



In order to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, **everyone has a role to play**. It takes more than governments and action from the health sector to protect the health and safety of Canadians. Each of us can help our country be prepared in the event of an emergency by understanding how coronavirus spreads and how to prevent illness. Here are some FAQs that we have put together to help answer questions at this time.

### Alberta declared a state of emergency under the Public Health Act – March 18, 2020

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
How many cases in Alberta?	As of March 27, there have been 542 confirmed cases reported in Alberta. 2 deaths, 33 recovered(AHS Ref.)
What is the current Risk Level in Alberta?	As of March 18, COVID-19 in Alberta New Public Health Measures are now recommended to limit the time Albertans spend in large crowds. ALL EVENTS over 50 people to be cancelled. NO attendance at rec centres, casinos, bingo halls, bars, theatres and other facilities. Sit down restaurants can remain open at lower capacity. (See Local Updates)
CONFIRMED CASES – GEOGRAPHIC	March 24 2020 Statistics Athabasca -0 Barrhead – 2 Boyle - 0 Edson - 0 Grande Prairie - 1 Grimshaw - 0 High Prairie –5 Hinton - 1 Jasper - 2 Peace River - 4 Slave Lake - 3 Swan Hills – 0 Wabasca - 0 Westlock – 1 Whitecourt - 0 Wood Buffalo – 0
What source of information should be followed? Here you will find	Alberta Health Services (AHS) <a href="https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/">https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/</a> or Center for Disease Control (CDC) <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/">https://www.cdc.gov/</a> <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html</a>
How long do we plan to cancel or postpone in-person events? (As of March 16, 2020)	CDC recommends that for the next 8 weeks organizers cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of <b>10</b> people or more. This could change as the situation evolves.
Who is most at risk?	Older people and people of all ages with severe underlying health conditions — like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, for example — seem to be at higher risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness.

	Pregnant women should engage in usual preventive actions to avoid infection like washing hands often and avoiding people who are sick.
Is there a vaccine?	At this time, there is no vaccine for COVID-19 or any natural health products that are authorized to treat or protect against COVID-19.
How is COVID-19 spread from person-to-person?	COVID-19 is believed to be spread mainly by coughing, sneezing or direct contact with a sick person or with surfaces they have recently touched
How long does the COVID-19 live on surfaces?	Studies suggest that coronaviruses (including preliminary information on the COVID-19 virus) may persist on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days.
I received the Flu vaccine, am I protected?	While coronaviruses are a respiratory illness, these infections are not the same as those that cause the flu. If you have received a flu vaccine, it will <b>not</b> protect against coronaviruses.
What can I do to prevent the COVID-19 Virus?	Everyone must be diligent at all times in following safety precautions including washing hands, following the use of universal precautions and limited social contact.
What can I do if I have COVID-19?	If you have COVID-19, reduce contact with others If you are sick, the following steps will help to reduce contact with others: 1. Stay at home and <a href="#">self-isolate</a> (unless directed to seek medical care) 2. If you must leave your home, <a href="#">wear a mask</a> or cover your mouth and nose with tissues, and maintain a 2-metre distance from others 3. Avoid having visitors to your home 4. Cover your mouth and nose with your arm when coughing and sneezing 5. Have supplies delivered to your home instead of running errands (Supplies should be dropped off outside to ensure a 2-metre distance)
People with fever and/or a cough or shortness of breath are at highest risk of having COVID-19 if they meet any of the following criteria:	See COVID-19 Screening Criteria on Staff Portal Issued by the AHS Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) (Self Assessment)
<b>MEDICAL QUESTIONS</b>	
What do we do if 811 is not available?	Be patient, continue to try and call. Seek medical attention if symptoms worsen.
What is considered a fever?	<b>Fever:</b> Although a <b>fever</b> technically is any body temperature above the normal of 98.6 F (37 C), in practice a person is usually not <b>considered</b> to have a significant <b>fever</b> until the temperature is above 100.4 F (38 C). ... The temperature is measured with a thermometer. (Follow directions)
What do I do if I have a fever?	See COVID-19 Screening Criteria on Staff Portal Issued by the AHS Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) (Self Assessment)
What do I do if I have a cough?	See COVID-19 Screening Criteria on Staff Portal

	Issued by the AHS Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) (Self Assessment)
What if I have symptoms like a cough, but are due to seasonal allergies, medication side effects and or chronic health conditions?	Everyone still needs to practice safety protocols to ensure they are coughing into their sleeve or Kleenex, washing hands etc.
What do I do if I am short of breath?	See COVID-19 Screening Criteria on Staff Portal Issued by the AHS Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) (Self Assessment)
How does one care for someone with COVID-19	Both the patient and care-giver should wear a medical mask, gloves, safety glasses when they are together in the same room. The patient should sleep in a separate bedroom to others and use a different bathroom. Assign one person to care for the patient, ideally someone who is in good health and has no underlying conditions. The care-giver should wash their hands after any contact with the patient or their immediate environment. People infected with COVID-19 can still infect others after they stop feeling sick so these measures should continue for at least two weeks after symptoms disappear. Visitors should not be allowed until the end of this period.
<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
How can I reduce the risk of infection?	Washing your hands will help reduce your risk of infection. But it's also an act of solidarity because it reduces the risk you will infect others in your community and around the world. Do it for yourself, do it for others.
<b>TRAVEL QUESTIONS</b>	
Who is requiring people travelling out of country to self isolate for two weeks?	<b>Alberta Health Services</b> is now requiring anyone that is returning from out of country to self isolate for at least two weeks and we are recommending the same for this period that you will be off work following your trip. Staff will not be able to return to work for at least 14 days following any out of country travel and provided they have not developed any symptoms.
What if I have family out of Country and they come home, should I isolate?	You should try to arrange to minimize or eliminate contact with that person for 14 days following their return e.g. no direct social contact, stay 2 meters away, use separate washrooms, regular hand washing, sanitize surfaces in your home etc. AHS website can also provide additional information for situations such as this.
Can I travel within Canada?	Yes, at this time travel within Canada is acceptable, practice the precautions. Alberta Health Services is not yet recommending restrictions on travel within country however the situation is changing rapidly so please continue to check their website.
Should I change or cancel my travel plans outside of Canada? (AHS)	Travel outside Canada is not recommended at this time. (AHS)

What should I do if I have recently returned from travelling outside of Canada? (AHS)	Effective March 12, all Albertans currently outside of the country, or who have recently returned, are recommended to self -isolate on their return for 14 days, independent of the country they were visiting.
<b>RECREATION AND EVENTS</b>	
Is the Barrhead Library open?	Closed to the public until further notice to help limit the spread of COVID-19. Check out <a href="http://barrheadpubliclibrary.ca">barrheadpubliclibrary.ca</a> for more information.
Is the New To You open?	Due to implementing <i>COVID-19</i> preventive measures <b>NEW TO YOU</b> store will be closed until further notice. Our first priority beyond supporting <b>BLUE HERON</b> is the health and well-being of all our volunteers and staff. We would appreciate an absolute ' <b>no donations</b> ' of any kind during this closure.
Is the office open?	Office is closed as of Friday March 20, 2020 Please call 780.307.2842 for General Inquiries
<b>MEDICAL EI</b>	
Has the government waived the waiting period for Employment Insurance?	At this time, it is our understanding that for people quarantined due to COVID-19, the government is eliminating the waiting period entirely, so you can get EI benefits for an entire 14-day quarantine. We also understand that there is a difference between self isolating and quarantine. Please contact the EI office or website for current and accurate information.
Link to EI information specific to COVID-19	<a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html</a>
I am in quarantine and seeking to waive the one-week <a href="#">EI sickness benefits</a> waiting period so I can be paid for the first week of my claim, who can I call?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone: 1-833-381-2725 (toll-free)</li> <li>• Teletypewriter (TTY): 1-800-529-3742</li> </ul> <a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html">https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html</a>
I am self-isolating due to symptoms, I don't have any sick time, can I use vacation?	You have the option to use vacation pay you have accrued (Check with HR) OR you can access the EI program
<b>PREVENTION</b>	
I am worried about catching COVID-19. Should I wear a medical mask? (AHS)	Masks can be very important in certain situations. When sick, wearing a mask helps prevent us from passing illnesses on to other people. This is why we ask people who have a cough or respiratory symptoms to wear a mask and wash their hands when visiting an emergency department or clinic. - If you are sick, wearing a mask helps prevent passing the illness on to other people. - <b>If you are healthy, medical masks are not recommended as they don't provide full protection and can create a false sense of security.</b>

<p>What can I be doing in my home(s) to prevent the COVID-19 virus?</p>	<p>You can do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Washing hands (soap and water for 20 sec). when entering and before leaving the home.</li> <li>• Hard surfaces are wiped down twice per day, with a sanitizing wipe or bleach solution (1.5 tbsp bleach in 1 litre of water)</li> <li>• Door handles, remote controls, phones (cell and home), light switches, computer, mouse, taps, toilet flush handle, soap dispensers, counter tops, railings, chairs (backs, arms), fridge handle, cupboard door handles, stove handle knobs/buttons, sinks, microwave fronts, assistive equipment, keys, steering wheel, car buttons and knobs of shared vehicles, any other surfaces you think of that we have missed or specific to your home</li> <li>• First Aid, 72-hour Kit on hand</li> <li>• Hand washing as per guidelines</li> </ul>
<p>Would an N95 mask be best to use?</p>	<p>N95 masks (respirator masks) require special fitting and testing in order to be effective. We (AHS) strongly recommend against members of the public using N95 masks, as they can make it more difficult to breathe for some individuals, especially those with chronic breathing problems. They provide little, if any, benefit beyond that provided by a procedure mask.</p>
<p>How to put on, use, take off and dispose of a mask?</p>	<p><b>Remember, a mask should only be used by health workers, care takers, and individuals with respiratory symptoms, such as fever and cough.</b></p> <p>Before touching the mask, clean hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water</p> <p>Take the mask and inspect it for tears or holes.</p> <p>Orient which side is the top side (where the metal strip is).</p> <p>Ensure the proper side of the mask faces outwards (the coloured side).</p> <p>Place the mask to your face. Pinch the metal strip or stiff edge of the mask so it moulds to the shape of your nose.</p> <p>Pull down the mask's bottom so it covers your mouth and your chin.</p> <p>After use, take off the mask; remove the elastic loops from behind the ears while keeping the mask away</p>

	<p>from your face and clothes, to avoid touching potentially contaminated surfaces of the mask.</p> <p>Discard the mask in a closed bin immediately after use.</p> <p>Perform hand hygiene after touching or discarding the mask – Use alcohol-based hand rub or, if visibly soiled, wash your hands with soap and water.</p>
What does Self-isolation mean?	<b>Isolation</b> separates sick people with a contagious disease(COVID-19) from people who are not sick.
What does Quarantine mean?	<b>Quarantine</b> separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease(COVID-19) to see if they become sick.
<b>PERSONAL CARE AND SUPPORT</b>	
The <b>Mental Health Help Line</b> is available 24/7 to provide advice and referrals to community supports near you.	Call: <a href="tel:1-877-303-2642">1-877-303-2642</a>
Alberta Health Services are offering a new text service to help with mental health at this stressful time	<p><b>Text4Hope</b></p> <p><a href="#">Free service</a> supporting mental health and wellness in a time of stress and isolation.</p> <p>Text <b>COVID19HOPE</b> to <b>393939</b> to subscribe.</p>
What are some thing I can do to support myself?	<p>Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.</p> <p>Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.</p> <p>Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.</p> <p>Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling</p>
<b>MISC</b>	
Can I eat food from a restaurant or drive thru	Yes, the virus is not a food born illness. To be as safe as possible. Wash your hands before eating.

<p>How do I prevent the spread of germs when caring for someone who is sick?</p>	<p>Have the person stay in one room, away from other people, including yourself, as much as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If possible, have them use a separate bathroom.</li> <li>○ Avoid sharing personal household items, like dishes, towels, and bedding</li> <li>○ If facemasks are available, have them wear a facemask when they are around people, including you.</li> <li>○ If the sick person can't wear a facemask, you should wear one while in the same room with them, if facemasks are available.</li> <li>○ If the sick person needs to be around others (within the home, in a vehicle, or doctor's office), they should wear a facemask.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after interacting with the sick person. If soap and water are not readily available, <b>use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.</b> Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.</li> <li>● Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.</li> <li>● Every day, clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Wash laundry thoroughly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If laundry is soiled, wear disposable gloves and keep the soiled items away from your body while laundering. Wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Avoid having any unnecessary visitors.</li> </ul>
<p>What treatment can I provide someone with symptoms?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make sure the sick person drinks a lot of fluids to stay hydrated and rests at home.</li> <li>● Over-the-counter medicines may help with symptoms.</li> <li>● For <i>most people</i>, symptoms last a few days and get better after a week.</li> </ul>

When to end home isolation (staying home)?

- People **with COVID-19 who have stayed home (are home isolated)** can stop home isolation under the following conditions:
  - ***If they will not have a test*** to determine if they are still contagious, they can leave home after these three things have happened:
    - They have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers)  
AND
    - other symptoms have improved (for example, when their cough or shortness of breath have improved)  
AND
    - at least 7 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared
  - ***If they will be tested*** to determine if they are still contagious, they can leave home after these three things have happened:
    - They no longer have a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers)  
AND
    - other symptoms have improved (for example, when their cough or shortness of breath have improved)  
AND
    - They received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart. Their doctor will follow [CDC guidelines](#).