



Public Health Update
January 8, 2021

Extended COVID-19 restrictions:

The social restrictions have been extended once again.

Unfortunately, our province has not seen a downtrend in cases and hospitalizations. We also saw cases of the UK strain emerge. It is a strain of the virus that can spread faster. Thus, the province is continuing to be very watchful with social and travel restrictions.

Gatherings between people who don't live in the same household, with minor exceptions for those who live alone, will now be in place until at least **February 5, 2021**.

The extension applies to all of the current public health orders, including bans on social gatherings in private homes and all events at public and private venues.

Detailed information and reminders:

- **Social interaction and gatherings**
 - Socialize with only those in your immediate household. No gatherings of **any size**.
 - Do NOT gather indoors or outdoors with anyone who does not live with you.
 - You may take a walk with a friend, but do NOT turn it into a group activity.
 - People who live alone may socialize with 2 people within their core social bubble.
 - Funerals and weddings may proceed with your immediate household ONLY, 10 people maximum.
 - Receptions are not allowed.
 - Places of worship cannot hold in-person services until the end of this order.
 - Travel outside of local regions is restricted to essential travels.
- **Continued precautions**
 - Masks are mandatory in any indoor public areas like retail places and grocery stores.
 - **Three-layered masks are now recommended.**
 - Maintain good hygiene.

- Regularly wash hands.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Social and physical distancing, standing 2 metres apart when in public spaces.
 - Take care to make sure you are able to maintain physical distance and wear masks in the workplace.
 - Extra care should be taken in small office spaces, break rooms, and kitchens.
- Disinfecting high-touch surfaces and items.
- Stay at home when feeling ill.
- Get tested when you have symptoms such as fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, etc.
 - It is NOT recommended to get tested if you have no symptoms.

It has been a very long and difficult year, and it is continuing to affect us in the new year. It is understandable that you feel frustrated and sad because of the limitations on social interaction. However, due to a small number of people who did not follow the restrictions during the holiday season, we are not out of the woods yet.

We were able to bend the curve down before, so now is our time to stay the course.

Please reach out to friends, family and neighbours virtually to offer mental and emotional support and connection. Let's use compassion and understanding to get through these dark days together.