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From: CLRInfo
Sent: January 14, 2022 10:57 AM
To: Ken McCormack
Cc: Maria Sushkova
Subject: CLR INFO - Jan 14

Importance: High



[CLR Members,](#)

Please find the important updates and reminders on the current situation in the province.

Provincial Update

[COVID-19 pandemic update](#)

As of Thursday, Jan. 13, 88.9% (4,433,294) of eligible people five and older in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 83.3% (4,150,713) have received their second dose.

Also, 92.6% (4,006,935) of all eligible adults in B.C. have received their first dose, 90.0% (3,893,147) received their second dose and 31.2% (1,351,017) have received a third dose.

B.C. is reporting 2,554 new cases of COVID-19, for a total of 291,246 cases in the province.

There are 36,049 active cases of COVID-19 in the province and 249,458 people who tested positive have recovered. Of the active cases, 534 individuals are in hospital and 102 are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation.

[Provincial state of emergency extended](#)

With some highways still damaged by flooding and mudslides, and the potential for further flooding this week, the Province is extending the provincial state of emergency.

Given the continued need for public safety measures under the Emergency Program Act and ongoing work to repair damaged highways, the provincial state of emergency is being extended until the end of day, Jan. 18, 2022.

Learn More:

For information on evacuation orders and alerts, visit Emergency Info BC:

<https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/>

For updated road conditions: www.drivebc.ca

For up-to-date public weather alerts, visit Environment and Climate Change Canada's website: https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/index_e.html?prov=bc

[Boosters available for pregnant people](#)

Starting Jan 13, people who are pregnant can book a COVID-19 booster vaccine if it has been at least eight weeks since they received their second vaccine dose.



While it is recommended people get their booster six months after their second dose to ensure longer-lasting protection, it is important for pregnant people to receive their booster during pregnancy to ensure optimal protection for them and their baby.

[Applications open for COVID-19 Closure Relief Grants](#)

Businesses can now apply for the COVID-19 Closure Relief Grant, a new program the Province has fast-tracked to support B.C. businesses ordered to temporarily close their doors due to recent public-health measures.

The total grant amount per business (between \$1,000 and \$10,000) will be based on the number of employees and follows a formula similar to the previous Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant that supported businesses in the spring of 2021.

To apply for a grant, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/business-relief

Federal Update

[Canada extending repayment of COVID-19 business aid loans to 2023](#)

The federal government is extending the deadline for small businesses to pay back their Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA) loans to the end of 2023.

The government introduced CEBA in April 2020 as an interest-free loan program, offering initially up to \$40,000 to small businesses and non-profits who have experienced a loss of revenue due to COVID-19. An expansion was then offered, seeing businesses able to apply to receive up to \$60,000 loans. Now, eligible businesses “in good standing,” will have until Dec. 31, 2023, to repay and be eligible for up to \$20,000 of debt forgiveness.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development Mary Ng made the announcement on Wednesday, Jan 12, noting that given new restrictions many businesses are facing due to the current Omicron surge, they may need more time to pay back their loans. To learn more about the program, visit: <https://ceba-cuec.ca/>

[Centre for Research on Pandemic Preparedness and Health Emergencies](#)

The Government of Canada has created the Centre for Research on Pandemic Preparedness, within the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), to protect the health of all Canadians by developing and mobilizing health research for pandemic and health emergency preparedness, prevention, response and recovery. The Research Centre will work with the Public Health Agency of Canada and other key Canadian and international stakeholders to identify priorities, coordinate activities, and make targeted research investments.

Starting in 2021-22, CIHR received new, ongoing funding of \$18.5M per year to support the research activities and operations of the Research Centre.

In its first year of operation, the Research Centre has supported several COVID-19 research activities under its mandate.

[Learn more](#)

Other COVID Related Updates

[Pfizer CEO announces Omicron vaccine to be ready in March](#)

The CEO of Pfizer, Albert Bourla, said on Monday a redesigned COVID-19 vaccine that specifically targets the Omicron coronavirus variant is likely needed and his company could have one ready to launch by March.



Bourla said Pfizer and partner BioNTech SE are working on both an Omicron-targeted vaccine version as well as a shot that would include both the previous vaccine as well as one targeted at the fast-spreading variant.

[Approval of Pfizer COVID-19 pills coming in 7-10 days: Health Canada](#)

Health Canada should be ready to make an authorization decision about Pfizer's Paxlovid antiviral treatment for COVID-19 in a week to 10 days, chief medical adviser Dr. Supriya Sharma said Thursday.

But it's still unclear when shipments will start or how much Canada will get at first as supply issues for the U.S.-made drug have made it incredibly hard to get even in the U.S., where it was authorized before Christmas.

Canadian health leaders and some premiers have been publicly pressuring Health Canada to greenlight the medication, which prevents the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 from reproducing within a patient's body. Pfizer's clinical trial showed for high-risk patients it prevented hospitalizations by about 90%.

Work Safety

[Province seeks input on proposed asbestos licensing rules](#)

British Columbians are invited to provide feedback on proposed health and safety requirements for contractors, employers and workers who undertake asbestos abatement work.

Asbestos-related diseases are the leading cause of workplace deaths in B.C. and workers and others continue to be exposed to this extremely hazardous substance. To improve workplace health and safety, the provincial government is proposing new standards under the Workers Compensation Act that would require:

- asbestos abatement contractors to be licensed by WorkSafeBC to operate in B.C.; and
- employers, workers and contractors who perform asbestos abatement work be certified through a mandatory safety training process that would be authorized by WorkSafeBC.

Government would like to hear from a broad range of British Columbians, including workers, employers, contractors, building and homeowners, and the general public. The consultation will be open from Tuesday, Jan. 11, to Friday, Feb. 11, 2022. To participate, visit: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/consultation/asbestos-abatement-licensing-and-training>

Mental Health & Substance Use

[More drug-poisoning prevention services for construction workers](#)

People working in the construction industry will benefit from life-saving harm-reduction training in the workplace, substance-use support groups and information on local community resources thanks to new provincial funding.

The project will reduce the stigma associated with substance use and raise awareness of pain management, pathways to treatment and other information about mental health and substance use. The Province is investing \$1 million through the Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division (CMHA) and the Community Action Initiative (CAI) to support the expansion.

Enhancing B.C.'s response to the drug-poisoning crisis is an integral part of A Pathway to Hope, B.C.'s roadmap for building the comprehensive system of mental-health and addictions care for British Columbians.

[Learn More:](#)

For more information on the Tailgate Toolkit, visit: <https://thetailgatetoolkit.ca/>

A Pathway to Hope: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/initiatives-plans-strategies/mental-health-and-addictions-strategy/bcmentalhealthroadmap_2019web-5.pdf

Stop Overdose BC: <https://www.stopoverdose.gov.bc.ca/>



Stay safe,

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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