

Public Health Update

**April 23, 2021**

**Travel ban & prolonged indoor activity restriction**

The COVID-19 case counts have climbed up to a concerning number in British Columbia. The province has announced a travel ban on non-essential travelings outside of your local area, starting April 23rd and ending May 25th. The indoor activity restrictions are also prolonged till May 25th.

* **Non-essential travels out of local areas are banned:** 
  + “Local areas” are defined as:

1. Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley (Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health)

2. Northern/Interior (Northern Health and Interior Health, including Bella Coola Valley, the Central Coast and Hope)

3. Vancouver Island (Vancouver Island Health)

* + Non-essential travel into and out of these regions is not allowed and now prohibited by law.
  + Non-essential travel from other provinces and countries will also be turned away.
    - Non-essential travels are travels for recreational purposes.
    - It is encouraged that you not book camping/hiking/vacation trips outside of your local area.
    - Any bookings you already have will be canceled and refunded.
  + Roadblocks and checkpoints at ferry terminals and land borders will enforce the order. But you should not be subjected to random stops.
  + At the discretion of police, people not obeying the travel restrictions may be fined $575.
  + Essential travels are still allowed, these may include:
    - Returning to your principal residence, moving or helping someone move.
    - Work, school, child care, shared custody
    - Getting health care or social services or helping someone else
    - Providing care or assistance to a person, visiting a resident in assisted living or hospital, attending a funeral
    - Court appearance, parole check-in
* **Indoor activities are still restricted:**
  + No dine-in services at restaurants and bars. Patio dining and take-outs only.
  + No indoor gathering of any size.
  + Indoor religious services are suspended.
  + Indoor exercises are all suspended, no matter the level of intensity.
  + People who live alone may have up to 2 visitors inside their residence. These must be two people in your core bubble.
  + People who live alone may also visit one other residence with more than one occupant.
* **Outdoor gatherings limited to a 10-people core bubble:**
  + Make sure to limit your social circle to the same 10 individuals.
  + You should still practice social distancing, wear a face mask and frequently wash hands when meeting people outdoors.
* **Non-urgent surgeries may be delayed due to limited hospital capacity** 
  + None hospitals in Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health will cut 1750 non-urgent surgeries over the next two weeks to deal with a flood of COVID-19 hospitalizations.

These restrictions are temporary measures to make sure we can continue to care for those who are at highest risk. The decisions are not made lightly. This is a reminder to stay local and follow the guidelines. Let’s all do our part and be kind to each other.