

COVID-19 UPDATE – March 30, 2020

In an effort to keep our community partners connected, we are providing you with regular COVID-19 updates.

Key Updates for March 30, 2020

- For a full list of updates from VCH visit vch.ca
- BC prepares to provide care for more patients affected by COVID-19
- Minister Dix announces suspension of parking fees for health-care workers
- Prime Minister announces wage subsidy to encourage employers to keep employees on payroll

BC prepares to provide care for more patients affected by COVID-19

The preparation continues in B.C. for a possible increase in the number of COVID-19 patients. At today's briefing, Minister of Health Adrian Dix announced that there are now 4,233 vacant acute care beds throughout the province, with a current occupancy rate of about 61 per cent. Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and Fraser Health authorities are preparing off-site treatment centres with extra beds for patients who are recovering from less serious illnesses or injuries; in VCH, that site will be the Vancouver Convention Centre, which will house 271 beds if they are needed.

Suspension of parking fees for health-care workers and visitors

Minister Dix also announced a suspension of parking fees for health-care workers, and in coordination with that, VCH announced today that health-care workers, staff, visitors and the public will no longer have to pay for parking at our owned and operated sites. Pay parking will be suspended until further notice, effective April 1, 2020. This change makes it easier for individuals to avoid touching screens and buttons at payment kiosks that may have been touched by someone previously and also supports physical distancing measures that have been mandated by Dr. Bonnie Henry.

In addition, VCH has worked with our civic partners in Vancouver, Richmond and the City of North Vancouver to provide unrestricted street parking in neighbourhoods near VCH hospitals.

Parking tickets will be waived if staff or physicians get ticketed during a work shift while parking close to Vancouver General Hospital, Richmond Hospital and Lions Gate Hospital.

Wage subsidy for employers

Earlier today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the details of a wage subsidy to encourage employers to keep people on the payroll. For businesses that have seen a reduction in revenue of at least 30 per cent, the federal government will cover up to 75 per cent of employee salaries on the first \$58,700 earned.

Key Messages to Share

- Wash your hands frequently and stay home if possible
- Practice social distancing if you have to go out
- If you think you have COVID-19 take the self-assessment here: covid19.thrive.health
- Self-isolate at home for 10 days if you have COVID-19 symptoms