

Subject: COVID-19 Updates - December 10, 2020 - Vaccines - Recovery Benefit
Date: Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 7:58:15 AM Pacific Standard Time
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Attachments: image001.png, image002.jpg

Provincial Updates

This week, the provincial government made two important announcements:

1. **Vaccines** – British Columbia will be receiving a small number of doses of the Pfizer vaccine this week. Dr. Ross Brown, Vice President for Pandemic Response with the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, will head up the province’s Covid-19 vaccine program over the coming months. The initial supply of approximately 4,000 doses will be administered to Lower Mainland health care workers who work in long term care from two distribution sites, one in the Vancouver Coastal region and one in the Fraser Health region. More doses of the Pfizer vaccine and a supply of the Moderna vaccine will be coming in the new year. By March, the Province aims to have 400,000 people vaccinated, with priority given to staff and residents in long term care. By April, the plan is to roll out the vaccines more broadly to seniors, front line essential workers, people with underlying health conditions, people who are underhoused, and those living in remote indigenous communities.

This is good news for those who are most at risk of serious illness from Covid-19. However, it will still be several months before the vaccines are widely available. Dr. Brown and Dr. Henry stressed the importance of keeping up our layers of protection and continuing to follow the public health guidelines while the vaccine program gets underway.

Plan underway to distribute COVID-19 vaccines in B.C.

The first vaccines to arrive in B.C. will be from Pfizer, then Moderna, and will be delivered initially in two Lower Mainland sites next week before expanding to nine sites by January 2021.

The first limited round of approximately 4,000 vaccines will be administered to Lower Mainland health-care workers who work in long-term care homes and front-line health-care workers essential to the COVID-19 response. Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health are reaching out to those staff to schedule opportunities for vaccine appointments.

Vaccines will continue arriving each week in B.C. in increasing quantities, with targeted deployment for people in priority groups. Expected timelines will depend on vaccine approval and availability.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0065-002035>

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2. **Recovery Benefit** – The Province announced a new benefit that will be available to BC residents. The BC Recovery Benefit is a one-time, tax-free payment of up to \$1,000 for families and single

parents and up to \$500 for eligible individuals. Eligibility is based on net income from your 2019 tax return. Online applications open on December 18th and phone support will be available starting December 21st. The news release is here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/recovery-benefit>

For people with disabilities who are receiving the Covid-19 supplement, the \$300 supplement will be reduced to \$150 per month from January-March 2020. They will need to apply for the new Recovery Benefit, which will make up for the amount that the supplement is being reduced. Inclusion BC has posted more information here: <https://inclusionbc.org/new-bc-covid-recovery-benefit-and-changes-to-pwd-supplement/>

New BC COVID Recovery Benefit and Changes to PWD Benefits

The Province of BC has announced a new BC Recovery Benefit. Amounts are determined on a sliding scale, based on income. [More information here.](#)

- People receiving PWD benefits are eligible to apply and the amount will not be clawed back based on your existing benefits.
- Single people earning less than \$62,500 qualify for a \$500 payment and individuals earning up to \$87,500 will qualify for a reduced amount.
- Families with incomes under \$125,000 will be eligible to receive \$1,000 and families earning up to \$175,000 will qualify for a reduced amount.
- For people currently receiving the \$300 PWD Covid-19 supplement, **this amount will be reduced to \$150/month from January – March.** The reduced \$150 amount will be added to your PWD cheque automatically. You do not have to apply for this.
- With these changes, people on PWD who apply for the BC Recovery Benefit will get about the same amount in total for the next 3 months as if the \$300 PWD supplement was continued:
 - * So instead of: $\$300 + \$300 + \$300 = \900
 - * ...you will get: $\$500 + \$150 + \$150 + \$150 = \$950$
- The new recovery benefit is not automatic, you will need to apply.

Inclusion BC is glad to see an extension of benefits for people with disabilities but we are disappointed that the disability top-up amount was reduced and the remaining amount (recovery benefit) is subject to an application process. The application process will reduce access for those who require additional support to apply or get caught up on their taxes.

There is no guarantee of an extension past March. The federal government recently announced plans for a Federal Disability Benefit, which we hope will address the grossly inadequate assistance rates for people with disabilities.

The BC Government website with more information on the Recovery Benefit is here:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/recovery-benefit>

To apply and be eligible for the one-time, tax-free benefit, people must:

- be a resident of B.C. on Dec. 18, 2020;
- be at least 19 years old on Dec. 18, 2020;
- have filed a 2019 income tax return;
- have their 2019 income tax notice of assessment, and if applicable, their spouse's 2019 income tax notice of assessment;
- have their social insurance number;
- have their direct deposit information; and
- have their B.C. driver's licence.

Applying online is the fastest way to receive the benefit.

Temporary Pandemic Pay Update

Here's a tweet from the new Minister of Finance, Selina Robinson, where she acknowledges people's concern about receiving the Pandemic Pay before Christmas:



Selina Robison ✓
@selinarobinson



Pandemic pay promised to frontline health, community social service workers reaching many before Christmas, but delays are plaguing payment to those in services with multiple funding sources after yrs of privatization by BC Libs. Will do what we can to break logjam.

1:54 PM · Dec 7, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

We will continue to watch our bank account and let you know when we receive the funding and can schedule payment to employees.

Holiday Pictures





Gary was out for some fresh air and found these Candy Canes!

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Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Safe