



March 23, 2020.

*Dear Community Member,*

*What an extraordinary time we are going through in the province of BC, the entire country and all over the world. This is uncharted territory and your patience and cooperation is appreciated. Every day, things are changing and we are asking a lot of our citizens. How we handle the next two weeks will help determine the path of this virus. It is our civic duty to follow the guidelines and restrictions that have been put in place to help “flatten the curve” and slow the spread of COVID-19.*

*One of the more challenging aspects of these past few days has been the overwhelming amount of information from many levels of government and multiple sources.*

*I have summarized some of the key updates, resources that are available and where to find them as well as some of the recommendations that have been put out there. I have tried to group information and resources by governing agency which will hopefully make this a little easier to navigate. **For regular updates, please see my facebook page as well as twitter.** My office will be sending out weekly email newsletters during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

*I would like to thank everyone for their patience, their caution and their support. With everyone’s support of the challenging and constantly changing guidelines, we know that we will get through this stronger and closer than ever. Please don’t hesitate to call my office if you or anyone in your family needs support or information of any kind. If we don’t know the answer, we will do our best to find an answer for you.*

---

#### COMMUNITY OFFICE INFORMATION

---

*Please note, our office is currently not accepting in-person meetings as part of managing the COVID-19 virus and to help ensure public safety. We will continue to provide services for constituents via telephone (778 593 2262) and email ([Jinny.Sims.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Jinny.Sims.MLA@leg.bc.ca))*

*Please don’t hesitate to reach out if you need assistance or have any questions or concerns.*

## Government of BC

The government of BC is focused on people's health and safety. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have declared a provincial state of emergency. This means more resources to support Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer for BC, and to ensure that everything possible is being done to keep the people of British Columbia safe and healthy.

**"This is our time  
to be kind, be calm  
and be safe."**

- Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer



There is a wealth of information to help inform all British Columbians on the disease itself, where to find answers, when and where to get testing as well as how to best protect yourself.

*If you would like to speak to someone, non-medical information about COVID-19 is available 7:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m., 7 days a week at 1 888 268 4319 or 1 888 COVID 19*

*You can also text your questions to 604 630 0300*

For free of charge provincial health information line, you can call Healthlink BC 8-1-1, a toll-free service operated by the Ministry of Health and staffed by nurses. **Translation services are available in more than 130 languages.**

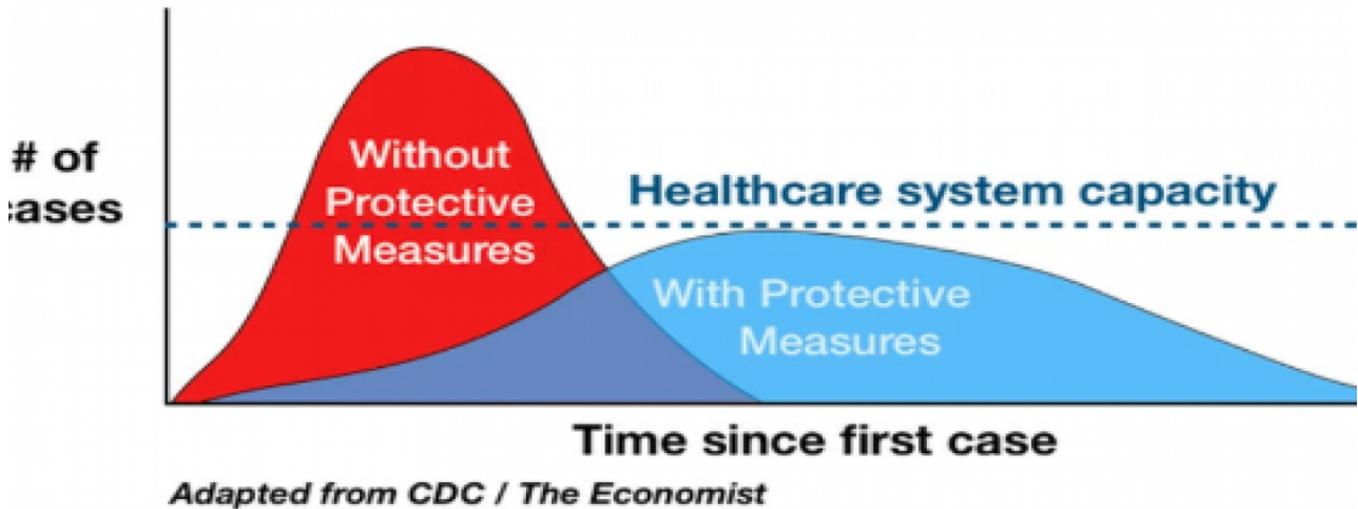
The British Columbia Centre for Disease Control is the best provincial source for COVID-19 health information. Here you will find answers to common questions about COVID-19 and for individuals as well as community settings, employers and businesses and other government agencies **This website provides translated information on COVID-19.**

Their website is: [www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19)

Daily update briefings with Minister of Health Hon. Adrian Dix and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry are live streamed on: [www.facebook.com/BCProvincialGovernment](https://www.facebook.com/BCProvincialGovernment)

Official Twitter Accounts are a quick way to get the latest information:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
|  BC Centre for Disease Control:  | @CDCofBC      |
|  BC Government News:            | @BCGovNews    |
|  Fraser Health Authority:       | @FraserHealth |
|  Minister of Health Adrian Dix: | @adriandix    |
|  Health Canada:                 | @GovCanHealth |



At noon today, Premier John Horgan and Minister of Finance Carole James gave an important update on ***the first financial support package from the BC Government***. They announced an additional \$5 billion in income supports, tax relief and funding for people, businesses and services in response to the current pandemic. These are the first steps and will continue to develop and evolve over the days and weeks to come.

A summary of benefits is as follows:

### HEALTH CARE

- ✚ MSP coverage wait times are waived for those who have been out of province and returned
- ✚ Choose virtual health care services whenever available, physicians will be compensated

### RETAIL & SERVICES

- ✚ ICBC customers on a monthly payment plan may defer their payment up to 90 days with no penalty
- ✚ BC HYDRO bill deferral, payment plans, as well as crisis funding is available. Call [1-800-BC HYDRO](tel:1-800-BC-HYDRO)
- ✚ TRANSLINK has begun rear-door, **fare-free** boarding on all BC Transit, Translink buses.

### EMPLOYMENT & INCOME ASSISTANCE

- ✚ Employers cannot require a doctor's note for testing for people to stay home from work.
- ✚ Tax-free \$1 000 payment (BC Emergency Benefit) to those whose ability to work has

been affected by COVID-19



Boost to B.C. Climate Action Tax Credit. (effective July 2020)



Pausing student loan payments for six months, starting on March 30, 2020

## HOUSING

There have been many questions surrounding renters and how the government will be supporting renters. BC housing has already stated that no one should be evicted from any BC Housing funded building due to non-payment of rent during this crisis. We are working to ensure that no one should be evicted because of this crisis. There will be more information on this package mid-week. For the latest information, please go to:

[www.bchousing.org/COVID-19](http://www.bchousing.org/COVID-19)

For more complete details regarding the latest financial support announcements, go to:

[https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0013-000545?fbclid=IwAR1mvvXa1MjTqhb4A59N2MV2XociG4gYCx0vDqy8QF01pkv\\_rfXFcS3g6mk](https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0013-000545?fbclid=IwAR1mvvXa1MjTqhb4A59N2MV2XociG4gYCx0vDqy8QF01pkv_rfXFcS3g6mk)

### **Fraser Health Authority**

The Fraser Health Authority is working closely with the BC Centre for Disease Control and the Public Health Agency of Canada to monitor the national and provincial COVID-19 situation.

This website provides easy to read, general information on prevention, travel, testing. There is also a series of downloadable posters and images to share.

To access their website, click on the following link:

<https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/coronavirus/coronavirus-questions-general-public#.XnPbyaZYauU>

### **Surrey School District #36**

As you probably know, Minister of Education, Honourable Rob Fleming announced that all schools will be closed indefinitely for direct face to face instruction. You will find regular updates, as well as answers to some of the up in the air questions we all have. As with everything else right now, we need to exercise patience as the 12 000 Surrey School District employees work diligently to ensure the continuity of instruction for our 72 000 students in 128 schools and how it will be delivered.

You will find all the latest updates about these changes at:

<https://www.surreyschools.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

For those of you who have *K-12 students who are not in the public school system*, watch for updates from their schools. The in-class instruction suspension applies to ALL schools in British Columbia.

The Minister of Education, in his letter, has stated that all students on track to move to the next grade will do so in the fall and that all grade 12 students eligible to graduate will graduate.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/218690-covid-letter.pdf>

### **City of Surrey**

Earlier this week, the city of Surrey closed all Recreation facilities and Libraries until further notice. As of Friday March 20, all spring break day camps are cancelled and the two city run daycares will be closed to the public. Please click on the link below for the latest update from Mayor Doug McCallum regarding city services and operations.

<https://www.surrey.ca/city-government/30876.aspx>

### **Government of Canada**

The Prime Minister announced a new set of economic measures to help stabilize the economy during this challenging period. These measures will provide up to \$27 billion in direct support to Canadian workers and businesses.

Here is a summary of the emergency funds available:

-  GST credit - \$400 single adults - \$600 for couples
-  Child Tax benefit Top up - \$300 per child added on top of what you receive already
-  Student loan payments deferred-6 month time frame, no payments and no interest accrual;
-  Indigenous community based support fund \$305 million
-  \$200 million provided for community resources- Shelters/homeless needs; sexual assault/transition homes
-  10% wage subsidy for small-medium sized businesses for employees -\$25 000 per employer

-  Ensured mortgage Protection Program- \$50 billion provided, payment deferrals, special payment arrangements
-  Bank Supports – auto loans, deferral of payments possible – contact bank directly
-  Personal Income Tax – payment before Sept 1/2020 – extended deadline income tax payments owed; filing for income tax – June 1<sup>st</sup> 2020
-  Emergency Care Benefit – Quarantined or caring for sick family member – providing \$900 bi-weekly; payment via direct deposit – will not require medical documentation, starting early April
-  Emergency Support Fund \$5 billion

Please see website on how to apply for programs.

[https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html?fbclid=IwAR01-qrw4dqCk5nMFZsoEwTbJr7Qzs4aU\\_0K2MF38JCjySv1ONAUUn0PrBAM#individual](https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html?fbclid=IwAR01-qrw4dqCk5nMFZsoEwTbJr7Qzs4aU_0K2MF38JCjySv1ONAUUn0PrBAM#individual)

## **Travel**

The government of Canada has issued an Official Global Travel Advisory and all non-essential travel outside of Canada should be avoided. Many countries have also put travel or border restrictions in place and Canadians may be forced to remain outside of Canada longer than expected.

<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice/221>

Canada has announced an Emergency Loan Program for Canadians abroad.

<https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-info/financial-assistance/covid-19-financial-help>