

## From EARNSCLIFFE

B.C. COVID-19 Update – April 28, 2020

New updates:

### ***3PM - Provincial public health update from Minister Dix and Dr. Henry***

- New cases are largely associated to ongoing outbreaks at the penitentiary and poultry facility.
  - 1,190 people have recovered
- Number one focus remains protecting the health of British Columbians based on a risk assessment to break the risk of infection. This will be ever evolving as we learn more about this virus.
- We need just enough restriction to control the virus and to also continue as a community.
- Personal health measures are reflective of our ability to flatten the curve.
  - Environmental cleaning, washing our hands and our face
  - Most importantly, staying home if you get sick
  - As we look at our economic connections we must pay close attention to these plans moving forward.
- Minister Dix noted that conversations are ongoing on how we can begin to reopen the economy. We will hear more from the Premier in the days and weeks ahead.
- Regarding those that are homeless in Vancouver being moved into temporary housing during COVID, Dr. Henry said that there are accommodations being considered for their pets - though, each circumstance will be treated differently based on placement and needs..

### ***2PM - GVBOT Webinar with special guest, Minister Mungall***

Today Minister Mungall said to a GVBOT audience that Economic stimulation will be guided by the work of the task force. The Premier's Economic Recovery Task Force will be extremely important to help guide how BC starts rebuilding.

- Mungall reiterated that Dr. Henry has signalled we can open up in mid-May, but that comes with a lot of caveats.
- It will be a “slow dialing up of the volume” with decisions based on science and evidence, guided by Minister Dix and the PHO.
- Government is listening to businesses and they are seeing a real interest in diversifying the supply chain, and producing more products closer to home.
- Government is looking to support projects in foundational industries/natural resources to get job-creating projects off the ground and reduce barriers/red-tape for businesses while maintaining responsible regulation.
- Government is also looking to add more resources to the decision-making process
- Mungall mentioned she is responsible for reviewing areas where government can reduce red-tape
- She indicated the BC government will constantly monitor response & recovery programs and investments and make sure they are working. “If they aren't working, we're going to fix it.

### ***12PM – Update from BC Minister of Education, Rob Fleming***

- Led by the ministry's Integrated Planning Framework for School Districts, we have been working closely with all education partners on a coordinated approach:
  - Onboarded more than 20,000 teachers with Zoom enterprise videoconferencing platform
  - Ministry launched Keep Learning website to access resources to assist with home teaching

- Through a partnership with the WE organization we have ensured students and teachers have access to learning resources through the WE Schools program that support mental wellbeing and community
- Through Foundry community wellbeing hubs, supports for students that are involved and battling mental health and additions
- Invested into public libraries to provide another layer of online learning support for families
- BC is a diverse province; there is not a one size fits all approach, but all school districts are guided by same set of 4 priorities:
  - Ensuring healthy and safe environment for all students, parents and faculty in every school setting in BC
  - Provide services needed to support children of our essential workers
  - Support vulnerable students who may need special assistance
  - Continuity of educational opportunities for all students
- BC is getting prepared for some in class instruction this school year. Minister Fleming said the province is watching the return in New Zealand. Says this will only happen when conditions are appropriate and the health and safety of all students, families and employees can be guaranteed. This will help us in BC develop and evidence-based plan to move forward

#### Upcoming announcements:

- An update coming later this week on the impact of the new single-care home policy for long-term care workers.
- Minister Dix and Dr. Henry to announce more modelling early May.

#### Stakeholder comments:

- As virus fight continues, clarity is key to economic recovery (News Release, [BC Liberal Caucus](#))
- B.C. planning for controlled return to in-class K-12 instruction (Hayley Woodin, [Business in Vancouver](#))
- B.C.'s care aids fighting for equal wages during pandemic and beyond (Alan Campbell, [Business in Vancouver](#))
- COVID-19 dominates Vancouver city council agenda (Regan Hasegawa, [CTV News](#))
- The Post-Viral Pivot: How Canada's Tech Startups Can Drive the Recovery from COVID-19 (News Release, [The Innovation Economy Council](#))
- Over One Million Litres of Alcohol for Hand Sanitizers a Month Committed by Canada's Distillers (News Release, [Spirits Canada](#))

#### Existing measures:

- On April 23, 2020, Dr. Henry [issued an order](#) for industrial camps that applies to workers in the agricultural, aquacultural, forestry and resource sectors, as well as those who provide accommodation for these workers. This order sets out prevention, control and inspection protocols for workers and employers. Additional guidelines were released for silviculture operators and employees.
- Up to \$35.6M of BC's \$5B COVID-19 Action Plan will be distributed through Community Living BC (CLBC) to ensure people with developmental disabilities remain supported during the pandemic.
- Premier Horgan and Minister Fraser announced [new collaborative framework](#) for healthcare in rural, remote Indigenous communities.

- Dr. Bonnie Henry and Minister Adrian Dix [presented](#) an update on modelling Friday, April 17.
- Minister James and Minister Robinson [announced](#) that the school property tax rate for commercial properties will be reduced by an average of 25 per cent in the total property tax bill for most businesses. This is on top of the previously announced 50 per cent reduction to the provincial school property tax rate. Provincial school tax remittances delayed until the end of the year.
- Minister Darcy and Minister Mark announced ([Release here](#)) a \$1.5M investment per year (over three years) in *Here to Talk* – a 24/7 accessible app available to over 50,000 post-secondary students across British Columbia
- 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: 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 waived 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