

From EARNSCLIFFE

B.C. COVID-19 Update – April 7, 2020

New updates:

3:30 PM - Monday April 6 - BC Public Health Update - Dr. Bonnie Henry and Minister Dix

- On Regional District of East Kootenay’s recommendation to close border to Alberta for non-essential travel, Dr. Henry says it is not something that she believes is necessary at this point. The pandemic is very similar to what is happening in Alberta, so both taking very similar measures.
- Received two major shipments of PPE (Saturday and Tuesday). They are currently going through extensive testing of the equipment as they came from an alternative source.
- Public health officials had call with faith leaders across the province this morning; agreed to help support the celebration of upcoming religious events while maintaining a physical distance.
 - o Now is the time to pay special attention to our elders and seniors; reach out virtually.
 - o This is not a time to be travelling; we need to continue to avoid all essential travel, and do not go to smaller communities; now is a time to stay home.
 - o Group celebrations inside are also problematic, coming together in even small groups can be very problematic. If you do, you must maintain distances.
- Many people we know in BC managing chronic disease and other health issues; online care is available.
- “We are in the thick of things; we need to continue to stay united and stay strong, although holidays coming up, we need to keep our firewalls strong.” – Dr. Henry

Upcoming announcements:

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

Stakeholder comments:

- **Op-ed: Bonnie Henry – no boundaries with COVID-19** (Dr. Henry, Business in Vancouver: biv.com)
- **BC Ferries to start screening passengers for COVID-19** (R. Zussman, Global News: globalnews.ca)
- **BC hotels, community centres to help vulnerable people isolate** (H. Woodin, Business in Vancouver: biv.com)
- **Member Advisory re COVID-19** (News Release, Canadian Actors’ Equity Association: caea.com)
- **Cultural sector resources for businesses and individuals** (News Release, Cultural Human Resources Council: culturalhrc.ca)
- **Construction Briefing – COVID-19** (News Release, BC Construction Association: bccassn.com)
- **CARFAC response to COVID-19** (News Release, CARFAC: carfac.ca)

- **BC municipality wants to close border with Alberta for long-weekend to slow COVID-19** (D. Desai, National Post: nationalpost.com)
- **Squamish-Lillooet Regional District chair calls for roadblock to prevent visitors** (D. Thuncher, Business in Vancouver: biv.com)

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.
- 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](#)
- [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 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