



Dec 10, 2020

Provincial COVID-19 Update

Dear Faculty, Staff and Residents,

On Monday, BC's Provincial Health Officer (PHO), Dr Bonnie Henry, extended current restrictions, for another month, so they will be in effect until midnight on the 8th of January.

In sum, the provincial order (attached) on social gatherings and events will continue to place significant limitations on public events and gatherings. Events and gatherings are separated into categories of essential and non-essential, which are defined in the order so that it is clear to which organizations and activities the order applies. Organizations and essential service providers such as health care, social services and schools can continue to operate within their approved COVID-19 safety plans. Organizations, including households, that are not listed in Para 9, but identified in Para 10 are required to comply with the order. Residents in BC will continue to only be able to socialize with people in their household.

A separate message on the Provincial Health Officer's update is being sent to students.

What does this mean for Pearson College staff, faculty and residents? Essentially, we continue as we have been doing for the past few weeks with a couple of minor tweaks. Here is a brief refresher:

- We continue to follow our COVID-19 health and safety protocols on and off campus. People and families that live and work in British Columbia and across Canada are counting on everyone to do their part to bend the curve downward, especially as vaccines are on the horizon with some arriving in Canada and BC next week. Although most Canadians will not be vaccinated until later in 2021, vaccinations will start soon with the most vulnerable – those in long-term care facilities and seniors' homes, as well as frontline health care workers. As Dr Henry says, the priority is to save lives and we can do that by following the order and protecting the most vulnerable until sufficient vaccinations are in place to prevent community transmission.
- Only those students that are assigned to a House may be inside that House unless responding to an emergency. With the permission of a Houseparent, House Buddy or resident, students from the same House or a different House (up to a maximum of 4 or 5 depending on their dorm room) may continue to cook inside the home of a

Houseparent, House Buddy or resident provided masks are worn at all times and physical distancing of no less than 2m between students and hosts is maintained. Students are permitted to remove their mask and eat inside the home of a Houseparent, House Buddy or resident, provided the host can provide a separate space for students only.

- Planning for Winter Break will continue with a view to focusing on venues for activities that are on campus (indoor and outdoor) and within Houses, and for venues off campus that are at isolated locations or locations where an activity can be safely conducted without compromising students/employees or the Provincial Order for events and gatherings at a location outside school property. The Winter Break Planning Group met yesterday to review proposed activities for 19 December to 10 January with a view to circulating a draft schedule of events as soon as possible for everyone to see.
- Off-site educational and 'health and well being' field trips shall continue to be reviewed for approval by the Safety Committee, the Director of Health Services and VP Operations and Administration. Overnight or more complex off-site activities may also require review by the COVID-19 Working Group.
- For staff, faculty and residents, the Friday afternoon social event is cancelled until further notice. Cookie/coffee breaks will continue, however, please refrain from gathering to eat coffee break snacks in the Jane and Jack Matthews Room as this contravenes PHO orders on social gatherings. If staying in the Jane and Jack Matthews Room, maximum occupancy limits must be followed, masks must be worn and physical distancing maintained. You are permitted to eat lunch in the Jane and Jack Matthews Room provided you separate yourself from others (i.e. do not eat in a group). The College will move as quickly as possible to establish additional outdoor shelters with heaters to provide additional space options.
- Departmental supervisors are to review plans for staff "working from home/work remotely". Effective immediately, supervisors are to reduce staff presence on campus to minimum essential visits to maintain business continuity if not already at the minimum essential level. For additional guidance, please contact the Director of Human Resources.
- WorkSafe BC inspectors will be augmented and inspections of facilities will be stepped up across the Province. All organizations and institutions, including Pearson, are to review and revise safety plans to ensure full compliance. The College's Director of Health Services and its Safety Committee will work together with all community stakeholders to ensure Pearson continues to be fully compliant.
- [Dr Henry is advising everyone to "stay small and stay local"](#). For Pearson College students – our "small" is our House system and our "local" is staying within the campus bubble. This does not mean we ban activities off campus, it just means we plan for activities and locations off campus that are in compliance, including the additional flexibility allowed for schools. For Pearson College employees and residents – as bubble

piercers, we need to be especially vigilant when off campus and abide by the restrictions in place province-wide for family units.

- If in doubt about any of the restrictions or measures or if you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Morgan, Craig or Ty or any member of our Safety Committee or COVID-19 Working Group.

While messages from the Minister of Health and the PHO were clear on the seriousness of the pandemic in BC, they also delivered positive messages about the coming availability of vaccines and a recent slowing of the upward curve. They stressed how critically important it is now to follow all health and safety protocols and precautions to prevent further deaths and serious illness and to pave the way for successful implementation of the vaccine program.

Let's do our part. Thank you.

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