Alberta

Popular topics:

COVID-19 info for Albertans

Actions to protect Albertans and prevent the spread of novel coronavirus.

⊙ Current situation

The COVID-19 outbreak was declared a global pandemic by World Health Organization (WHO). Alberta declared a public health emergency on March 17.

Confirmed cases: 119 in Alberta, 591 in Canada.

- Complete information for Albertans
- Updates from the Chief Medical Officer

Last updated: March 18 at 4:30 pm

ⓘ

If you recently returned from travel outside Canada or have symptoms - cough, fever, fatigue or difficulty breathing:

- stay home – do not go to an ER or clinic
- take the COVID-19 self-assessment test ↗
- call Health Link 811 ↗ for testing and instructions

What's new

- Introduced new financial relief measures for affected Albertans.
  - Supports for Albertans
  - Supports for employers
- Launched statistics on COVID-19 cases and tests in Alberta ↗.
- Implemented new public health measures to limit the time Albertans spend in large crowds and crowed

spaces.

Current risk in Alberta

We're continuing to move forward with more aggressive measures to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in Alberta. Additional actions may be required in the coming days. The health of Albertans is, and always will be, our top priority.

Cases in Alberta and Canada

Aggregate data on COVID-19 cases in Alberta is now available, including age range, sex, geographical area and AHS zone of cases.

[View COVID-19 data ↗]

On March 18, Alberta confirmed 22 new cases.

Location	Confirmed cases	Deaths
In Canada	591	8
In Alberta	119	0
Calgary zone	83	0
Edmonton zone	27	0
Central zone	3	0
South zone	2	0
North zone	4	0

Testing in Alberta

Alberta is testing for COVID-19. We are acting out of an excess of caution even when the likelihood of exposure is low.

Test results	Negative	Positive
Completed tests (as of March 18)	14,447	119

About coronavirus

COVID-19 vs. Influenza

Coronaviruses

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause respiratory illness in people, ranging from mild common colds to severe illnesses.

Novel coronaviruses, like COVID-19, are new strains of the virus that have not been previously identified in humans. This means people have no immunity against it, and it has no specific vaccine or treatment.

COVID-19 vs. Flu

In some ways, COVID-19 is similar to influenza (also known as the flu), but there are also key differences.

Similarities

- Both cause respiratory disease

- Both are spread by small droplets from the nose and mouth

- Both are not spread through the air over long distances and times, unlike the measles

Differences

- COVID-19 does not appear to transmit as efficiently as influenza:

  - only people with symptoms seem to be spreading the disease

  - controlling its spread is possible when people with symptoms are isolated

- There is no specific vaccine or treatment for COVID-19.

- COVID-19 causes severe disease and mortality in more cases than the flu. On average:

  - COVID-19 has resulted in 1 to 2 deaths per 100 cases

  - Flu results in 1 death in every 1,000 flu cases

Because COVID-19 can cause serious illness, it is critical to keep it from spreading by having people with a symptoms stay home, away from others.

How it spreads

COVID-19 is transmitted through person-to-person spread by:

- larger droplets, like from a cough or sneeze

- touching contaminated objects or surfaces, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth

COVID-19 is not airborne and cannot spread through the air over long distances or times, like the measles.

Studies suggest that the virus generally only survives for a few hours on a surface, though it may be possible for it to survive several days under ideal conditions.

Symptoms

Symptoms

COVID-19 symptoms are similar to influenza and other respiratory illnesses. Common symptoms include:

- dry cough

- fever

- fatigue/extreme tiredness

Symptom of serious illness include:

- difficulty breathing

- pneumonia

If you have symptoms:

- stay home - do not go to an ER or clinic

- take the [COVID-19 self-assessment](#) ↗ to determine next steps and find out if you require testing.

If you need immediate medical attention, call 911 and inform them you may have COVID-19.

Risks

Most people – about 80% – recover without needing special treatment. However, it can cause serious illness in some, and there is a risk of death in severe cases.

While we are still learning about COVID-19, serious illness appears to develop more often in people who are older or have pre-existing conditions, such as:

- high blood pressure

- heart disease

- lung disease

- cancer

- diabetes

Treatment

Last updated: March 16 at 5 pm

There is no specific vaccine for COVID-19 at this time.

The virus is new and different, so needs its own vaccine – which researchers around the world are now working to develop.

Supportive care is being used to treat patients with COVID-19 and some medications are being tested to see if they can help severely ill patients.

If you suspect you might have COVID-19, complete an online COVID-19 self-assessment to determine next steps and find out if testing is required.

For other health-related concerns, consult your health care provider.

Mental health and coping

The COVID-19 pandemic can have a significant impact on Albertans' mental health.

Resources are available if you, or someone you know, is struggling or needs a little extra support, advice on handling stressful situation, or ways to talk to children.

- Mental health and coping with COVID-19 ↗ (CDC)

- Talking with children about COVID-19 ↗ (CDC)

- Help in Tough Times ↗ (AHS)

Prevent and prepare

Alberta is implementing measures to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, including new restrictions on mass gatherings. Find tips to prepare your household in case you need to self-isolate at home.

- Help Prevent the Spread posters ↗

NEW: Mass gathering restrictions

Last updated: March 17 at 4 pm

New public health measures are now recommended to limit the time Albertans spend in large crowds and

crowed spaces. Effective March 17:

- Mass gatherings are now limited to no more than 50 attendees.

  - This includes: conferences, worship gatherings and family events such as weddings and funerals.

  - This does not include: grocery stores, shopping centres, health care facilities, airports, the legislature and other essential services.

- Albertans are prohibited from attending public recreation facilities and private entertainment facilities.

  - This includes gyms, swimming pools, arenas, science centres, museums, art galleries, libraries, community centres, children's play centres, casinos, racing entertainment centres and bingo halls.

- Albertans are prohibited from attending bars and nightclubs, where minors are prohibited by law.

- Sit-down restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, food courts and other food-serving facilities, including those with minors-allowed liquor license, are limited to 50% capacity to a maximum of 50 people.

  - Take-out, delivery or drive-through service is permitted.

  - [Licensed facilities are permitted to deliver liquor](#) ⤓, (PDF, 112 KB)

Not-for-profit community kitchens, soup kitchens and religious kitchens are exempt at this time, but sanitization practices are expected to be in place and support will be in place for this practice.

Effective March 18, all passenger ropeways, like gondolas and chairlifts will be closed until further notice under the *Safety Codes Act*.

Help prevent the spread

All Albertans can take steps to [help prevent the spread](#):

- practice social distancing

- stay home and away from others if sick or in isolation

- practice good hygiene

  - wash hands often

  - cover coughs and sneezes

  - avoid touching face

- monitor for symptoms: cough, fever, fatigue or difficulty breathing

If symptoms develop:

- take the COVID-19 self-assessment ↗

○ take the COVID-19 self-assessment [⤢]

○ call Health Link 811 [↗] for instructions and testing

How to prepare

To prepare for COVID-19, public health officials recommend that you:

Create a household action plan

○ Talk with the people who need to be included in your plan.

○ Meet with household members, other relatives, and friends to discuss what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community and what the needs of each person will be.

○ Plan ways to care for those at greater risk of serious complications, such as ensuring you have sufficient medication, and determining what supplies are needed and if they can be delivered.

○ Talk with your neighbours about emergency planning.

○ Create a list of local organizations you can contact if you need access to information, health care services, support or resources.

○ Create an emergency contact list.

Plan for self-isolation

○ Practice good personal health habits and everyday preventive actions.

○ Choose a room in your home you can use to separate sick household members from healthy ones.

○ Choose a separate bathroom for sick individuals to use, if possible.

○ Plan to clean these rooms as needed when someone is sick.

○ Have 72 hours worth of food and supplies at home. We do not recommend stockpiling goods.

Plan for changes at work

○ Plan for potential changes at your workplace.

  ■ Learn about your employer's emergency operations plan.

  ■ Ask about what sick-leave policies and work from home options are available.

Resources

○ Self-isolation information sheet ↓

○ How to build an emergency kit

How to self-isolate

Self-isolation can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. If you're asked to self-isolate, follow these guidelines:

- stay home - do not attend work, social events or any other public gatherings

- avoid close contact with other people - especially seniors and people with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems

- monitor for symptoms like a dry cough, fever, fatigue or difficulty breathing

Learn how to self-isolate and what you can do to prepare

What Alberta is doing

Last updated: March 17 at 4:25 pm

Alberta government actions

- March 17 – Alberta declared a state of emergency under the *Public Health Act* to empower authorities to more effectively respond to public health concerns.

- March 17 – $60 million in one-time emergency funding was provided to civil society organizations, adult homeless shelters, and women's emergency shelters to:

  - enable social distancing and sanitization of common areas

  - provide supports and services to at-risk seniors, people with disabilities and families facing homelessness, poverty and social isolation

- March 15 – $500 million in additional health funding was commitment to the COVID-19 response to ensure front-line health professionals have the tools they need for testing, surveillance and treatment of patients.

Public health actions

Alberta's public health officials are carefully monitoring the situation in Canada and around the world, and are ready to respond. They are:

- working closely with federal, provincial and territorial partners to share information and assess potential health risks

- ensuring our health system is responding effectively

- ensuring front-line health professionals have information about the virus so they can:

  - take recommended actions

  - promptly report potential cases to public health officials

- updating self-isolation and self-monitoring recommendations for returning travellers as required

- tracing all close contacts of confirmed cases, testing and isolating those who are symptomatic, and asking even those who feel well to self-isolate for 14 days after their last contact with the case

See more [information for Albertans](#).

Info for Albertans

Effective March 12, all travellers returning from outside Canada must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.

Info for employers and employees

Measures are in place to protect businesses, employers and employees from the economic disruption of COVID-19, including:

- Financial relief for businesses and employers

- Job-protected leave for employees

- Federal employment insurance benefits

- Business continuity planning resources

[COVID-19 supports for employers and employees ⬈](#)

Last updated: March 18 at 5:50 pm

Info for travellers and airline passengers

An official global travel advisory is in effect. Albertans should follow all travel recommendations.

- Avoid all non-essential travel outside Canada and all cruise ship travel.

- Canadians abroad should return home immediately.

- Returning travellers should:

  - follow self-isolation guidelines and monitor for symptoms for 14 days

  - check recent domestic and international flights for confirmed cases (info updated as cases are confirmed)

[View all travel advice ⬈](#)

Last updated: March 18

Info for seniors

Last updated: March 15 at 5 pm

To prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, among seniors and other vulnerable groups:

- Only essential visits to any continuing care or long-term care facility in Alberta are recommended.

- Individuals over 60 years of age and those with pre-existing health conditions are most at risk of severe symptoms from COVID-19.

- Families and friends of those in these facilities are asked to think of other ways besides visiting that they can support and encourage their loved ones through this difficult time.

Info for schools and daycares

Last updated: March 17 at 4 pm

Effective immediately, all students will no longer be attending classes in K to 12 schools until further notice.

Teachers and other school staff will still be expected work, either from home or at their workplace. Decisions on how to do this are still to be made, and may vary depending on the school jurisdiction.

School authorities are expected to continue their regular day-to-day operations and ensure the safety of school facilities. Maintenance, capital projects, cleaning of facilities, and administrative work will continue.

- Every student will receive a final mark and students will progress to their next grade level next school year.

- Provincial assessments, such as provincial achievement tests, will be cancelled.

- At this time, diploma exams essential for post-secondary acceptance will continue.

- Every student who is eligible to graduate from Grade 12 this year will graduate.

All licensed childcare facilities, out-of-school programs and preschool programs in Alberta are closed at this time.

- Approved day homes are exempt as they care for fewer than 7 children at a time, but should use enhanced sanitation practices.

Should students/parents/guardians wish to access a school facility, they must follow these guidelines:

- Anyone sick with respiratory symptoms (even if symptoms resemble a very mild cold) should not be allowed to enter.

  - Staff should be actively asking those who enter if they are having any respiratory symptoms, which would include (but not limited to) fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose etc.

- Handwashing must take place when entering and exiting the school. This may be done by either using soap and water (for a minimum of 20 seconds) or by using alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Less than 50 people should occupy a single space (e.g. classroom, hallway, and gymnasium) at a single time.

- The principles of social distancing should apply. A minimum distance of two meters must be

maintained between individuals.

Resources:

- [Record of decision by the chief medical officer of health](#) ⤓ (PDF, 110 KB)

Info for post-secondary institutions

Last updated: March 15 at 5 pm

Effective immediately, in-person classes at post-secondary institutions are cancelled until further notice. Campuses remain open.

The government will also be working with post-secondary institutions to ensure that these extraordinary circumstances do not prevent students from being eligible for admission to post-secondary studies for the upcoming school year.

Resources:

- [Record of decision by the chief medical officer of health](#) ⤓ (PDF, 110 KB)

Info for municipalities

Last updated: March 15 at 5 pm

We are providing advice based on current evidence and [public health recommendations](#) ↗ from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Helping local organizations plan for an outbreak

- [Business continuity planning](#) ⤓ is essential in preparing critical operations for potential interruptions.

- [Alberta Emergency Management Agency](#) field officers are available to support municipalities, First Nations and Metis Settlements with their emergency management and business continuity planning.

Supporting the health system

Communities should:

- refer anyone with health-related concerns to [Health Link 811](#) ↗ and promote it as a reliable source of information

- promote the [Respiratory Viruses and the Workplace guide for workplaces](#)

- review business continuity plans to ensure disruptions from staff shortages have been considered, especially for critical operations

- stay informed about the current situation in Alberta via this web page

Resources

- OHS: Respiratory viruses and the workplace

- Business continuity planning ⤓

- Help Prevent the Spread posters ↗

Info for homeless shelters and service providers

A guidance document has been developed to support providers of services for Albertans experiencing (or at-risk of) homelessness. The document outlines general recommendations to prevent COVID-19 in these settings.

Resource

- Guidance for Providers of Services to Albertans Experiencing (or at-risk of) Homelessness ⤓ (PDF, 647 KB)

Government service changes

Driver licenses and vehicle registration changes

Upcoming expiry dates for Alberta drivers' licences, vehicle registrations, other permits and certificates are being extended until May 15.

Vehicle registration

Vehicle registrations expire on an assigned month based on the registrant's surname or a company name.

- Albertans with surnames or company names beginning with B, D, G, Y will now have until May 15, 2020 to renew their vehicle registrations.

Driver's licences

Driver's licences expire on the holder's birthday in the year noted on the card.

- Albertans who have birthdays between March 17 and May 15 and whose cards expire this year, now have until May 15, 2020 to renew.

- Expiry dates can be found on your card and Albertans with birthdays between March 17 and May 15 are encouraged to confirm whether or not they need to renew this year.

Court and justice services changes

The Alberta Court of Queen's Bench, the Provincial Court of Alberta and the Alberta Court of Appeal are limiting services to essential and urgent functions.

Alberta Court of Queen's Bench

Alberta's Court of Queen's Bench has suspended all jury trials scheduled between March 16 and May 31. Jurors summoned to attend jury selection during this time are released and don't need to attend.

Current jury trials are proceeding, jurors for these trials must report to court. Crown prosecutors and defense counsel in all cases have been notified.

Hearings are limited to emergency or urgent matters only. Emergency matters are those in which serious consequences to persons or harm to property may arise if the hearing does not proceed, or if there is a risk of loss of jurisdiction or expiration of an existing protection or restraining order.

Any counsel or juror showing symptoms should contact the court to seek instructions from the judge presiding over their case.

Find more Alberta Court of Queen's Bench information.

Provincial Court of Alberta

The Provincial Court of Alberta is limiting all regular operations until further notice.

Effective March 17:

- All Traffic Courts are closed

- You do not need to attend unless the matter is an in-custody, urgent criminal matter, or urgent family or child protection matter

- No members of the public are permitted unless they are required (i.e. counsel, parties, witnesses, media)

Find more Provincial Court of Alberta information.

Alberta Court of Appeal

Only people necessary (counsel, litigants, and media) should attend court. No one who is ill or experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms should attend.

Filing deadlines have not changed. The Court's Case Management Officers remain available to consider requests for extensions, fiats and other administrative directions.

Parties and counsel are encouraged to provide the Registry with an email address if they have not already done so. At this time, correspondence from and to this court may be sent by email instead of fax.

The Court of Appeal Registry is operating on social distancing guidelines posted at the Court of Appeal Registry counters.

Find more Alberta Court of Appeal information.

Chief Medical Officer updates

Daily updates from Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Transcripts

- [March 18, 2020](#)
- [March 17, 2020](#)
- [March 16, 2020](#)
- [March 15, 2020](#)
- [March 14, 2020](#)
- [March 13, 2020](#)
- [March 12, 2020](#)
- [March 11, 2020](#)

Resources

- [Help Prevent the Spread Posters](#) ↗ (PDF, 933 KB)

- [AHS update on novel coronavirus](#) ↗

- Government of Canada's 2019 New Coronavirus (2019-nCoV): Outbreak Notification -[English](#) ↗ | [Simplified Chinese](#) ↗ | [French](#) ↗

- [World Health Organization's Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)](#) ↗

News
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March 18, 2020

[Update 5: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (March 18 at 4:30 p.m.)](#)

Twenty-two additional cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed, bringing the total number of cases in the province to 119. Aggressive public health measures continue in order to help limit the spread of COVID-19.

March 18, 2020

[Protecting Alberta's families and economy](#)

Government is providing immediate financial assistance to Albertans affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

March 17, 2020

[Update 4: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (March 17 at 3:30 p.m.)](#)

Aggressive public health measures, including additional limits to mass gatherings, are being implemented provincewide to limit the spread of COVID-19 and protect Albertans.

March 17, 2020

[New measures to limit COVID-19 in Alberta](#)

The government will declare a state of public health emergency later today, empowering authorities under the *Public Health Act* to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic

March 16, 2020

Update 3: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (March 16 at 5 p.m.)

Aggressive public health measures continue to be implemented province wide to limit the spread of COVID-19 and protect Albertans, as cases have now been identified in all zones across the province.

March 16, 2020

Enacting measures to expedite COVID-19 support

Government will introduce motions to expedite the passing of budget legislation necessary for front-line spending to combat the COVID-19 public health crisis.

March 15, 2020

Update 2: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (March 15 at 4:30 p.m.)

Aggressive additional public health measures are being implemented provincewide to limit the spread of COVID-19 and protect Albertans, after new cases appear to be spreading into community settings.

March 15, 2020

$500 million committed to COVID-19 response

An additional $500 million will give Alberta's public health officials the resources they need to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and keep Albertans safe.

March 14, 2020

Update 1: COVID-19 in Alberta (March 14 at 3:30 pm)

Ten additional cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed, bringing the total number of cases in the province to 39.

March 13, 2020

Update on COVID-19 in Alberta

The Emergency Management Cabinet Committee is recommending schools remain open with mitigations in place to protect the health of Alberta teachers and students.

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