

COVID 19 School Sector Update



Please forward this update to staff and families. It is also available at: bccdc.ca/schools/news-resources

April 14, 2021



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Welcome

Dear school partners,

COVID-19 vaccines protect you and your community from COVID-19. As more people are immunized against COVID-19, it is harder for the virus to spread.

Every day more people across BC get vaccinated. However, the recent rise in cases means it's more important than ever to follow [school health and safety plans](#).

It's also important to follow province-wide restrictions. This means:

- Do not host or attend **indoor** social gatherings.
- Only attend **outdoor** social gatherings with up to 10 people from outside your household. These should be the same ten people, not different people each time.
- Only travel outside of your community for essential reasons like work or health appointments.

The best way to prevent COVID-19 exposures in schools is to keep the number of cases in our communities low. Find out more about province-wide restrictions [from the BC Government](#). Find [preventive actions](#) you can take from the BCCDC.

On behalf of our team at BCCDC, and regional public health teams across the province, thank you for your continued partnership.

Updates

BC Centre for Disease Control

Fill in the second province-wide COVID-19 survey

Public health experts are again asking British Columbians over 18 to share their experience with the COVID-19 pandemic. This will help public health professionals better respond to the challenges facing British Columbians. The survey includes questions on the experiences of families with school-aged children and is available in 10 languages.

Find out more at bccdc.ca/covid19survey.

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Province of British Columbia

COVID-19 immunizations: Vaccine registration

COVID-19 vaccine appointments can now be booked online. Check in regularly to know when it's your turn: gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated

To keep the system running, please wait until your age cohort is called to register. Check the gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated page often to find out when it is your turn. The following groups can register to book their vaccine anytime:

- Indigenous peoples 18 and older, and
- Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

When it is your turn, register gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated. Vaccine appointments can also be booked by telephone (1-833-838-2323) or in-person at the nearest Service BC location.

BC COVID-19 Immunization Plan: Front-Line Priority Workers

BC is temporarily pausing the use of the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine for people under age 55. This is based on guidance from Health Canada and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization.

Front-line workers who were to receive the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine remain a priority. The program is expected to resume as more vaccines become available.

Find frequently updated information on BC's COVID-19 Immunization Plan at gov.bc.ca/covidvaccine.

Learning about COVID-19 & Schools

Impact of vaccinations on school safety

By fall 2021, most adults in BC, including school staff, should have received their first vaccination. Many will have received their second vaccination as well.

As more people get vaccinated, we expect fewer cases of COVID-19 in communities. This means fewer exposures in schools.

People who are vaccinated are much less likely to experience severe illness and death from COVID-19. Even with most adults being vaccinated, some health and safety measures will be in place in schools and the community until there is significantly less community spread of COVID-19.

Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccines at bccdc.ca/covid19vaccine

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COVID-19 vaccines and children

Vaccines are tested in adults before being tested in children. The vaccines available in BC at this time have been tested in adults and approved for use in adults.

The vaccines are not yet recommended for most children. Clinical trials with children under the age of 18 are underway to learn more. This will help us learn more about how the vaccines might work in children.

A summary of information about COVID-19 vaccinations is available at bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/covid-19-vaccination-at-a-glance.

Celebrating Safely

Graduation is an important event for students, staff and families. It is a time of excitement and change, and marks a significant accomplishment.

Graduation celebrations will still need to look different this year.

- Events like convocation and the granting of diplomas can happen in line with school health and safety plans.
 - Consider live streaming events, so parents, caregivers, families, and friends can participate.
- Events like dinners and dances can only occur in line with the Provincial Health Officer's [Order on Gatherings and Events](#).
 - People can have small gatherings of up to 10 people in parks, public areas or yards.

The Order on Gatherings and Events is updated as needed, based on the level of COVID-19 community spread. The types of events allowed may be different than what is listed here. Find out what is currently allowed, and how safer celebrations and ceremonies can be held at bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/social-interactions/safer-celebrations-and-ceremonies.

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Public Health Profile

Public health includes a diverse group of professions that have unique training, skills and experiences. They include doctors, nurses, epidemiologists and health promotion specialists. Across the province, public health professionals work together to support schools impacted by COVID-19.

Fraser Health Schools Hub



Fraser Health's Public Health team has a dedicated schools hub. They coordinate COVID-19 support to schools from Burnaby to Boston Bar.

The team is composed of a group of health professionals. This includes medical health officers, public health nurses, contact tracers, environmental health officers, and healthy schools public health nurse leads.

The Fraser Health schools hub team works seven days a week and provides many supports to schools, such as:

- School-specific contact tracing,
- Providing notifications such as letters and phone calls, and
- Assisting schools with their COVID-19 safety plans.

They also support our regional Rapid Response Team. The team supports schools and school districts when there are significant COVID-19 exposures.

Translations

[Read in American Sign Language](#)

[Lire en français](#) (read in French)

[阅读简体中文版](#) (read in Simplified Chinese)

[ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਪੜ੍ਹ](#) (read in Punjabi)