

LATEST UPDATE – DECEMBER 24, 2021

In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

Happy holidays from VCH

With the holidays here, we express our deepest gratitude for community partners, who offer critical supports to populations across the health authority. As we continue to navigate the pandemic together, we sincerely appreciate your collective support and look forward to continuing our partnership in the New Year.

Extreme cold in the forecast

A period of extended cold temperatures is forecast from Dec. 25 to Jan. 1. VCH Public Health recommends support for those who may be especially vulnerable to cold, since the risk from exposure to cold weather is a greater risk to health than COVID-19 for the housing insecure. Please check on:

- People who are isolated or experiencing homelessness
- Outdoor workers, older adults and young children
- People who may be more likely to experience hypothermia as a side effect of alcohol and substance use
- Anyone who isn't acclimatized to our weather

Warming centres are exempt from the Provincial Health Officer Gatherings and Events Order and are not subject to event or capacity limitations that took effect on Dec. 22, 2021. However, COVID-19 safety measures, such as face masks, are in place at warming centres to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination is not required for access to warming centres.

Other things that can help the community this time of year include handing out clothing to help keep exposed skin covered and dry (hats, scarves, mittens, socks, footwear, warm layers, umbrellas) and providing a warm drink.

COVID-19 vaccine update

As of Friday, Dec. 24, 2021, 87.8% (4,377,551) of eligible people five and older in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 82.8% (4,126,279) have received their second dose.

Since December 2020, the Province has administered 9,276,592 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca and Pfizer Pediatric COVID-19 vaccines.

Ministry of Health update

In the Dec. 24 [statement](#) on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, 2,441 new cases were reported with 967 of those in the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) area.

The total number of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 in B.C. now stands at 235,658 since the start of the pandemic. There are 10,415 active cases of COVID-19 across B.C. currently.

In the past 24 hours, four new COVID-19 deaths were recorded, while 192 individuals are currently in hospital and 71 of those are receiving treatment in ICU/critical care. The total number of individuals who have passed away due to COVID-19 is 2,414.

Province strengthens COVID-19 measures for a safer holiday season

The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) has implemented additional measures to address rising COVID-19 case counts that could result in increased hospitalizations and critical care admissions and potentially overstress the health-care system.

Revised PHO orders, which took effect on Wednesday, Dec. 22, and will extend to Jan. 18, 2022, include the following measures:

- Indoor organized gatherings of any size are not allowed. This includes gatherings like New Year's Eve parties, wedding receptions or other celebrations
- Indoor events at venues can only have 50% capacity. This includes events like concerts, sports or movies.
- Bars and nightclubs are closed.
- Restaurants, cafes and pubs can have a maximum of 6 people at each table and must have physical distancing or barriers between tables.
- Adult exercise, fitness and dance activities are not permitted.

These measures are in addition to the revised PHO orders that took effect on Monday, Dec. 20, which include:

- Indoor personal gatherings are limited to your household plus 10 visitors or 1 other household. Everyone 12 + must be fully vaccinated.
- At restaurants, cafes and pubs, customers must stay seated and cannot move between or visit other tables. Masks are required when not seated.
- All sports tournaments are not allowed, except for high performance athletes.

The measures introduced on Dec. 20 will extend until January 31, 2022.

Updates on PHO measures can be found by visiting <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restrictions>.

Postponement of non-urgent scheduled surgeries

Starting Jan. 4, 2022, the Ministry of Health is postponing non-urgent scheduled surgeries to manage pressure on acute care facilities. Urgent and emergency surgeries will continue, and rescheduling will be determined through continuous monitoring of capacity and COVID-19 impacts throughout January and on a regional basis.

British Columbians are advised to get fully vaccinated if they have not already done so, to get their booster shot as soon as one is offered, to stay home if they are sick, to avoid all travel if not fully vaccinated and to follow the travel advisory issued by the federal government to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada.

Read more [here](#).

Vancouver Coastal Health advises residents of care options ahead of holiday season

Ahead of the upcoming holiday season, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is encouraging people to access care in the right place. While it is important to visit the emergency department for emergent health issues, non-life threatening urgent and non-urgent conditions can often be effectively managed by urgent primary care centres, family doctors, walk-in clinics or other services. Those who are unsure where to access care can call 8-1-1 for general health guidance and information on services available in their local community.

Read more [here](#).

Translated versions are also available: [Simplified \(简体中文\)](#) and [Traditional \(繁體中文\)](#) | [Punjabi \(繁體中文\)](#) | [Vietnamese \(Tiếng Việt\)](#) | [Spanish \(Español\)](#)

Vancouver Coastal Health COVID-19 testing update

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) has opened a new COVID-19 testing site located at the Life Sciences Centre, Health Sciences Mall on UBC campus. Services will be available from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week, with free parking for those accessing care.

Due to a winter storm warning issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada on Dec. 23, starting Saturday Dec. 25, VCH will temporarily divert people accessing COVID-19 testing services at the St. Vincent's testing site to the new site at UBC. This is a precautionary measure to ensure the safe operations of testing services for both staff and people accessing care during the inclement weather.

To support testing capacity and to prioritize care to those who are sick, VCH continues to strongly encourage only those with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to access testing services.

Read more [here](#).

VCH vaccination clinics

Access a full list of VCH vaccination clinics, including pop-up clinics, by visiting <http://www.vch.ca/vaccine>.

All clinics are accepting drop-ins for first and second doses, but appointments are required for children aged five to 11 years old, and for booster or third doses. All are welcome at our clinics, including those without personal health numbers and people who are not residents of B.C. To book a vaccine, [register on the provincial system](#) or call 1-833-838-2323. [Service BC locations](#) can also help you register for a vaccine.

Get your BC Vaccine Card online at gov.bc.ca/vaccinecard. Once verified, you will be able to save a digital copy to your mobile device or print a hard copy to present along with your government-issued photo identification when entering designated businesses. Don't have

access to a computer? Get your card from a Service BC Centre or by calling 1-833-838-2323 at the Get Vaccinated call centre.

Community engagement opportunities

VCH values community input. Please consider participating in or sharing the featured community engagement opportunities below:

- [Mental Health & Substance Use Services - Dialectical Behavioral Therapy \(DBT\) Intake Process Review](#)

We are encouraging individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder or with traits of Borderline Personality Disorder, who have been looking to access or who have accessed the Dialectical Behaviour Therapy program at VCH Mental Health & Substance Outpatient Services, to complete the short survey below. We are also encouraging input from family members of prospective/current clients.

- [Become a Mental Health & Substance Use Interview Panel Advisor](#)

The Client and Family Support and Involvement Team for Vancouver Acute, Community & Regional Tertiary are seeking a number of client and family advisors that can be part of leadership interview panels in all of our Vancouver Mental Health and Substance Use areas: Vancouver Community, Vancouver Acute, and Regional Tertiary.

VCH community engagement opportunities can be found on our [Engage VCH](#) homepage.

Home support resource pamphlet

VCH has developed some resource material for home support services and how to access it. This information is available in various languages.

- **Home support pamphlet**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[العربية Arabic\]](#) | [\[فارسی Farsi\]](#) | [\[Français French\]](#) | [\[Español Spanish\]](#) | [\[Tagalog\]](#)
[\[Tiếng Việt Vietnamese\]](#)

- **Home support client handbook**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[فارسی Farsi\]](#)

Other resources

Find the Provincial Health Officer's orders [here](#).

To see a map of **COVID-19 cases by local health area**, visit [here](#).

For the **latest medical updates**, including case counts, prevention, risks and testing, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>

For **community engagement opportunities** at VCH, see: <https://engage.vch.ca/>

COVID-19 vaccination resource toolkit

- **COVID-19 vaccine registration poster**

[\[English\]](#) | [\[العربية Arabic\]](#) | [\[简体中文 Chinese Simplified\]](#) | [\[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional\]](#) | [\[فارسی Farsi\]](#) | [\[한국어 Korean\]](#) | [\[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi\]](#) | [\[Español Spanish\]](#) | [\[Tagalog\]](#) | [\[Tiếng Việt Vietnamese\]](#)

- **Vaccine safety information**

[[English](#)] | [[简体中文 Chinese Simplified](#)] | [[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional](#)] | [[한국어 Korean](#)] | [[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi](#)] | [[Tagalog](#)]

- **Aftercare information**

[[English](#)] | [[العربية Arabic](#)] | [[American Sign Language - ASL](#)] | [[简体中文 Chinese Simplified](#)] | [[繁體中文 Chinese Traditional](#)] | [[فارسی Farsi](#)] | [[Français French](#)] | [[한국어 Korean](#)] | [[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Punjabi](#)] | [[Español Spanish](#)] | [[Tigrinya](#)] | [[Tiếng Việt Vietnamese](#)]

- **COVID-19 vaccine information sessions hosted by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and VCH (Cantonese and Mandarin)**

[[Cantonese](#)] | [[Mandarin](#)]

- **COVID-19 vaccine Q&A with Dr. Ray Chaboyer**

[[English](#)]

- **COVID-19 vaccine info session by VCH Chief Medical Health Officer Dr. Patricia Daly**

[[English](#)]

Thank you

We appreciate the time you spend reading these updates and hope you find the information and resources useful. If you no longer wish to receive the VCH Community Partner Update, please reply or send an email to ce@vch.ca with the word “unsubscribe”. Thank you.

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that our places of work and the Vancouver Coastal Health facilities lie on the traditional, unceded homelands of the fourteen First Nation Communities of the Heiltsuk, Kitasoo-Xai'xais, Lil'wat, Musqueam, N'Quatqua, Nuxalk, Samahquam, Sechelt, Skatin, Squamish, Tla'amin, Tsleil-Waututh, Wuikinuxv, and Xa'xtsa.