

## From EARNSCLIFFE

B.C. COVID-19 Update – April 3, 2020

New updates:

### ***3PM - Friday April 3 - BC Public Health Update - Dr. Bonnie Henry and Minister Dix***

Dr. Bonnie Henry - Provincial Health Officer

Dr. Bonnie Henry's message to young people: this is a challenging time for teenagers to not have social interactions and the uncertainty in what is going to happen in the next few months; especially when thinking about university and jobs. What is happening right now is extraordinary and you cannot be afraid to reach out for help and to get information.

Dr. Bonnie Henry's message to travellers (from inside and outside Canada): when you come to BC, you must self-isolate for 14 days, without exception or question.

Dr. Henry said that we are in the middle of this, we are in the thick of it. This is our time to hold the line. We need to keep our firewall up. We need to stay socially connected to one another.

Dr. Henry says that dispensing fees (and higher costs) is on their radar and will be addressed. There is a 30 day supply now and not 90 days due to supply change issues.

On enhanced surveillance at prisons, homeless populations and places where there are migrant workers, Dr. Henry says there is work being done by Health Authorities to do rapid response testing.

Minister Adrian Dix – Minister of Health

Minister Dix said “we received disappointing news from today from USA as a source of PPE” – and “we support the government of Canada's efforts to secure PPE.” The USA is experiencing undoubtable challenges and play a strong role in the supply chain.

Dix said “we need to support the Prime Minister and political leaders” to contribute to ongoing efforts to secure PPE.

Minister Dix said that they have heard some challenges for facilities on new parking measures – he said that we need to ensure that people have access to parking and we will continue to work on addressing these issues.

Existing measures:

- Addressing upcoming religious celebrations (Easter, Passover, Ramadan), Dr. Henry asks people to start thinking about ways to recognize these holidays without in-person gatherings. Faith leaders will be meeting again with the Province next week on this.
- Social Development and Poverty Reduction Minister Shane Simpson announced that the province is [implementing a series of temporary supports and supplements](#) for the province's most vulnerable.
  - \$300 per month COVID-19 crisis supplement for British Columbians living on income and disability assistance who aren't eligible for emergency federal support programs.

- Temporary exemption of the Federal Emergency Response Benefit for those that also receive Provincial income and disability assistance.
- Those on disability assistance who receive a bus card/transit card – the government will be putting the cost of the card (\$52) on to their next upcoming cheque.
- The province’s new [Economic Recovery Task Force](#) to support the B.C. economy during and after COVID-19 kicked off its work today.
- The BC government also released [further action to support essential service providers](#) during pandemic by ensuring they cannot be held liable for damages caused by exposure to COVID-19 while continuing to operate, so long as they are complying with orders from the provincial health officer and other authorities.
  - Premier John Horgan extends BC state of emergency to April 14, 2020.
  - The Province announces BC Hydro’s new, [targeted bill relief](#) in response to COVID-19.
- [COVID-19 Supply Hub](#) unveiled on April 1.
- [Compliance and Enforcement Guidance about Public Health Orders with respect to Physical Distancing](#) published.
- [COVID-19 Ethical Decision-Making Framework](#) published.
- [Guidance provided to industrial camps during COVID-19](#) published.
- All episodic vending markets (i.e. farmers markets, community markets) mandated to only sell food, prohibiting the sale of all other merchandise.
- Ministerial orders [issued March 26](#) to secure supply chain; list of essential services.
- As part of the government’s \$5-billion COVID-19 Action Plan, Minister Dix and B.C. seniors advocate Isobel Mackenzie announced new funding for the United Way’s Better at Home and bc211 services to further support seniors. Full release [found here](#).
- As part of the government’s \$5-billion COVID-19 Action Plan, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Selina Robinson and Premier Horgan announced [support for renters and landlords](#)
- [The Province closes certain parks, recreation areas](#), which is in addition to a previous suspension of services and facilities in provincial parks, including visitor centres, nature houses, washrooms and day-use areas. In alignment with Parks Canada, all campgrounds are closed until April 30, 2020.
- BC Legislature passed two new pieces of legislation:
  - Bill 15, Supply Act (No. 2), which provides funding for ministry operations for the first nine months of the 2020-21 fiscal year, set to begin on April 1; and
  - Bill 16, Employment Standards Amendment Act (No. 2), which allows workers to immediately take unpaid, job-protected leave if they are unable to work for reasons related to COVID-19.
- Minister James announces \$5-billion [BC COVID-19 Action Plan](#) to support people, essential services, businesses, and the economy
- Restaurants temporarily permitted to use unemployed servers to deliver liquor products
- BC public health order issued to close all personal service businesses
- Dine-in service prohibited at all restaurants across BC; mandating take-out and delivery only

- MSP wait times waved for those returning to BC from outside of province or outside the country who have been out longer than allowed.
- Community level initiatives in place to support women's shelters and all of our shelter systems
- The Minister of Public Services and Solicitor General declares a provincial state of emergency
- The Province declares a public health emergency under the [Emergency Health Services Act](#)
- Bars and clubs instructed to close; restaurants may remain open if they abide by crowd size rules and distancing measures
- K1-12 classes suspended until further notice
- Now available online: BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool (Available [here](#))
- B.C. health authorities move to outbreak response Phase 2, postponing all non-urgent surgeries/procedures, which will result in the cancellation of thousands of elected surgeries; staff who provide scheduled surgeries to be moved over to assist with critical care
- Lions Gate Hospital moves to Phase 3, only accepting emergency cases
- B.C. pharmacists permitted to refill prescriptions without requiring an additional physician's note
- Physicians to receive compensation for providing virtual care services
- Restricting visitors in long-term care facilities to essential visitors only
- Prohibition on gatherings larger than 50 people
- All casinos across B.C. remain closed; effective 11:59pm March 16
- Dedicated phone service for updated COVID-19 information 1-888-COVID19, info available in over 100 languages

#### Stakeholder comments:

- **It's time to support essential workers – COVID-19 update – BCGEU** (News Release, BCGEU: [bcgeu.ca](#))
- **Physicians in BC now available via virtual care** (Press Release, Doctors of BC: [doctorsofbc.ca](#))
- **B.C. pharmacies ask to be on priority list for personal protective equipment** (M. Weisgarber, CTV News: [bc.ctvnews.ca](#))
- **With COVID-19 threat, B.C. home share provider says she may face an 'impossible' choice** (D. Molki, CTV News: [bc.ctvnews.ca](#))
- **COVID-19: How B.C. restaurants are fighting to survive dine-in shutdown** (R. Shore, Vancouver Sun: [vancouver.sun.com](#))
- **Auto-repair industry struggles as fewer cars on the road due to COVID-19** (M. Fitzgerald, News 1130: [citynews1130.com](#))
- **Prescription change meant to safeguard supply in COVID-19 crisis triples fees for some patients** (R. Marchitelli, CBC News: [cbc.ca](#))
- **B.C. firefighters taking more time on calls as they follow COVID-19 safety protocols** (K. Griffin, Vancouver Sun: [vancouver.sun.com](#))
- **Patrick Johnston: Amateur sports clubs in B.C. feeling the COVID-19 shutdown squeeze** (P. Johnston, Cape Breton Post: [capebretonpost.com](#))
- **In B.C.'s high stakes mountain rescues, coronavirus is the newest invisible threat** (A. McKeen, The Star: [thestar.com](#))
- **#BuyLocalBuyBurnaby campaign launched. This is how you can help** (No byline, Burnaby Board of Trade: [burnabynow.com](#))

