

Subject: COVID-19 Updates - December 29, 2020 - Vaccine Distribution

Date: Wednesday, December 30, 2020 at 11:20:25 AM Pacific Standard Time

From: Ernie Baatz

To: Ernie Baatz

Keeping Safe and Healthy Through the Holidays

The basics of keeping the people we support, our teams and your families Healthy and Safe are important to practice every day:

- Stay home if you sick – Call 811 for further directions.
- Wash your hands regularly
- Keep your distance – at least two metres or six feet from people outside your bubble
- Wear a mask on transit, in stores, in all indoor public spaces.
- Keep your social bubble small – But stay connected with friends and family. Phone, video chat, go for a walk outside – it is so important to keep in touch.

BC's Plan for Vaccine Distribution

The COVID-19 immunization program will involve making vaccines available to everyone in the province who the vaccine is recommended for and who would like to be vaccinated. B.C. hopes to have vaccine available for all those who choose to be vaccinated by the end of 2021. It will take time before there's enough vaccine for everyone. While the immunizations take place, we will need to continue to maintain COVID-19 prevention measures.

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Groups that will get vaccinated first

Vaccines will not be available to all British Columbians at once. Vaccine distribution will be phased and will start with key populations based on Canada's pandemic plan to reduce severe outcomes and deaths.

The first groups to get vaccinated between December and February will be:

- residents, staff and essential visitors to long-term care and assisted-living residences.
- individuals in hospital or community awaiting a long term care placement
- health care workers providing care for COVID-19 patients in settings like Intensive Care Units, emergency departments, medical/surgical units and paramedics.
- remote and isolated First Nations communities.

From February to March, the immunization program will expand to include:

- community-based seniors, age 80 and above, Indigenous elders and Indigenous seniors, age 65 and above.
- people experiencing homelessness and/or using shelters.
- provincial correctional facilities.

- **adults in group homes or mental health residential care.**
- long term home support recipients and staff.
- hospital staff, community GPs and medical specialists.

Current COVID-19 vaccines trials are in adults. Initially, vaccines are expected to be approved for adult use. COVID-19 is a more serious illness for adults.

More information:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/bcs-plan-for-vaccine-distribution>

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The BC Recovery Benefit

Apply now for the BC Recovery Benefit, a one-time, tax-free payment of up to \$1,000 for eligible families and single parents and up to \$500 for eligible individuals. You have until June 30, 2021 to apply.

How the benefit works

The BC Recovery Benefit (the benefit) is a one-time direct deposit payment for eligible families, single parents or individuals. Benefit eligibility is based on net income from your 2019 tax return. **You must apply to receive the benefit.**

More information:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/recovery-benefit>

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Pandemic Pay Update

The Provincial Government is still processing pandemic pay invoices and when our funds arrive, we will pay them out through our payroll process.

The government says in their apology:

Delays are largely due to administrative complexities associated with distributing a new program to an estimated 250,000 employees working for hundreds of different employers.

Despite the challenges of the program, it should not have taken this long for employees to receive their pay. The Province apologizes for the significant impact this delay has had for everyone affected.

More information here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/temporary-pandemic-pay>

We will keep you informed.

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