

**Subject:** COVID-19 Updates - August 14, 2020  
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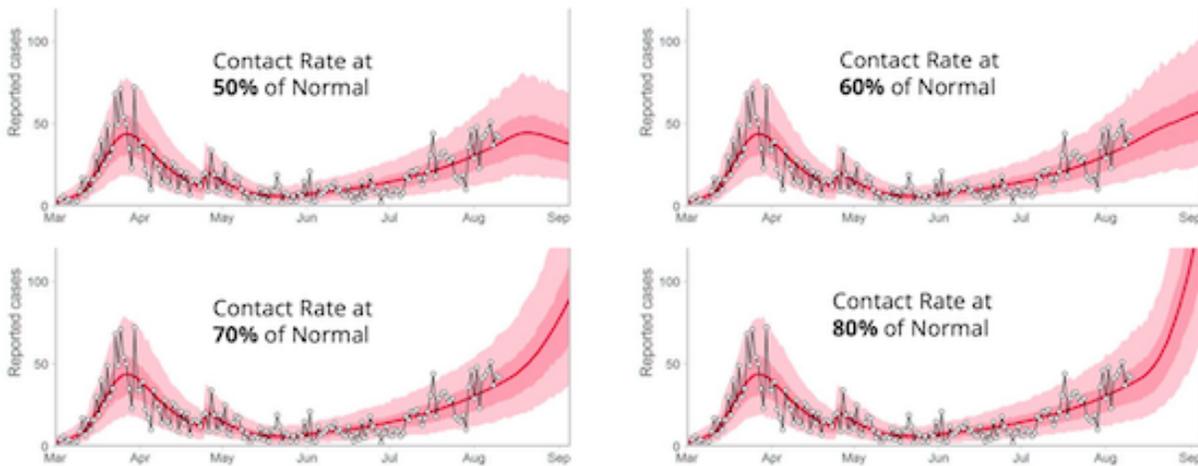
## Provincial Update – August 13, 2020

Today's update included a review of modelling data on scenarios for new cases. The Minister of Health and the Provincial Health Officer are very concerned that we are on a path to more infections. Their message is that we control how this curve goes. We can flatten the curve, as a community, with our personal behaviour.

- Please keep your distance from others.
- Don't go to large parties.
- Stay home if you are sick
- Wash your hands

### Dynamic Compartmental Modelling: Scenarios

Scenarios from our model illustrate the importance of reducing infectious contacts. Poorer compliance with public health advice could lead to a rebound in new cases.



## COVID-19 IN BC

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Full presentation is here: [https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/COVID-19\\_Going\\_Forward.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/COVID-19_Going_Forward.pdf)

## Provincial Update – August 10 2020

At the Monday press conference, the Provincial Health Officer announced the numbers of new cases for the weekend – 131 cases over three days. She is concerned that people are gathering in larger social groups and not doing it safely. The most important safety measures are:

1. Maintain Physical Distance – Six Feet / Two Metres apart
2. Small groups so contact tracing is easier
3. Outside gatherings so there is better air circulation

“If you are invited to a party or social event, and something doesn’t feel right, then it isn’t right for you or for your friends. It only takes one person with COVID-19 to cause a surge in new cases and for hundreds of people to be in self-isolation.

“You don’t have to go along to get along. Rather, invite your family and friends to instead join you to have safe social interactions this summer.”

Read more here:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0249-001498>

## **Translink Announces Mandatory Face Covering Policy**

- Beginning Monday, August 24, TransLink will require customers to wear non-medical masks or face coverings while on-board transit vehicles.
  - Although Transit Police will be able to enforce a rule or signage requiring face coverings on transit, the initial focus of this policy will be on awareness and education.
  - Frontline employees may inform or remind customers to wear a face covering when on-board transit vehicles.
- There are a number of important exemptions to this policy, which include:
  - Anyone with an underlying medical condition or disability which inhibits the ability to wear a mask or face covering;
    - These customers will have the option to request a TransLink branded card which notes they are exempt from wearing a face covering.
    - The cards will be made available at Compass Customer Service Centres at Stadium-Chinatown and Waterfront Stations.
  - Persons unable to place or remove a mask or face covering without assistance;
  - Children under 5 years of age;
  - Employees working behind a physical barrier or within areas designated for employees and not for public access (including Bus Operators while driving behind a barrier);
  - Police, employees, or first responders in an emergency.
- This step is essential to ensuring customers have confidence riding transit as British Columbia’s economy continues to reopen and more people commute around the region.
  - Rebuilding transit ridership is crucial as our region’s economy reopens and road congestion returns. Customer confidence is key to rebuilding ridership.
  - Internal counts show approximately 40 per cent of customers are currently wearing face coverings on transit.
- This policy around mandatory mask or face covering use is being added to TransLink’s Safe Operating Action Plan.

- The plan has increased cleaning and sanitizing of transit vehicles and hubs, increased service levels and creates space between customers where possible.

More information on safe transit use here:

<https://new.translink.ca/rider-guide/coronavirus-precautions>

Thank you to Sterling and Simon for their additional research on the exemptions to this policy. Simon went to the Stadium station Customer Service Centre and requested an exemption card for a person he supports who cannot wear a mask and the card was provided without additional questions.

Wearing a mask, and wearing a mask in public, is a new experience for many of us and some people may take more time to get comfortable keeping the mask on. We have a couple of different styles of fabric masks for people to try, and paper masks are lighter and easier to replace when they get dirty... Lots of options to help people keep their community safe while resuming some limited community activities.

## Financial Assistance for Community Social Services

There have been so many announcements from so many different government departments that we thought it might be helpful to summarize the announcements to date:

### For people with disabilities:

- \$300 per month added to people's cheques by the Provincial Government if they are on PWD (automatically added in April, May, June, July and August).
  - [BC Government Pandemic Assistance for Seniors and People with Disabilities](#)
- \$600 one time payment added to people's cheques by the Government of Canada if they have the Disability Tax Credit, are on CPP Disability Pension, or disability supports provided by Veterans Affairs Canada.
  - [Canada's Disability Tax Credit](#)
- Assistance with rent and income replacement (CERB) if people had employment.
  - [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support?utm\\_campaign=20200506\\_GCPE\\_AM\\_COVID\\_9\\_NOTIFICATION\\_BCGOV\\_BCGOV\\_EN\\_BC\\_NOTIFICATION](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support?utm_campaign=20200506_GCPE_AM_COVID_9_NOTIFICATION_BCGOV_BCGOV_EN_BC_NOTIFICATION)

### For employees of Spectrum:

- 2.25% wage increase in April 2020
  - <https://www.spectrumsociety.org/download/8693/>
- There was a rebate of a portion of Health and Dental premiums by SunLife. We are returning this to the employees on benefits. See LTD50 amount added to your paycheque on July 30 and August 31 if you are on benefits.
- 3.5% wage increase in July 2020 (retroactive payment to April 2020 paid on July 31, 2020). This is the Recruitment and Retention increase.
  - <https://www.spectrumsociety.org/download/9130/>
- Pandemic Pay: \$4/hour for 16 weeks from March 15 to July 4, 2020 – on straight time hours for front line support and supervisors. There will be an update on August 17<sup>th</sup> from government on the process to get this funding for agencies so they can pay it to employees. More info here:
  - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/temporary-pandemic-pay>
- [Equal Work Equal Pay BC](#) – A coalition of Community Social Service organizations working to get the

government back to providing the same increases to union and non-union employees. Please visit the website and send a letter to your MLA. Over 1,700 letters have already been sent to MLA's across BC!

**For home share contractors:**

- Emergency Funding from CLBC allowed Spectrum to pay a monthly additional payment in April, May, June, July and August for home share providers who continued to provide care and support to the people living with them, and provided additional support, including education on the pandemic and health guidelines, how to stay safe and connected to friends and family.

Thank you to everyone for your dedication to serving the people we support. There has been lots of uncertainty and lots of learning as we have progressed through this pandemic.

Have a quiet and sunny weekend!

**Ernie Baatz**

Executive Director

Spectrum Society for Community Living

Express yourself. Build your network. Find your voice.

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**Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Safe**