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Popular topics:

# COVID-19 info for Albertans

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

COVID-19 info for AlbertansCases in AlbertaTesting in AlbertaIsolation requirementsHelp prevent the spreadTravel adviceRestrictions on gatheringsRestrictions on businessesEssential servicesGuidance for workplacesSupports for businessesSupport for AlbertansProtecting residents at congregate care facilities

## Current situation

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

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

Last updated: April 18 at 3:30 pm

### **Testing**

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COVID-19 testing is now available to anyone with symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat. Find out how to get tested.

## Mandatory isolation

You must isolate for 10 days if you have symptoms, or for 14 days if you were exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 case or returned from international travel. Learn more.

## Practice physical distancing

Help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Practice physical distancing and take steps to protect yourself and others from getting sick. Find out how.

### Protecting congregate care residents

Seniors and people with health conditions are most at risk. To protect residents of congregate care facilities, most visitors are not allowed and measures are in place to help prevent and control outbreaks.

## Cases in Alberta

Location	Confirmed cases	Deaths	Recovered cases
In Canada	32,565	1,347	-
In Alberta	2,562 (165 new cases)	51	1,162

Updated April 18

Data reported in the table is based on a 24-hour period from 2 pm to 2 pm. Aggregate data reported in the interactive data application is based on calendar day.

View data and projections  $\rightarrow$ 

## Prevent the spread

Mandatory isolation requirements

Isolation can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Under public health order, you are legally required to isolate for:

- 14 days if you returned from international travel or are a close contact of a person with COVID-19, plus an additional 10 days from the onset of symptoms, should they occur
- 10 days if you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition

Learn how to isolate and prepare  $\rightarrow$ 

Last updated: April 3 at 4 pm

Restrictions on gatherings

No gathering of more than 15 people is allowed in one indoor or outdoor location.

People gathered in groups of fewer than 15 people must maintain a distance of 2 metres from one another. Gatherings must occur in a space that allows for <u>mandated physical distancing</u> (at least 2 metres between attendees).



Last updated: April 13 at 1 pm

Non-essential businesses are prohibited from offering services in a location accessible to the public.

Businesses that are on the <u>essential workplaces list</u> can remain open and have more than 15 people on a worksite as long as risk mitigation strategies are implemented and followed.

View all business restrictions  $\rightarrow$ 

Updated: April 13 at 1:30 pm

#### 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 must:
  - follow mandatory 14-day isolation requirements and monitor for symptoms
  - check recent domestic and international flights for confirmed cases (info updated as cases are confirmed)

View all requirements for travellers

Last updated: April 3 at 3:30pm

#### Help prevent the spread

All Albertans have a responsibility to help prevent the spread. Take steps to protect yourself and others:

- practice physical distancing
- practice good hygiene: wash hands often for at least 20 seconds, cover coughs and sneezes, and avoid touching face
- monitor for symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat
- self-isolate for the legally-required 10 days if you have any symptoms that are not related to a preexisting illness or medical condition
- take the <u>COVID-19 self-assessment</u> [] if you're concerned about your health
- health care workers should follow <u>guidelines for personal protective equipment</u> (PDF, 69 KB) when caring for individuals who may have COVID-19. Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health has <u>endorsed</u> these <u>guidelines</u> (PDF, 109 KB).

#### Wearing masks

Medical masks (N95, surgical or procedure masks):

• must be kept for health care workers and people providing direct care to COVID-19 patients

Non-medical masks (cloth or homemade):

- should only be used in addition to other protective steps
- are not proven to protect the person wearing it, but may help protect others
- cover your mouth and nose to prevent respiratory droplets from contaminating other people or surfaces
- must be worn and taken on/off properly as the outside can become contaminated

Learn how to wear masks properly  $\rightarrow$ 

Last updated: April 13 at 3:30 pm

## Symptoms and risks

Symptoms

### Symptoms

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

- Common symptoms can be mild: cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat
- Symptom of serious illness: difficulty breathing or pneumonia

#### If you have symptoms:

- stay home and isolate for at least 10 days or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer (this is a legal requirement)
- take the COVID-19 self-assessment 7 to determine if you need testing
- <u>call Health Link 811</u> <sup>[2]</sup> if concerned about your health
- do not go to an ER or clinic if you need immediate medical attention, call 911 and inform them you may have COVID-19

Last updated: April 13 at 3:30 pm

Alberta has one of the highest testing rates in the world. As the situation evolves, Alberta's testing approach and priorities will adjust according to need and direction from the chief medical officer of health.

Testing is now available to all Albertans with COVID-19 symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat.

Learn how to access testing  $\rightarrow$ 

Last updated: April 13 at 3:30 pm

#### Health risks

COVID-19 can cause serious respiratory illness. Because it is a new virus with no treatment or immunity in people, it is critical for people with any symptoms to stay home and self-isolate to keep it from spreading.

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 or diabetes.

See isolation requirements  $\rightarrow$ 

#### 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 and 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.

Help prevent the spread  $\rightarrow$ 

Last updated: March 15 at 5 pm

There is no vaccine or proven treatment 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.

Last updated: April 3 at 3:30 pm

#### 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 vaccine or proven 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.
- Neither is spread through the air over long distances and times, unlike the measles.

#### Differences

- COVID-19 does not have a specific vaccine or treatment available.
- COVID-19 does not appear to transmit as efficiently as influenza:
  - only people with symptoms seem to be spreading the disease, but symptoms may be very mild, so transmission is possible even if the person is feeling well
  - controlling its spread is possible when people with symptoms are isolated
- 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<u>people with</u> symptoms follow mandatory isolation requirements.

Last updated: April 3 at 3:30 pm

There is currently no evidence to suggest:

- being pregnant increases your risk of getting COVID-19 or having serious complications
- $\circ$  the COVID-19 virus is transmitted to your baby during pregnancy, delivery or through breastmilk

However, there is always an increased risk of preterm or stillbirth with any significant maternal illness.

Talk to your health care provider if you have questions or are worried about leaving your home to attend appointments.

If you aren't feeling well, take the online assessment to arrange testing [2]

For more information, read the AHS COVID-19 and Pregnancy guide .

## Get help

Mental health and addiction

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

Online resources are available if you need advice on handling stressful situations or ways to talk to children.

- Help in Tough Times [↗ (AHS)
- Mental health and coping with COVID-19[ 2 (CDC)
- <u>Talking with children about COVID-19</u> [↗ (CDC)
- <u>COVID-19 information for young kids and students</u> ↓ (PDF, 122 KB)

If you need to talk, call the 24-hour help lines:

- Mental Health Help Line at 1-877-303-2642
- Addiction Help Line at <u>1-866-332-2322</u>

#### Family and sexual violence

If you or someone you know is at risk of family or sexual violence, help is available.

#### Family violence

• Call our 24-hour Family Violence Info Line at 310-1818 to get anonymous help in over 170 languages.

#### Sexual violence

If you need help finding sexual assault support services, call Alberta's One Line for Sexual Violence at<u>1</u>
<u>866-403-8000</u> (Open 9 am to 9 pm in 170 languages).

#### **Utner** resources

- Family violence during COVID-19 information sheet → (PDF, 321 KB)
- Find information on shelter and financial supports
- Learn how to recognize and prevent family violence

#### Child neglect and abuse

Children are at a higher risk for neglect and abuse during times of uncertainty and crisis.

Call the 24-hour child abuse hotline at <u>1-800-387-KIDS</u> (5437) if you think a child is being abused, neglected or sexually exploited.

Learn the signs of abuse  $\rightarrow$ 

#### Caregivers support

Nearly one million Albertans act as caregivers for loved ones experiencing challenges related to illness, disability or aging. These caregivers need support too.

#### Renters and landlords

New protections are in place for residential and mobile homes site tenants facing financial hardship due to COVID-19:

- Tenants cannot be evicted for non-payment of rent and/or utilities before May 1, 2020.
- Rents on residential properties or mobile home sites will not increase while Alberta's State of Public Health Emergency remains in effect.
- Late fees cannot be applied to late rent payments until June 30 and cannot be collected retroactively for this time.
- Landlords and tenants need to work together to develop payment plans while COVID-19 is being managed.
- Landlords can still file applications and receive orders for possession if the reason for the eviction is unrelated to rent and/or utility payments, or if a tenant refused to negotiate or comply with a payment plan.

#### **Resources:**

- <u>Suspending Eviction Enforcement</u> ↓
- <u>Rent Payment Plans</u> ↓

• Ministerial Orders

#### Consumer protection

We're receiving two types of complaints related to consumer exploitation resulting from COVID-19:

- retail outlet stores raising prices for high-demand products (i.e. toilet paper, hand sanitizer)
- o private individuals purchasing mass quantities of supplies and reselling them at an inflated premium

The *Consumer Protection Act* prevents suppliers from grossly raising prices with no explanation beyond what is reasonable for goods that are readily available.

Unlike commercial sales, the act does not explicitly cover private sales. We urge all Albertans to act with consideration and caution and to find ways to help support each other in this time.

#### File a consumer complaint

If you see prices for products or services in Alberta skyrocket because of COVID-19, you can report it through our <u>Report-a-Ripoff submission form</u> or by calling 1-877-427-4088.

#### Cyber security

Cyber security incidents involving malware and fraudulent activities, including identity theft, are being reported across Alberta in the wake of COVID-19.

- Anyone who receives a call asking for credit card information should hang up immediately and call the non-emergency line for local law enforcement.
- Albertans are encouraged to continue to exercise caution when clicking on links or providing personal information to people and organizations that request that information, unsolicited.

Learn about cyber security  $\rightarrow$ 

## Info for vulnerable Albertans and other organizations

#### Seniors and other vulnerable groups

Government issued public health orders to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, among seniors and vulnerable groups for the following settings:

- Long-term care facilities
- Licensed supportive living facilities, including seniors lodges and group homes
- o Licensed residential addiction treatment centres (under the Mental Health Services Protection Act)

Homeless shelters and service providers

On March 30, the Chief Medical Officer of Health recognized operators of shelters and temporary or transitional housing facilities provide an essential service in Alberta during this time of emergency.

- These facilities are exempt from the mass gathering public health order and may provide shelter to more than 15 people – as long as risk mitigation strategies are followed, including maintaining a minimum of 2 metres distance from one another. Read the <u>exemption letter</u> [2] for more information.
- All non-essential gatherings inside or outside these facilities must include no more than 15 people.

We are working with community-based organizations, homeless shelters and women's shelters to:

- update pandemic plans with guidelines and information specific to COVID-19
- expand shelter capacity and help current service providers to maintain physical distancing practices by finding additional space to house people

\$30 million has been committed to adult homeless shelters and women's emergency shelters to support their COVID-19 response.

Last updated: March 31 at 3 pm

Charities and not-for-profit organizations

\$30 million has been committed to charities, non-profits and civil society organizations to support their COVID-19 response.

More information on emergency funding for charities and not-for-profit organizations

Last updated: March 30 at 11:00 am

#### Volunteers

Volunteers play many important roles in communities across our province.

Volunteers and volunteer organizations must follow all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to protect themselves and those they help.

- Volunteer organizations may have more than 15 volunteers and/or employees in one location.
- Volunteers and employees may work together at distances of less than 2 metres, where unavoidable.
- Volunteer organizations must take actions to prevent the transmission of infection among employees, volunteers and the people they are helping.
- Proper hygiene and cleaning practices must be followed within the volunteer organization.

• Any employee or volunteer with symptoms, including cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat, is required by law to isolate and may not participate in volunteer or workplace activities.

Information for non-health care volunteers 🕁 (PDF, 43 KB)

#### Faith-based organizations

We recognize Albertans need a place to worship together in their various religious traditions, in a way that doesn't put people at risk of spreading or contracting COVID-19.

Gatherings with over 15 people are strictly prohibited, but faith-based organizations can find other ways to worship, including:

- o live streaming activities instead of in-person events, whenever possible
- gatherings with fewer than 15 people can happen as long as proper mitigation measures are followed:
  - people who are sick with a fever or cough must not attend
  - anyone at high risk of severe disease should not attend
  - practice physical distancing and maintain 2 metres between each person
  - stagger arrivals and departures to maintain physical distancing
  - increase access to handwashing stations or alcohol-based sanitizer
  - frequently clean surfaces that are touched often
  - remove activities that require physical contact between participants

More information can be found in the guidance document for faith-based organizations J (PDF, 194 KB)

## Schools and daycares

#### Child care

- Licensed child care facilities are closed to the general public at this time.
- Select licensed child care centres have reopened to provide child care for essential service workers.
- Home-based child care with 6 or fewer children (not including the caregiver's own children) can continue operating as long as safety measures are in place.

Learn more about child care during COVID-19  $\rightarrow$ 

#### Resource:

• <u>COVID-19 information for young kids and students</u> (PDF, 122 KB)

- All classes in K to 12 schools are cancelled until further notice
- All Grade 6 and 9 provincial achievement tests and Grade 12 diploma exams are cancelled through to the end of June
- School authorities will offer at-home learning opportunities for all kindergarten to Grade 12 students
- Each student will get final grades and a report card appropriate to their grade level
- High school students on track to receive 100 or more credits will still be eligible to graduate

Student learning during COVID-19  $\rightarrow$ 

#### Resources

- <u>Record of decision by the chief medical officer of health</u> [☐ (March 16, 2020)
- <u>COVID-19 information for young kids and students</u> (PDF, 122 KB)

Last updated: April 17 at 3 pm

#### Post-secondary institutions

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

We are 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:** 

<u>Record of decision by the chief medical officer of health</u> [...] (March 16, 2020)

Last updated: March 15 at 5 pm

## Government response

Support the Alberta Bits and Pieces Program

Submit your offers of products or services [2] to the Alberta Bits and Pieces Program if you're interested in supporting the COVID-19 response.

If there is a requirement for your product or service, you will be contacted by a representative of the Government of Alberta.

The program is named after the "bits and pieces program" established by Canada's Minister of Munitions

and Supply during the Second world war, C. D. Howe. The program coordinated innovative production and procurement efforts from across the Canadian economy to support the war effort.

#### Alberta government action plan

The Alberta government is taking action to protect the safety, security and economic interests of Albertans amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

See the weekly overview of the COVID-19 action plan [2] (April 5-11)

Last updated: April 15 at 11 am

#### Public health actions

Alberta's public health officials are carefully monitoring the situation in Canada and around the world. 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 isolate for 14 days after their last contact with the case
- granting law enforcement the authority to enforce public health orders and issue fines to anyone violating a public health order
- protecting Albertans in congregate care facilities by updating standards and guidelines
- making testing available to all Albertans with COVID-19 symptoms (cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat)

Updated: April 15 at 11 am

#### Info for municipalities

We are providing advice based on current evidence and <u>public health recommendations</u> [2] from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Helping local organizations plan for an outbreak

• <u>Business continuity planning</u> (PDF, 319 KB) is essential in preparing critical operations for potential interruptions.

• <u>Alberta Emergency Management Agency</u> 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:

- o refer anyone with health-related concerns to <u>Health Link 811</u> [↗] and promote it as a reliable source of information
- promote the <u>Respiratory Viruses and the Workplace guide for workplaces</u>
- review business continuity plans to ensure disruptions from staff shortages have been considered, especially for critical operations
- $\circ\;$  stay informed about the current situation in Alberta via this web page

### Resources

- OHS: Respiratory viruses and the workplace [7]
- Help Prevent the Spread posters [7]

Last updated: March 15 at 5 pm

## Government service changes

Temporary office closures

Some Alberta government office locations have temporarily closed to the public.

To find out how to access affected government services, visit the program's web page or call Alberta Connect at 310-4455 from 8 am to 8 pm, 7 days a week.

View list of temporary office closures  $\rightarrow$ 

#### Driver road tests

Driver road tests are suspended until the public health emergency ends.

Cancelled road tests can be rebooked online at no additional charge once it is safe to resume testing.

Updated: April 14 at 5 pm

Expiry dates for Alberta drivers' licences, identification cards, vehicle registrations, other permits and certificates is extended until May 15.

### Driver's licences and ID cards

Drivers' licences and ID cards expire on the holder's birthday in the year noted on the card.

- Albertans who have birthdays from March 17 through May 14 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 from March 17 through May 14 are encouraged to confirm whether they need to renew this year.

### Vehicle registration

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

• Albertans and companies with registrations expiring in March and April (including those whose last names begin with B, D, G, Y) will now have until May 15, 2020 to renew their vehicle registrations.

### Medical evaluations

Effective immediately, Transportation has extended the timeline to 90 days for most drivers requiring a medical evaluation to provide their completed medical form when applying for or renewing their licence.

This will reduce the current strain on the healthcare system. Medically, high risk drivers will still be required to present their medical evaluation at the time of their application or renewal.

See Medical conditions and driving for more information.

#### Corporate Registry changes

### Corporate Registry changes

In keeping with public gathering restrictions, deadlines are suspended for corporations, partnerships, cooperatives and non-profit organizations to hold annual general meetings and file their annual returns

These groups will remain active in Alberta, and will not have their corporations, partnerships, cooperatives or non-profit organizations dissolved due to failing to file annual returns.

#### Learn more $\rightarrow$

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

There are changes at the court because of COVID-19. Read more at <u>Alberta Court of Queen's Bench</u> information [2].

### Provincial Court of Alberta

There are changes at the court because of COVID-19. Read more at <u>Provincial Court of Alberta information</u>

## Alberta Court of Appeal

There are changes at the court because of COVID-19. Read more at Alberta Court of Appeal information [7].

## Chief medical officer updates

Daily updates from Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Alberta's chief medical officer of health.

## Transcripts

- <u>April 17, 2020</u>
- <u>April 16, 2020</u>
- <u>April 15, 2020</u>
- <u>April 14, 2020</u>
- <u>April 13, 2020</u>
- <u>April 10, 2020</u>
- <u>April 9, 2020</u>
- <u>April 8, 2020</u>

• <u>April 7, 2020</u>

## Protecting families and the economy



## Student learning during COVID-19

Guidelines for continuing K to 12 student learning while in-school classes are cancelled due to COVID-19.



## Agriculture Job Connector

Matching workers with employers to fill agriculture and agri-food jobs.



## Relief for the energy sector

Immediate action will protect jobs and provide economic relief to the oil and gas industry.



## **Economic Recovery Council**

Providing expert advice to guide Alberta through the economic downturn as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the energy price crash.

## Resources



- Information for young kids and students ↓ (PDF, 122 KB)
- <u>COVID-19 Information Posters</u>
- Alberta COVID-19 information sheets (PDF):
  - English と, French と, Arabic と, Traditional Chinese と, Simplified Chinese と, Hindi と, Korean と, Punjabi と, Somali と, Spanish と, Tagalog と, Urdu と, Vietnamese と,

- Government of Canada COVID-19 updates:
  - English [2] French [2] Simplified Chinese [2]
- <u>Alberta Health Services (AHS) COVID-19 updates</u>
- World Health Organization COVID-19 updates [2]

## News

### Situation updates

- Update 35: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (April 17)
- Update 34: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (April 16)
- Update 33: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (April 15)
- Update 32: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (April 14)
- Update 31: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (April 13)
- Update 30: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (April 12)
- Update 29: COVID-19 pandemic in Alberta (April 11)

### News releases

- Federal energy stimulus package: Premier Kenney (April 17, 2020)
- Camping reservations temporarily suspended (April 17, 2020)
- Response plan protects workers, food supply (April 16, 2020)
- Personal protective equipment is reaching Albertans (April 15, 2020)
- Increasing mental health supports in response to COVID-19 (April 15, 2020)
- Personal protective equipment for non-AHS facilities (April 14, 2020)
- Increased supports for Alberta caregivers (April 14, 2020)
- <u>Alberta Hope COVID-19 study tests early treatment option</u> (April 13, 2020)
- Boosting charitble donations during COVID-19 (April 12, 2020)
- <u>Supplies headed to provinces in need | Fournitures destinées aux provinces dans le besoin(April 11, 2020)</u>

<u>Jobs</u>

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