

**Subject:** COVID-19 Updates - December 8, 2020  
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## **Joint Statement on BC’s COVID-19 Response, Recent Updates**

Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.’s provincial health officer, and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, have issued the following joint statement regarding updates on the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) response in British Columbia:

“Today, we are reporting on three 24-hour periods. From Dec. 4 to 5, we had 647 new cases. From Dec. 5 to 6, we had 726 new cases and in the last 24 hours, we have had a further 647 new cases.

...

“As we all do our part now with COVID-19, we can be encouraged to know that the start of vaccine availability is days away. This is a welcome milestone that we can all celebrate.

“The orders that we have had in place have started to have an impact on the transmission of the virus in British Columbia. However, transmission remains high and we need to continue our efforts to reduce social interactions and stop the spread. The provincial health officer’s orders restricting all gatherings and events have today been extended through to Jan. 8, 2021, at midnight. This includes gatherings in people’s homes and in public venues.

...

“The order extension and travel requirement are necessary steps to help us get through the remainder of the year and protect those who are most vulnerable.

“We understand that, for many of us, this will mean celebrating the important December holidays in a different, smaller way than what we are used to. We can still be festive, but let’s ensure it is only with our immediate household.

“As hard as this may be, let’s remember that the sacrifices we make now will protect our loved ones and countless others throughout our province. Your efforts and sacrifices are making a difference.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0064-002017>

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## **CLBC Conference Call for Service Providers and Home Share**

## Providers

CLBC's regular monthly call for service providers with Dr. Daniele Behn Smith, Office of the Provincial Health Officer) is today at 1pm.

Here are the details for you to use to join the call:

**Date:** Tuesday, December 8, 2020

**Time:** 1:00 – 2:15 p.m.

**Call in details:** 1-877-353-9184 and enter the access code 37568# when prompted

If you can't join the call today, there is a recording of each call posted on the CLBC website at:

<https://www.communitylivingbc.ca/for-service-providers/information-about-the-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-for-clbc-funded-service-providers/teleconference-calls-service-providers/>

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## CLBC Update for Individuals & Families



Welcome to the December 4 edition of CLBC's Update for Individuals and Families. As a reminder, you can find all Updates (including past editions) [posted on our website here](#). If you know of anyone who would like to receive future Updates, please share [the link to our sign up page](#) with them. If you have a specific question, or feedback about this update, you can send an email to [CLBCInfo@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CLBCInfo@gov.bc.ca).

## CLBC and Government News

### **New Key to Home website opens the door to inclusive housing**

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of home for all of us.

A new web site called Key to Home has been launched by Community Living BC and Inclusion BC to help individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and service providers build awareness in their local communities for more inclusive housing. The web site can be found at: [KeytoHomeBC.ca](http://KeytoHomeBC.ca).

The web site provides planning sheets for individuals and families and research information on the need for inclusive housing in B.C., as well as videos and support materials to make presentations to local city councils, planners, developers, and non-profit housing providers. The goal is to ensure local community housing plans and projects include spaces for people with



disabilities.

## **Recognizing International Day of Persons with Disabilities**

December 3 marked United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPWD). This annual celebration is a time for all of us across British Columbia to recognize the important contributions people with developmental disabilities make to their communities.

The U.N. declared the theme for this year: “Building Back Better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 World.” You can [read more about IDPWD 2020 on the United Nations website here](#).



**International  
Day of  
Persons with  
Disabilities**

**3 DECEMBER**

[Here is a message from CLBC’s CEO Ross Chilton.](#)

## **Teleconference plain language summary now available**

On November 17, a teleconference for individuals and families took place with Dr. Daniele Behn Smith, Deputy Provincial Health Officer, Michael Prince, CLBC Board Chair and John Stinson, CLBC Vice President of Regional Operations. The call shared the latest health information and guidance on COVID-19.

You can [read a plain language summary of the teleconference call here](#). This summary, as well as the audio recording of the call, are also [posted to the CLBC website here](#).

## **Provincial Health Officer orders on social gatherings**

The Provincial Health Officer (PHO) has ordered all events, social gatherings and all adult team sports to be suspended to significantly reduce COVID-19 transmission related to social interactions and travel.

To stay updated, the best place to get the most recent information about COVID restrictions and orders is [on the BC Government website here](#).

## **BC Centre for Disease Control explains safe social interaction**

At this time, British Columbians must limit in-person social gatherings to the people they live with. This is not the time to invite friends or family over to your home or to go to someone else’s home for a social visit. If you live alone, you can continue to spend time with one or two people from a different household. Essential visits from support staff can continue.

Many of us have questions about what all this means for our personal and individual situations. For helpful information and answers to questions about safe social interactions during COVID-19, [visit the BCCDC website here](#).

## **COVID-19 mouth rinse / gargle test available to adults**

If you are instructed by a health care provider to get tested for COVID-19 and live on Vancouver Island or in the Lower Mainland, you might now be able to get a gargle test instead of a nasal swab. [You can read more about this test here](#).

If you can choose a gargle test, you should know you can’t eat, drink, vape, smoke, brush your teeth or chew

gum for one hour before the test.

[Click here for instructions of how to take the gargle test.](#)

Are you worried about doing the gargle test correctly? You can practice at home before you go for your test. [Click here to learn how you can practice at home.](#)

You can also [click here to find a COVID-19 testing site near you.](#)

### **Health Canada and BC CDC information on masks**

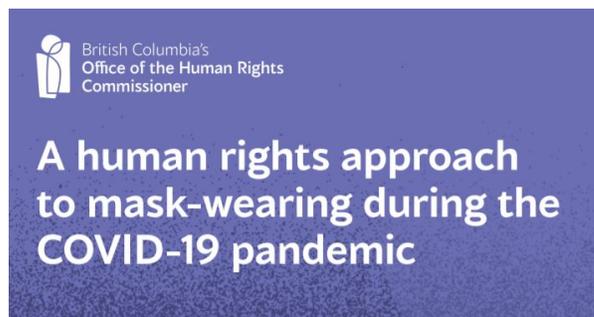
Health Canada has helpful information about non-medical face masks, including what they should be made of and how to put on/remove/clean them, and sewing instructions, [which you can read here.](#)

You can also [find information from the BC Centre for Disease Control here.](#)

### **What if I, or my loved one, can't wear a mask?**

When it comes to mask-wearing policies, we need to ensure there is balance between protecting the public, especially people who are at risk of more severe illnesses, and the rights of people who cannot wear a mask on the basis of protected grounds in B.C.'s Human Rights Code (such as disability).

[The policy guidance that you can read here](#) from BC's Human Rights Commissioner Kasari Govender details how mask-wearing requirements must accommodate people with disabilities or medical conditions that prevent them from using non-medical masks.



## **Staying connected and supported**

### **New Calendar for Connection!**

Community Living BC is working with BC CEO Network the Family Support Institute, Vela Canada, Inclusion BC, BCANDS and BC Self Advocacy groups to find ways to support people to stay safe and connected through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new Calendar for Connection is hosted on the Family Support Institute website and focuses on highlighting safe, accessible and inclusive opportunities for social connection happening provincially and locally for those CLBC serves. In these present times, most of the events and activities featured on the calendar are accessed online. Service providers, self advocacy groups and other community partners are encouraged to create and share their own accessible and inclusive events on this calendar for connection. Thank you to those who have already shared your events with us!

[You can check out what's on the calendar by clicking here.](#)



## Telephone and online counselling supports for Indigenous people



A number of treatment facilities across B.C. are currently offering emotional and cultural supports online and over the phone. The following services are free and are available to all Indigenous people in B.C.:

- **Carrier Sekani Family Services.** Call: 250-567-2900 and ask for an ARP Team
- **Kackaamin Family Development Centre.** Call: 250-723-7789 or Toll-free: 1-833-205-6946
- **Namgis Treatment Centre.** Call: 250-974-8015
- **Nenqayni Wellness Centre.** Call: 250-989-0301
- **North Wind Wellness Centre.** Call: 250-843-6977 or Toll-free: 1-888-698-4333
- **Telmexw Awtextw (Sts'ailes First Nations).** Call: 604-796-9829
- **Tsow Tun Le Lum.** Call: 250-268-2463 or Toll-free: 1-888-590-3123
- **Wilp Si'Satxw Healing Centre.** Call: 778-202-0162 or 778-202-1349

Many addictions treatment centres are closed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. [Find a list of Centres across B.C. that are supporting people in various ways by clicking here.](#)

## Plan Institute advisors offer assistance

The COVID-19 pandemic has created financial hardship for many individuals and families. Some people are asking questions about how to withdraw money from their Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). To help with these questions, a Plan Institute Advisor [wrote this article about withdrawing from an RDSP.](#)

Did you know that Plan Institute has a Disability Planning Helpline that you can call toll-free from anywhere in Canada? Their team of seven advisors specialize in providing advice to families and individuals on disability topics including the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), the RDSP, trusts and estate planning, advocacy approaches, government benefit programs, social network building and more. Each of the advisors has a personal connection to the disability community and is very experienced in the topic they advise on. [Read more about the team of advisors here.](#)

Visit [planinstitute.ca](http://planinstitute.ca) or email [info@planinstitute.ca](mailto:info@planinstitute.ca) to learn more about the helpline and other services that Plan Institute offers. You can call their Disability Planning helpline at 1-844-311-7526. Leave a message and someone will get back to you within one to two business days. You can also send an email any time at [info@rdsp.com](mailto:info@rdsp.com).

[Check out the upcoming Plan Institute RDSP workshops on December 15 and 19.](#)

## Find a food bank

Food banks provide an important and essential service, particularly during these very challenging times. Many food banks are offering other supports to help people in need during COVID-19. [You can use the food bank finder here](#) to locate your local food bank to contact them and see what their capabilities and needs are at present.

## Metis Nation BC provides COVID support

Metis Nation BC has a COVID support program that includes emergency shelter funding, reusable face masks, funding for elders, education and technology support. Applications are now open at [www.MNBC.CA/COVID](http://www.MNBC.CA/COVID). For more information, you can call 604-557-5851.

## Updated Support and Connection Toolkit highlights resources and activities

In each edition of this Update, we share an updated version of the Support and Connection Toolkit which gathers links to resources and activities into one document for easy access. [See the most updated toolkit here](#)

## **Self Advocate Corner**

### **CLBC Expression of Interest: Self Advocates Leading Connection during COVID-19**

Community Living BC is working with partners to find ways to support people to stay safe and connected through the COVID-19 pandemic. The B.C. Self Advocacy community has an important role to play to help lead this effort.

Are you a group of leaders doing important work to support people to stay safe, strong and connected during COVID-19?

CLBC wants to pay an independent self advocacy group or groups to organize and offer safe ways for people with diverse abilities to connect with other people during COVID.



CLBC will be accepting applications for the Expression of Interest: *Self Advocates Leading Connection During COVID-19* until December 11, 2020.

We will be awarding grants for the period of January 2021 – August 2021.

This is an opportunity for self advocates to:

- Take on a leadership role and get paid for it (great if you have experience, but not required).
- Create a plan and choose who you want to hire to make your ideas happen.
- Become an independent self advocacy group/organization led by and for people who live with the label of a developmental or intellectual disability (if you aren't one already).

[Find out more and how to apply on the CLBC website here.](#)

### **Share your story for the next CLBC magazine: How are you staying strong during COVID-19?**

The CLBC Editorial Board made up of self advocate leaders from around B.C. is collecting stories and quotes for the next edition of the Celebrate Diverse Abilities magazine. Tell us how you are staying safe and strong during COVID-19 by emailing [Jessica.Humphrey@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Jessica.Humphrey@gov.bc.ca) by Wednesday, December 9.



### **New BC Disability website profiles self advocates**

[BCDisability.com](http://BCDisability.com) is a new website that aims to be a useful resource to persons in B.C. who have a disability or are an ally of someone with a disability.

BCDisability includes:

- [A directory of disability resources across BC](#)

- [Guides on accessibility, advocacy, community inclusion, and more](#)
- [A spot to showcase the work of artists and entrepreneurs](#)
- [Fun, games, contests, and an interactive quiz on disability with new questions each time](#)

BCDisability wants to showcase the awesome things that B.C. self advocates are doing in their communities, whether it's through advocacy, employment, a hobby, school, or something else.

Do you have something awesome you want to share? Email [spencer@bcdisability.com](mailto:spencer@bcdisability.com)

## **Stories of hope and encouragement**

### **Vancouver Easter Seals House opens doors for respite stays during the COVID pandemic**

Easter Seals understands the enormous challenges the COVID pandemic has put on families that have someone with diverse abilities in their household. So, during this time, they are opening up their suites in Easter Seals House in Vancouver to families who are looking for a night of respite. "You may choose it as a get-away for yourself and spouse or partner, or choose to bring your family member," says Lisa Beck, Easter Seals BC/Yukon CEO and President.

For \$68 per night, you'll have your own private studio apartment that includes a kitchenette, two twin beds (or combine to a king bed), full bathroom and wireless internet access. You will also have access to laundry facilities, and the option of underground, secured parking for \$10 per night.

All [COVID health and safety protocols](#) are in place at Easter Seals House, so you can feel safe and welcome during your stay.

Easter Seals House is a charity-run lodge that provides a home-away-from-home for families and adults who travel from out of town to Vancouver for medical treatment. Located minutes from hospitals, it is a lifeline for thousands of families throughout BC and Yukon to help relieve them of the stress and financial burden of finding somewhere to stay in an expensive and unfamiliar city.

To book your stay, call 1-800-818-3666 or visit [eastersealsbcy.ca](http://eastersealsbcy.ca) for more information. Easter Seals House is located at 3981 Oak Street, Vancouver.

### **Spirit Orcas raise money for COVID and Santas Anonymous**

The amazing Spirit Orcas from Victoria, led by [CLBC WOW award winner](#) Susan Simmons, have raised over \$6,000 for COVID-19 relief by swimming the shoreline of Greater Victoria (10 km at a time) for a total of 80 km! On December 12, they will be raising money for Santas Anonymous. Learn about the Spirit Orca journey by watching [this short video by Spirit Orca youth mentor Jasmine Kremer](#).

You can also [see a video capturing the story of their Great Big Swim fundraiser here](#).

