

COVID-19 Regional Update – March 19, 2021

Good afternoon all. Nathan back again with a quick regional update.

It really feels like things are starting to move now, and good news keeps coming out. This quote from Dr. Penny Ballem, the executive lead of BC's immunization plan rollout makes me feel quite hopeful. "We want to thank everyone in BC for doing their part as we rolled out our call centre program to support the largest immunization program in this province's history. We have made significant progress after some initial challenges and we can proudly say that we are on track to have everyone immunized by this summer."

Vaccine Booking Schedule

Vaccine call centres for seniors are open. You can book a vaccine appointment for yourself when you are eligible to call, in many cases (not all) your spouse may also be eligible for the vaccine, regardless of their age, so make sure to ask. You can also have a family member or friend call for you. It is easy and safe to book over the phone.

When you can call is based on your age:

- **Born in 1941** (age 80) You can call anytime.
- **Born in 1942** (age 79) or Indigenous and born in 1966 or earlier (55+) You can start calling **March 20 at 12 pm**
- **Born in 1943** (age 78) You can start calling **March 22 at 12 pm**
- **Born in 1944** (age 77) You can start calling **March 23 at 12 pm**
- **Born in 1945** (age 76) You can start calling **March 25 at 12 pm**
- **Born in 1946** (age 75) You can start calling **March 27 at 12 pm**
- **Born in 1940** or earlier (81+) or Indigenous and born in 1956 or earlier (65+) You can call anytime.

The Interior Health call centre's number is 1-877-740-7747

For the most up-to-date information on the Vaccine roll-out please regularly visit the [Province's COVID-19 Vaccination and Immunization page](#) as the information is constantly evolving.

Here are some notes from the March 18, 2021 Provincial COVID-19 update:

- 622 new cases of COVID-19 in BC (30 in Interior Health).
- From Sunday Mar 7 to Saturday Mar 13 there has been 1 new case in the Fernie Health Delivery Area, 5 new cases in the Cranbrook Health Delivery Area, 1 new case in the Kimberley Health Delivery Area and 2 new cases in the Windermere (Columbia Valley) Health Delivery Area. These numbers are usually updated on Wednesdays on the [BCCDC website](#).

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- There have been 8 new COVID-19 deaths in the province with a total of 1,419 COVID-19 deaths in the province since the beginning of the pandemic.
- A total of 90,049 cases since the beginning of the pandemic.
- 4,941 active cases of COVID-19 in BC.
- 286 individuals currently hospitalized in BC with COVID-19 with 85 of those in intensive care. For Health Authority specific stats visit the [BCCDC COVID dashboard](#).
- 83,613 people who tested positive have recovered.
- 465,584 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in BC; this is spread across all health areas.
- Current Provincial Health Officer Orders regarding social gatherings remains in place. Learn more about these orders [here](#).
- Link to Mar 18 [Joint Statement](#).

Frontline Workers to receive vaccines in April.

Health Minister Adrian Dix said the age-based rollout is ahead of schedule and that progress, combined with the incoming supply of AstraZeneca vaccines, means the province can move to vaccinate those working in specific front-line industries. The Ministry of Health said people in priority groups will receive their first dose of the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine in April. Booking arrangements for front-line workers will be established in the coming weeks and will be communicated clearly and directly to each sector to arrange bookings. For the full news release, [click here](#). The PowerPoint presentation is available for viewing [here](#). Those groups include:

- K-12 educational staff.
- Child-care staff.
- Grocery store workers.
- First responders like police, firefighters, and emergency transport workers.
- Postal workers.
- Manufacturing staff.
- Wholesale and warehousing employees.
- Bylaw and quarantine officers.
- Correctional facility staff.
- Cross-border transport staff.
- Workers living in shared housing in places like ski hills.

BC COVID-19 Support App

If you have not already checked out the BC COVID-19 Support App (available for iOS and Android phones), it really is worth a look. It has all the provincial COVID-19 info in one spot, including the daily updates, vaccination info, self-assessment tool, business, and community resources and so much more.

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Long-Term Care, Assisted Living & Independent Living Outbreaks updates

The BCCDC is posting weekly reports on outbreak and case information in Long-Term Care, Assisted Living & Independent Living Facilities. These can be viewed [here](#).

For the most accurate and up to date info on the COVID-19 pandemic please visit:

- [BC Centre for Disease Control's COVID-19 Data](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
- [BCCDC COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
- [Interior Health School Exposures](#)
- [Provincial Health Officer's orders, notices, and guidance](#)
- [Provincial response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

Booking a COVID-19 test:

Online: You can book an appointment online through the COVID-19 Test Booking Form:

<https://interiorhealthcovid.secureform.ca/index.php>

By phone: Call the COVID-19 Test Booking Line at **1-877-740-7747** for assistance with booking your test.

Seek a test if you have two or more of the following symptoms for more than 24 hours, and they are not related to any other pre-existing conditions:

- *Sore throat*
- *Loss of appetite*
- *Extreme fatigue or tiredness*
- *Headache*
- *Body aches (muscles and joints aching)*
- *Nausea or vomiting*
- *Diarrhea*

If you suspect that you or a loved one may have symptoms of COVID-19, please visit:

- [COVID-19 Self-assessment tool](#)
- [BCCDC testing information](#)

Thanks for reading.

Stay safe and play smart.

Nathan.

Nathan Siemens

Communications Coordinator

Regional District of East Kootenay

250-489-2791