

## LATEST UPDATE – Nov. 20, 2020

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In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

### Ministry of Health Update

In today's joint statement on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, reported 516 new cases of COVID-19 for a total of 25,474 cases in the province since the pandemic began. There were 148 new cases in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) region. Currently, 227 individuals are hospitalized with COVID-19 provincially, 57 of whom are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation. There were 10 new deaths, bringing our total number to 331. VCH assisted living, long-term care homes and seniors' rental buildings with ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks are:

- Windermere Care Centre (14<sup>th</sup> floors)
- Renfrew Care Centre
- Youville Residence, Parkview Unit (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors)
- Arbutus Care Centre (first floor)
- Columbus Residence (second floor)
- Holy Family Hospital (rehab not impacted)
- Capilano Care Centre
- Fraserview Intermediate Care Lodge
- Louis Brier Home & Hospital
- Banfield Pavilion (fourth floor)
- Royal Arch Masonic Home
- Three Links Care Centre.

### New Province-Wide Restrictions

The province is currently in the midst of its second surge, and we are seeing increased activity in terms of community transmission, outbreaks, and effects on our health care system in every health authority in the province. We need to keep our essential services open, such as schools, healthcare and workplaces – and we do this we need to flatten the curve.

With this in mind, Dr. Henry has extended the provincial health officer orders that were in place for Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health to the entire province, and added several new restrictions in place. The orders came into effect Nov. 19, 2020 at midnight and will last until at least Dec. 7, 2020.

Below are some of the major changes/additions to the new orders and restrictions. Complete information can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions>

### Masks

The Minister of Public Safety and the Solicitor General has issued a requirement for the wearing of masks for all indoor public and retail spaces for staff and customers, except where eating or drinking. People who cannot put on or remove a mask on their own are exempt, as are children under the age of two.

- Employers are expected to enforce the mandatory mask policy with both employees and customers;
- A customer can be refused entry or service if they do not wear a mask.

### Social Gatherings

There are to be no social gatherings of any size with anyone other than your immediate household. This applies in our homes, vacation rentals and in the community and in public venues including those with less than 50 people in controlled settings. Your immediate household can of course include roommates and if you live on your own, you can visit with up to one or two people if you regularly spend time with them. Essentially, everyone needs to go back to the limited pandemic bubbles the province had early on in the pandemic in March and April.

### **Fitness & Recreational Activities**

All businesses, recreation centres or other organizations that organize or operate indoor group physical activities that include spin classes, hot yoga and high intensity interval training must stop until further notice. All other group fitness activities indoors can continue to operate but they must adhere to the updated guidance that is being developed.

Games, competitions and practices can continue with no spectators and no travel. No spectators are allowed at any sport activities under the order. The only people allowed to attend sport activities are those that provide care to a participant or player. Travel to, from and between regions for athletic activities like games, competitions, training and practice is prohibited under this order.

### **Schools**

There are no major changes for schools at this time. When asked if schools might close early for the winter break, Dr. Henry said it's something she is considering. However COVID- exposures in schools are a reflection of what's happening in communities. With this in mind, she is looking into what can be done to reduce transmissions in the community (such as the new orders) and subsequently in schools as well. Closing schools earlier for the winter break is being considered, but creates other challenges such as youth congregating together anyhow in less safe places, and leaving essential workers without a safe place for their children. No decisions have been made on this yet, and many different options are being considered.

### **Travel**

At this time, all non-essential travel should be avoided. This includes travel into and out of B.C. and between regions of the province. For example:

- Do not travel for a vacation;
- Do not travel to visit friends or family outside of your household or core bubble.

### **Open Board Forum**

The VCH Board of Directors invites you to our virtual Open Board Forum at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. This meeting is dedicated to our communities in Sea to Sky, Sunshine Coast, Powell River and the Central Coast including Bella Coola and Bella Bella. This is the Open Board Meeting that was postponed in light of the recent provincial election. Open to the public, the virtual Open Board Forum is an opportunity to join a conversation with our Board and for us to hear from you. The Board Chair and senior leaders will provide updates on COVID-19 as - more than ever – we want to stay connected to our communities in the Coastal region. To register and to send questions in advance, please email [ce@vch.ca](mailto:ce@vch.ca)

We hope you are able to attend, and please forward this invitation to those who might be interested. The details are attached.

### **VCH Website and Translation Engagement**

VCH is starting two important projects – the redesign of the VCH website and a review of VCH translation practices. Your input in the web design project and the translation needs at VCH for safe care will help us improve our translation tools and ensure our future website is a user-friendly resource that is easy to navigate. We are hosting Zoom focus groups to hear from the diverse communities we serve. To register for any of the focus group times and dates (see the attached poster), please email [ce@vch.ca](mailto:ce@vch.ca).

### **Testing**

Anyone in the VCH region with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, however mild, can now be assessed for and get a COVID-19 test. Contact your physician or nurse practitioner's office, or a local community collection centre to arrange for a test. Phone numbers and locations of collection centres can be found by visiting: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing> or by calling 8-1-1. For more information and latest updates on COVID-19, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter @CDCofBC or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>.

### **Other Resources**

To find the Provincial Health Officer's orders, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

To see a map of COVID-19 cases by local health area, visit:

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

For a listing of the community exposure events, go to: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/public-exposures>

For the latest medical updates, including case counts, prevention, risks and testing, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>

For community engagement opportunities at VCH, see: <http://cean.vch.ca/members/current-opportunities/>