



New Provincial COVID-19 Restrictions in Effect

As you may have heard in the news by now, with the rising COVID-19 transmissions in BC, Dr. Bonnie Henry issued a new public health order on province-wide restrictions. **In a nutshell, all individuals, places of work and businesses in B.C. must significantly reduce social interactions and travel.** While this seems all doom and gloom, let us start with the positive:

International scientists have developed several promising vaccine candidates. Two of them are in the last stages before approval and have a high effectiveness of around 94-95%. What that means is that out of a 100 people, 94-95 develop protective immunity. Even better yet, at least one of the vaccines also has a high effectiveness in Elders (often vaccines are less effective as we age). Among the good news is that the current vaccine candidates have shown to be safe with only minor side effects.

While timelines have not been confirmed, federal health officials expect the first doses to be available starting as early as January or February 2021. Officials also estimate that it will take at least a year for a large percentage of the Canadian population to be vaccinated. The Health Department will update the community as more details will become available.

Until large proportions of the population in Canada and the rest of the world are vaccinated and develop immunity, we will have to deal with the threat of the virus to the health of our community, and especially our Elders. The new provincial restrictions are an effort by the government to curb the spread of the virus. What follows is a summary of what you need to know. You can access the complete public health order at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions>. The new restrictions are in effect until at least December 7, 2020 at midnight.



Summary of Province-Wide Restrictions

All individuals, places of work and businesses in B.C. must significantly reduce social interactions and travel.

- No social gatherings of any size with anyone other than your household or core bubble. For example:
 - Do not invite friends or extended family to your household
 - Do not host gatherings outdoors
 - Do not gather in your backyard
 - Do not have playdates for children
- All events and community-based gatherings are suspended.

Core bubble

For most people, their **core bubble is their immediate household**. For others, their core bubble may contain a partner, relative, friend or co-parent who lives in a different household. This should be a maximum of two people outside of those living in your immediate household.

An immediate household is:

- A group of people who live in the same dwelling. For example:
 - If you have a rental suite in your home, the suite is a separate household
 - If you live in an apartment or house with roommates, you are all members of the same household

People who live alone

People who live alone cannot host gatherings. They can continue to see the same one or two people of their core bubble at each other's homes.

University students

Welcoming your child home from university is okay. This is not a social gathering.



Allowed activities

These activities are not considered a social gathering:

- Going for a walk. You must make sure a walk does not turn into a group of people meeting outside
- Parents carpooling kids to and from school
- Grandparents providing child care

Restaurants and bars

The order does not impact restaurants and bars. Restaurants and bars can continue to operate as long as they have a COVID-19 Safety Plan and employee protocols in place.

- You should only **visit a restaurant with people in your household or core bubble**. Remember, a maximum of six people at a table

Athletic activities

Games, competitions and practices can continue with **no spectators and no travel**.

Mask requirements

Masks are now required for everyone in all public indoor settings and workplaces. People who cannot put on or remove a mask on their own are exempt.

Travel advisory

At this time, all non-essential travel should be avoided. This includes travel into and out of B.C. and between regions of the province. For example:

- Do not travel for a vacation
- Do not travel to visit friends or family outside of your household or core bubble

The TWN Health Department will issue more detailed guidance with regards to travel shortly.