

## Joleen Kaminski

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**From:** CLRInfo  
**Sent:** October 15, 2021 10:48 AM  
**To:** Maria Sushkova  
**Subject:** CLR Info - Weekly Update - Oct 15

**Importance:** High

### [CLR Members](#),

Please find the latest updates on the current situation in the province.

## COVID-19 and Vaccination Updates

### [U.S. to reopen Canada, Mexico land border to vaccinated travellers in early November](#)

The United States will reopen its land borders and ferry ports of entry with Canada and Mexico to fully vaccinated travellers next month, after being closed for nearly two years in the effort to help curb the spread of COVID-19. Meanwhile, vaccinated travellers from other countries will be allowed entry into the U.S. in early January 2022.

White House officials have yet to provide a set date on when they will reopen their land borders. The current deadline for the U.S. to reopen its borders with Canada and Mexico is Oct. 21, but officials have said the closure will be extended to the early November reopening date.

Unlike the rules when it comes to flying from Canada to the U.S., those travelling via land will not have to present a recent negative COVID-19 test as long as they can prove they have received two doses of an authorized vaccine that has been authorized for use by either the World Health Organization or U.S. regulators.

Under the new rules, White House officials said non-essential travellers will be asked about their vaccination status at crossings, and only those who are fully vaccinated will be allowed through. Anyone looking to cross U.S. borders can also be randomly selected for screening at any time, where they will be required to show proof of vaccination.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has previously said it will accept international travellers who have been immunized with vaccines authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or the World Health Organization. This includes vaccines developed by AstraZeneca, COVishield, Sinovac and Sinopharm, which have been approved by the WHO, as well as the Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson shots authorized for emergency use by the FDA.

White House officials said Tuesday that the U.S. was still determining whether to allow travellers who received two different vaccine doses into the country, such as two doses of different mRNA vaccines like Moderna and Pfizer, or one dose of an mRNA vaccine and one dose of AstraZeneca. Reluctance to accept mixed vaccination statuses could pose problems for the just over 10% of Canadians – 3,911,303 — the federal government said are fully vaccinated with a combination of doses.

Partially vaccinated travellers who are non-essential will not be allowed to cross American land borders, U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in a statement on Tuesday.

### [New App Provides Remote Access to COVID-19 Resources for Workplaces](#)

Oct 14, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) launched a new mobile app to help make workplace health and safety resources on COVID-19 accessible to workers in Canada.

The [CCOHS Safe Work app](#) hosts the Centre's collection of over 120 COVID-19 resources, including industry and sector-specific tip sheets, infographics, videos, and other guidance materials created to help workplaces keep their workers and customers safe.

The CCOHS Safe Work app can be downloaded for free via the [CCOHS website](#).

Topics covered in the app include how the coronavirus spreads, responding to COVID-19 in the workplace, health and safety planning for employers, hazard and risk assessment identification, rapid testing, screening tools, vaccines, worker rights and responsibilities, returning to the workplace, working remotely, and the importance of disconnecting from work.

### [Alberta Government will introduce legislation to protect businesses that require vaccinations for employees or implement the Restriction Exemption Program from legal challenges](#)

Alberta's government will soon offer a one-time payment of \$2,000 to Alberta small- and medium-sized businesses that are eligible for and choose to implement the [Restrictions Exemption Program](#), requiring proof of vaccination, a negative test result or medical exemption. Alberta businesses eligible for the REP Implementation Grant can use the funding as they see fit.

Alberta is the first jurisdiction in Canada to offer businesses a payment to offset costs associated with a proof of vaccination program.

An additional \$1 million will also be available for training to support the safety of workers when implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program.

Eligible industry associations across Alberta can use the REP Training Grant to develop or procure training to help workers assess and manage challenging situations that may arise during their daily work. Workers and employers will be able to access this training through select industry associations.

Alberta Government will introduce legislation to protect businesses that require vaccinations for employees or implement the Restriction Exemption Program from legal challenges.

The government will also be doubling fines for contravening public health orders, including the mistreatment of workers doing the difficult work ensuring public health orders are being followed, from \$2,000 to \$4,000.

## Provincial Updates

### [Additional health measures introduced to stop COVID spread and protect health services for most of Northern Health region](#)

Effective at midnight Thursday October 14, 2021 the entire Northern Health region, (**with the exception of Local Health areas west of Kitiwanga: Terrace, Kitimat, Haida Gwaii, Prince Rupert, Stikine, Telegraph Creek, Snow Country and Nisga'a**) are under the following additional orders:

New NH orders:

- Personal gatherings, both indoor and outdoor, are restricted to fully vaccinated people, including at private residences and vacation accommodation
  - Indoor gathering: up to 5 people are permitted
  - Outdoor gathering: up to 25 people are permitted
- All indoor and outdoor organized events require a safety plan and for attendees to wear a mask and present their BC Vaccine Card showing they are fully vaccinated
  - Indoor event: up to 50 people are permitted
  - Outdoor event: up to 100 people are permitted
- Worship services: virtual services are required
- Restaurants:

- Fast-food restaurants and unlicensed cafés without table service can provide take-out only or require patrons to present the BC Vaccine card showing they are fully vaccinated.
- Licensed establishments and those with table service must not serve alcohol between 10pm-9am and must require patrons to present the BC Vaccine Card showing they are fully vaccinated.
- Bars and nightclubs (no meal service) will be closed
- Sport events spectators (indoor and outdoor) are limited to 50% capacity, must have a safety plan, and require attendees to wear masks and present their BC Vaccine Card showing they are fully vaccinated

These measures will remain in place until November 19 midnight and may be subject to extension if cases remain high and vaccination rates remain low.

If you have questions or wish to submit concerns: [php@northernhealth.ca](mailto:php@northernhealth.ca)

### B.C. COVID-19 pandemic update

As of Thursday, Oct. 14, 2021, 89.0% (4,123,354) of eligible people 12 and older in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 82.9% (3,842,247) have received their second dose.

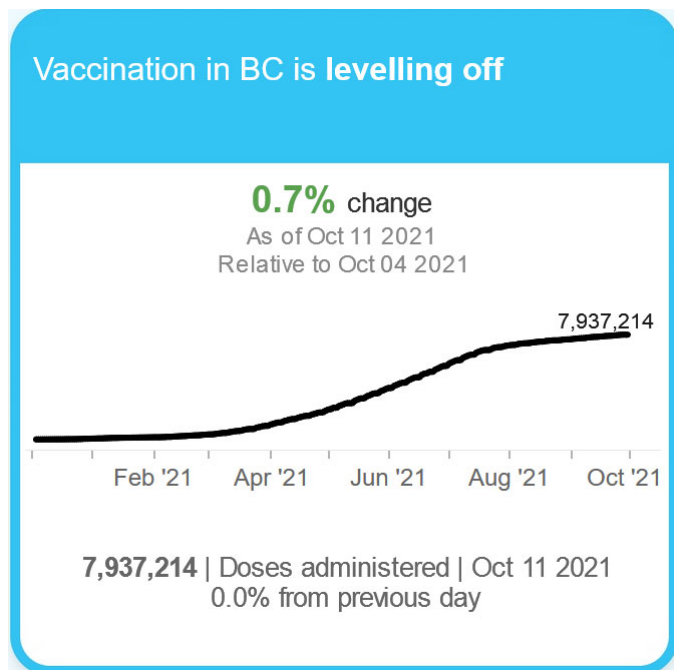
In addition, 89.4% (3,867,728) of all eligible adults in B.C. have received their first dose and 83.6% (3,615,342) have received their second dose.

B.C. is reporting 580 new cases of COVID-19, including 11 epi-linked cases, for a total of 195,766 cases in the province.

There are 5,348 active cases of COVID-19 in the province, and 187,985 people who tested positive have recovered. Of the active cases, 378 individuals are in hospital and 153 are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation.

Since December 2020, the Province has administered 8,008,858 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines.

### Immunization dashboard



## **Business & Economy**

### Canada adds 157K jobs in September, employment returns to pre-pandemic level

Statistics Canada says the labour market added 157,000 jobs in September, bringing employment back to February 2020 levels for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The unemployment rate fell to 6.9%, down from 7.1% in August.

The statistics agency says the job gains were widespread, but concentrated in full-time work and evenly split between the public and private sector. Gains were also notable in industries where many workers continue to work remotely.

**A quick look at Canada's September employment** (numbers from the previous month in brackets):

**Unemployment rate:** 6.9% (7.1)

**Employment rate:** 60.9% (60.5)

**Participation rate:** 65.5% (65.1)

**Number unemployed:** 1,421,800 (1,440,000)

**Number working:** 19,131,200 (18,974,100)

**Youth (15-24 years) unemployment rate:** 11.3% (11.6)

### **Minister's statement on September Labour Force Survey results**

Ravi Kahlon, B.C. Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation, has issued the following statement on the release of Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey for September 2021:

"The Labour Force Survey results for September show B.C. is leading Canada's economic recovery, with 12,300 jobs added last month. B.C. continues to lead all provinces since the onset of the pandemic with a job recovery rate of 101.5%. Our unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the country at 5.9%.

"Our job recovery rate has been strong across the province, led by Prince George at 107.1%. Other notable job recovery rates are in the Thompson-Okanagan at 106.8%, the Cariboo at 104.6%, Vancouver Island at 104.1%, the Kootenays at 102.3%, Lower Mainland at 102%, Vancouver at 101.3% and North Coast-Nechako at 100.7%.

"Women led B.C.'s increase in employment for the month of September. The job recovery rate for women stands at 101.7%.

"Data from the Labour Force Survey shows Indigenous peoples job recovery rate rose in September to 107.8% and is at the highest point since the pandemic began.

"In the past year, we have also seen more than 34,000 people move to B.C. from other provinces, which was the largest inter-provincial migration to B.C. in 28 years.

#### **Learn More:**

Stronger BC For Everyone: B.C.'s Economic Recovery Plan: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/>

### **Communities to benefit from improved services, environmental infrastructure**

The Province is accepting applications from local governments and First Nations for the third intake of the Environmental Quality stream, available through the federal-provincial Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. Funding supports communities to build the infrastructure they need for water, wastewater, and solid waste as well as soil and air pollution remediation services.

The Province will contribute as much as \$122.2 million toward the third intake of the Environmental Quality stream and the Government of Canada will contribute as much as \$147.8 million.

In 2018, the federal and provincial governments committed \$238 million to the first intake of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure program's Environmental Quality stream. In 2019, \$161 million was committed to the second intake. To date, 28 projects have been announced under the Environmental Quality stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

Federal and provincial funding covers up to 73% of eligible project costs and up to 90% for off-reserve Indigenous projects. The remaining funding is the responsibility of the community.

In total, the Province is investing \$3.6 billion over 10 years under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program for B.C.'s infrastructure initiatives.

Through the Investing in Canada plan, the federal government is investing more than \$180 billion over 12 years in public transit projects, green infrastructure, social infrastructure, trade and transportation routes, and Canada's rural and northern communities.

**Learn More:**

Government of British Columbia's infrastructure programs: [www.gov.bc.ca/Investing-in-Canada-Infrastructure-Program](http://www.gov.bc.ca/Investing-in-Canada-Infrastructure-Program)

Federal infrastructure investments in British Columbia: <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/prog-proj-bc-eng.html>

Investing in Canada plan project map: <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/map>

Investing in Canada plan funding stream - green infrastructure: <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/gi-iv-eng.html>

**Province expands training opportunities for young British Columbians**

As many as 2,000 young British Columbians will have a chance to improve their tech skills and knowledge through the expansion of the Canadian Tech Accelerator program aimed at bringing more people into the province's booming tech sector.

The initiative, part of the StrongerBC Future Leaders Program, will further up-skill people between 17 and 30, better preparing them for future job opportunities in tech-enabled fields.

The initiative, which will give priority to Indigenous, Black, people of colour (IBPOC), women, 2SLGBTQ+ people, immigrants and people living with disabilities, provides under-represented people access to first-rate training through NPower Canada's junior IT analyst program and the new junior data analyst program.

The program is being delivered in partnership with the Province, the Digital Technology Supercluster, Microsoft Canada, NPower Canada and Blueprint. Collectively, these organizations will invest approximately \$15.5 million to expand the Canadian Tech Talent Accelerator program in British Columbia.

**Learn More:**

To learn more about Canada's Tech Talent Accelerator, visit: <https://www.digitalsupercluster.ca/canadian-tech-talent-accelerator/>

To learn more about the Digital Technology Supercluster, visit: <https://www.digitalsupercluster.ca/>

To learn more about the StrongerBC Future Leaders program, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/economic-recovery/youth>

**Jobs, skills training offered to male survivors of abuse**

As many as 12 eligible British Columbians will get skills training and work experience to prepare them for jobs as general construction workers and labourers.

This is a new Community and Employer Partnerships (CEP) project from the Government of British Columbia and is intended for male survivors of violence and/or abuse.

The Province is providing almost \$170,000 to Kinghaven Peardonville House Society in Abbotsford to deliver skills and certification courses in its general construction program, The Purpose Project.

Project participants will receive nine weeks of occupational and employability skills training, four weeks of on-the-job work experience and one week of follow-up support to assist in their job search.

Participants will also receive certification courses in Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS 2015-GHS) and WHMIS GHS Implementation, fall protection, skid steer and telehandler operation, counterbalance forklift safety, Occupational First Aid Level 1 and introduction to construction warehousing.

In addition, each participant will receive up to 10 weekly sessions of one-on-one trauma counselling support.

Funding for this project is provided through the Project Based Labour Market Training stream of WorkBC's CEP. CEP invests \$15 million annually in communities throughout B.C.

#### **Learn More:**

[www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Community-and-Employer-Partnerships.aspx](http://www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Community-and-Employer-Partnerships.aspx)

## **Labour**

### **New rules protecting young workers in effect Oct. 15**

Employers are reminded that changes to employment standards become in force today, Oct. 15, 2021.

The changes raise the general working age in British Columbia from 12 to 16 and define the types of jobs that are appropriate for those under 16.

Youth aged 14 and 15 are able to do "appropriate" jobs defined as "light work" with permission from a parent or guardian. In some cases, children aged 14 and 15 may be permitted to do work outside the definition of light work with a permit from the Ministry of Labour's Employment Standards Branch.

The new rules do not prevent children from babysitting or delivering newspapers part time, or students from working in a work-study or work experience class, which are among the jobs excluded from the new rules.

Children aged 12 and older can continue to be employed in a business or on a farm owned by an immediate family member, as long as the work meets the safety criteria set out in the regulation.

Occupations or situations that are now generally considered as unsafe for youth under 16 include:

- repairing, maintaining or operating heavy machinery
- places where a minor is not permitted to enter
- sites of construction, heavy manufacturing, heavy industrial work
- sites designed to retain an oxygen-deficient or toxic atmosphere
- walk-in freezers or coolers, other than to place or retrieve an item
- handling substances that minors cannot legally purchase, use or distribute
- lifting, carrying or moving heavy items or animals
- using, handling or applying hazardous substances like pesticides

## **Innovation**

### **Province investing in proposed world-leading clean fuels plant in Merritt**

The Province is contributing \$2 million from the Innovative Clean Energy (ICE) Fund to support the engineering and design of a first-of-its-kind plant in Merritt to capture carbon dioxide and convert it to clean fuels, creating new jobs and economic opportunities in B.C.'s cleantech sector.

Squamish-based Huron Clean Energy proposes to finance, design, build and operate a first-of-a-kind commercial plant, which will capture carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and convert it into low-carbon synthetic fuels that can be used to replace standard diesel, marine and aviation fuels, through a process called Air-2-Fuels. The project will use BC Hydro's clean and renewable hydroelectricity, and integrate green hydrogen production. This aligns with the B.C. Hydrogen Strategy, a blueprint for how renewable and low-carbon hydrogen will support B.C.'s climate goals and create new jobs in B.C.'s growing clean-tech sector.

Huron Clean Energy's Merritt Electro Fuels Project will help meet the CleanBC goal of developing 650 million litres of new renewable fuel production capacity in B.C. An estimated 620 direct jobs will be created during the design and development phases of the project, with another 4,780 direct jobs during construction and 340 long-term jobs during the plant's operation.

The Merritt Electro Fuels Project is expected to prove the technical and business case for direct air capture and fuel synthesis, which could lead to the development of other commercial plants across Canada and other jurisdictions.

**Learn More:**

For more information on CleanBC, visit: <http://cleanbc.gov.bc.ca>

## **Mental Health & Substance Use**

### **Funding strengthens B.C.'s system of substance-use treatment, recovery care**

A new investment in B.C.'s system of substance-use care will build up treatment and recovery services for people who need them in communities throughout the province.

This \$132-million investment over the next three years for treatment and recovery services is part of Budget 2021's half-billion-dollar investment to continue building a comprehensive system of mental health and addictions care from the ground up. This funding will increase services across all regions of the province to strengthen the full continuum of substance-use treatment and recovery services, including withdrawal management, transition and assessment, treatment and aftercare services.

Enhancing B.C.'s response to the overdose emergency is an important part of A Pathway to Hope, B.C.'s roadmap for building the comprehensive system of mental health and addictions care.

**Learn More:**

A Pathway to Hope: [https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/BCMentalHealthRoadmap\\_2019.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/BCMentalHealthRoadmap_2019.pdf)

A Pathway to Hope progress report:

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/government/ministries-organizations/ministries/mental-health-addictions/pathway\\_to\\_hope\\_update\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/government/ministries-organizations/ministries/mental-health-addictions/pathway_to_hope_update_report_final.pdf)





Stay safe.

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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