

Subject: COVID-19 Updates - December 16, 2020 - Vaccines
Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 4:17:28 PM Pacific Standard Time
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Attachments: image001.jpg, image002.png, image003.jpg[66].jpg

Provincial Updates - “V-Day” – First Covid-19 Vaccines Administered in BC

A residential care aide working at a Vancouver Coastal Health facility became the first person in BC to be vaccinated against Covid-19 yesterday. The first shipment of nearly 4,000 vaccines will go to health care workers in the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health regions and by next week there will be additional vaccines available in all the health regions across the province. By the end of March 2021, the Province aims to provide vaccines to 400,000 people in British Columbia. We don't have details yet on when the vaccine will be available to those working in community living services. Along with other essential workers, they are considered high priority to receive the vaccine, as are individuals in residential care and those with underlying health conditions. On Monday, Dr. Henry reported that BC has flattened the curve but not bent it – meaning new cases are at a relatively stable rate currently but that rate is still too high and needs to come down. The number of new deaths each day and the number of people in intensive care is at an all-time high. Premier John Horgan reiterated Dr. Henry's concerns in his press conference yesterday, urging people to keep up their layers of protection and not become complacent. It will still be many months before vaccines are widely available and in the meantime the virus is continuing to spread.





(click on the image to enlarge)

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HealthLink 8-1-1

8-1-1 is a free-of-charge provincial health information and advice phone line operated by HealthLinkBC, which is part of the Ministry of Health. By calling **8-1-1**, you can speak to a health service navigator, who can help you find health information and services; or connect you directly with a registered nurse, a registered dietitian, a qualified exercise professional, or a pharmacist. These healthcare professionals will help you get the information you need to manage your health concerns, or those of your family.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can call **8-1-1** using VRS or TTY.

8-1-1 provides translation services on request in more than 130 languages. After dialing **8-1-1**, you will be connected with an English speaking health service navigator. To get service in another language, simply state the language you are looking for (example say “Punjabi”), and an interpreter will join the call. To find resources that have been translated into Chinese, Farsi, French, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish, or Vietnamese, visit [Translated Resources](#).

The HealthLinkBC site has links to various resources on Covid-19, including:

- Links to BC Centre for Disease Control
- Provincial supports for Covid-19
- BC Government Restart Plan
- Daily Covid-19 Updates from the Province of BC
- Health Authority Information
- Hospital Visiting Guidelines
- Translink information
- Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and World Health Organization (WHO) links

Check out <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/useful-resources-covid-19>

Spectrum Society is committed to providing accurate, up-to-date information on Covid-19 from trusted sources like HealthLink BC.

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Status of the B.C. Temporary Pandemic Pay program

The provincial government has assured us that the pandemic pay for essential workers will be coming as soon as possible. They acknowledge that the delay in getting this money to front line workers across the province has been longer than anticipated and they offered a public apology for this yesterday. We received this FAQ sheet to share with employees:

<https://sscl.sharevision.ca/public/Files/COVID19/PandemicPayFAQ.December2020.pdf>

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 begins on December 18th, 2020 and is the fastest way to receive the benefit.

Be Calm, Be Kind, Be Safe

Naomi Holmes
Associate Director



Open Dialogue. Open mind. Open opportunities.

For regular Spectrum COVID-19 updates click the image below:

