** <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/15/prime-minister-announces-support-research-staff-canada>
- **Canada Summer Jobs Start Rolling Out:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2020/05/canada-summer-jobs-start-rolling-out-to-keep-young-people-working-during-covid-19.html>
- **Benefit Payments for Eligible Canadians Continue to Fall:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/news/2020/05/benefits-payments-for-eligible-canadians-to-continue-until-fall-2020.html>

BC COVID-19 SURVEY

The BC Centre for Disease Control is a population health survey to elicit citizen experience, knowledge and actions during the COVID-19 pandemic. This survey is the first of several activities that will strengthen BC's pandemic response and understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 to date.

The survey will be open until May 31.

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-survey>

SCAMMERS USE BENEFIT PROGRAM HOAX TO TRICK VICTIMS

Text messages are circulating saying recipients have received a deposit for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). These texts are a scam. Do not reply or click on the link and delete the text. This is the latest attempt by unscrupulous fraudsters to get personal information and money by posing as the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

People should be vigilant when they receive, either by telephone, mail, text message or email, a fraudulent communication that claims to be from the CRA requesting personal information such as a social insurance number, credit card number, bank account number, or passport number.

- The CRA will never:
- give or ask for personal or financial information by email and ask you to click on a link
- email you a link asking you to fill in an online form with personal or financial details
- send you an email with a link to your refund
- demand immediate payment by Interac e-transfer, bitcoin, prepaid credit cards or gift cards from retailers such as iTunes, Amazon, or others; or
- threaten you with arrest or a prison sentence

To learn more about how to protect yourself from scammers, visit "[Slam the Scam](#)."

Phone Numbers:

- **1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319).** Non-health COVID-19 information. Open 7 days/wk, from 8:30am to 9pm MST
- **811** - dial 811 for health related information on COVID-19
- **211** - seniors looking for help (or volunteers willing to help), can call 211 or visit: <http://www.bc211.ca/>
- **Crisis Line: 1.888.353.2273** - free, anonymous support
- **Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868**

Online Links:

- **COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool & App** - use this online tool to complete a self-assessment & get updates.
- **BC Centre for Disease Control** - includes information on their testing protocols.
- **BC COVID-19 Dashboard** - a great source for up-to-date information and statistics.
- **Interior Health** - links to the latest Interior Health information.
- **Government of Canada** - statistics, travel info and economic and financial supports available federally.
- **Province of BC Information Hub** - (info on childcare, travel, employee/employer resources, business support)

Link to BC Restart Plan:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>