

From EARNSCLIFFE

B.C. COVID-19 Update – April 14, 2020

New updates:

- In today's press conference regarding British Columbia's COVID-19 updates, Dr. Bonnie Henry said that Fraser Health is looking at redeploying medical units in the province. It is currently set up at Vancouver Convention Centre but will be redeployed to Abbotsford to help with prison outbreak.
- Dr. Bonnie Henry said that the border control will be going on for some time, and applauded the federal Government for following similar regulations.
- Today, Minister Dix spoke to the \$1 million in funding for an ALS centre of excellence in Vancouver, which will continue to serve patients province wide during the COVID-19 crisis.
- Dr. Henry said that there is an important role for international medical graduates and said that they should not be practicing beyond their skill set and should continue to work with their colleagues on ways to support.
- Over the weekend the [government announced Showcase BC](#) to support new and established artists through Creative BC.
 - This new program and funding stream will provide one-time micro-grants of \$500 to emerging artists and \$2,000 to established artists for livestreaming, song writing and professional development.
 - Creative BC will offer grants to all previously eligible Amplify BC applicants.
 - British Columbians can access all the grant performances for free through the Showcase BC website and get information on new livestream events by following the hashtag #ShowcaseBC on Twitter.
 - To bring people together, the Province will host a free livestream concert this week featuring musicians from around British Columbia.
 - People will be able to join in and watch the concert online.
 - Livestream concert hosted by John Horgan will take place Thursday April 16 at 5 p.m. The virtual concert will feature Kym Gouchie, Alex Cuba, Desiree Dawson and Dan Mangan.

Upcoming announcements:

- More modelling data to be released by Dr. Henry this week.

Stakeholder comments:

- B.C. gaming shop producing COVID-19 face shields destroyed in fire (S. Little, Global News: [globalnews.ca](#))
- BC Ferries rescinds layoff notices and seeks clarity on COVID-19 wage subsidy (J. Azpiri, Global News: [globalnews.ca](#))
- BC paramedics stepping up in COVID-19 battle (B. Lypka, The Abbotsford News: [abbynews.com](#))
- COVID-19: B.C. outdoor groups feel park closures may be counterproductive (G. Luyumes, The Sudbury Star: [thesudburystar.com](#))
- Peachland, B.C. aiming to cut budget to help taxpayers during COVID-19 pandemic (M. Turcato, Global News: [globalnews.ca](#))
- Okanagan Indian Band asks visitors to 'stay away' during COVID-19 (No byline, BC Local News: [bclocalnews.com](#))

- B.C. Wildfire Service begins wildfire prevention measures early in response to COVID-19 (P. Boyd, Canadian Forest Industries: woodbusiness.ca)
- BC Nurses' Union donates \$10,000 to Food Banks BC during COVID-19 crisis (J. Hauck, The Abbotsford News: abbynews.com)
- PNG seeks to defer customer payments because of COVID-19 (R. Link, BC Local News: bclocalnews.com)
- BCDA Statement: BCDA Response to Aviva's Denial of Pandemic Insurance Coverage for BC Dentists ([BC Dental Association](http://BCDentalAssociation.com), April 13)
Education minister says B.C. students could be back in classrooms before end of school year ([CBC News](http://CBCNews.com), April 14)

Existing measures:

- The province [announced \\$5 million to expand existing mental health programs](#) to ensure British Columbians have increased access to vital mental health supports during the pandemic, with a focus on adults and youth and front-line care workers.
- BC Health Minister Adrian Dix issued a [joint statement](#) with Alberta Health Minister Tyler Shandro discouraging border crossings between the two provinces during the long weekend.
- The order is now official to make it possible for care workers to each only be able to work at one care home. The *Single Site Transition Program*, which is still underway and is described by Minister Dix as a “significant logistical challenge,” will apply to all health care workers, including community organizations and non-profits.
- Effective April 8, international travellers (including from the United States) returning to the province are required to provide a [14-day self-isolation plan](#) before or upon arrival to B.C., regardless of their point of entry to Canada. This document can be submitted online or completed in person on arrival. BC is the first jurisdiction to legally enforce this measure.
- BC Parks [announces](#) the closure of all provincial parks until further notice.
- Addressing upcoming religious celebrations (Easter, Passover, Ramadan), Dr. Henry asks people to start thinking about ways to recognize these holidays without in-person gatherings.
- 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.
- 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](#) – now open for applications.
- [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:
 - o 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
 - o 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