

## Joleen Kaminski

---

**Subject:** FW: COVID-19 Update - June 18

**Importance:** High

### [CLR Members,](#)

Please find the latest updates on the COVID-19 situation.

### [Expedited vaccination for construction industry essential workers](#)

Through our partnerships under the Council of Construction Associations (COCA), the CLR is pleased to announce that the government has expedited vaccines for construction industry essential workers.

In partnership with the BC Public Health Office, the BCCA and its [partners](#) have made available construction fast lanes at select vaccination centers around the province on specified dates between 1:30 - 4:30 pm through June and July.

No registration or appointment is needed, the workers can just show up at one of the locations listed below on any of the dates specified. Government ID and Personal Health Number is not essential but recommended to get through even faster.

**NOTE: First dose only**, wear your hard hat or bring your site access card or other construction ID.

### **Participating locations:**

#### **Lower Mainland:** (June 24, 25, 30, July 8, 9)

Vancouver - Italian Cultural Center (3075 Slocan St.)

Burnaby - The Christine Sinclair Community Centre (3713 Kensington Ave.)

Abbotsford - Abbotsford Ag Rec (32470 Haida Dr., Building 1)

[Download and Promote Poster on your Worksites](#)

#### **Northern Region:**

Still To Be Confirmed

#### **Vancouver Island:**

Still To Be Confirmed

#### **Southern Interior:**

Still To Be Confirmed

### [Joint statement on B.C.'s COVID-19 response, latest updates](#)

Thursday, Jun 17, Dr. Bonnie Henry and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, issued the following joint statement regarding updates on the COVID-19 response in British Columbia:

“Today, we are reporting 76.5% of all adults in B.C. and 74.8% of those 12 and older have now received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. In total, 4,231,871 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in B.C., 768,008 of which are second doses.

“We have had 120 new cases of COVID-19, for a total of 146,794 cases in British Columbia. There are currently 1,451 active cases of COVID-19 in the province. A further 143,579 people who tested positive have recovered. Of the active cases, 131 individuals are currently hospitalized, 44 of whom are in intensive care. The remaining people with COVID-19 are recovering at home in self-isolation.

“For those who had an mRNA (Pfizer or Moderna) vaccine for their first dose, it is safe to get a different mRNA vaccine for your second dose – mRNA interchangeability does not influence effectiveness. For those who first received an AstraZeneca vaccine, we have weighed all of the data and real-world evidence on vaccine effectiveness when mixing different types of vaccine. Our advice remains the same.

“Public health and WorkSafeBC have played an important part in our pandemic response, supporting businesses to put comprehensive COVID-19 safety plans in place to keep employees and customers safe. Now, as we look toward Step 3 and Step 4 of BC’s Restart plan, the requirements for businesses in B.C. will be changing. Building on the success of the COVID-19 specific plans, going forward, businesses will be required to adapt their COVID-19 plans into communicable disease safety plans. Over the summer months, WorkSafeBC will help workplaces make this transition to ensure plans are in place for the fall and winter seasons when respiratory and other communicable diseases typically increase.

### **Learn More:**

#### **The latest vaccine information:**

For vaccine information, visit the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) dashboard: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data> or: [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca)

For information on getting your second dose: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/dose-2>

Register for your vaccine now: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register> or call 1-833-838-2323.

#### **BC’s Restart Plan:**

For the June 14, 2021, announcement of Step 2 of BC’s Restart plan, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021PREM0041-001155>

#### **Epidemiology and modelling:**

For the June 10, 2021, modelling presentation, visit: [https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/6-10\\_PHO\\_presentation.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/6-10_PHO_presentation.pdf)

#### **Provincial health officer’s orders and guidance:**

Orders: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

Guidance on restrictions: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions>

#### **Statement from the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada on June 17, 2021**

Canada recently launched the [Vaccine Injury Support Program](#) to provide eligible individuals with access to financial support in the rare event that they suffer a serious and permanent injury from a Health Canada authorized vaccine administered in Canada. With the introduction of this new program, Canada joins a growing number of countries that have vaccine injury support programs in place. Information on the program, including eligibility and how individuals can apply, can be found [here](#).

The following is the latest summary on national numbers and trends:

“Since the start of the pandemic, there have been 1,405,146 cases of COVID-19 and 26,001 deaths reported in Canada.

“The strong and steady declines in disease trends continue, with reported active cases down by 84% since the peak of the third wave in Canada. The latest national-level data show a continued downward trend in disease activity with an average of 1,190 cases reported daily during the latest 7 day period (June 10-16), down 28% compared to the week prior.

“With the considerable decline in infection rates nationally, the overall number of people experiencing severe and critical illness is also steadily declining. Provincial and territorial data indicate that an average of 1,483 people with COVID-19 were being treated in Canadian hospitals each day during the most recent 7-day period (June 10-16), which is 22% fewer than last week. This includes, on average 673 people who were being treated in intensive care units (ICU),

17% fewer than last week. Likewise, the latest 7-day average of 23 deaths reported daily (June 10-16) is continuing to decline, showing a 28% decrease compared to the week prior.

“Overall, variants of concern (VOCs) represent the majority of recently reported COVID-19 cases across the country. Four VOCs (B.1.1.7 (Alpha), B.1.351 (Beta), P.1 (Gamma), and B.1.617.2 (Delta)) have been detected in most provinces and territories. While the Alpha variant continues to account for the majority of genetically sequenced variants in Canada, we are observing an increase in the Delta variant in some parts of Canada.

“As vaccine eligibility continues to expand, Canadians are encouraged to get vaccinated and support others to get vaccinated as soon as they are able. As well, with provinces and territories accelerating second dose programs, those who are eligible are urged to get fully vaccinated, including getting the second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series. The second immune-boosting dose substantially lowers personal risk of infection and serious harms, provides stronger protection against certain variants of concern, including the Delta variant, and may make immunity last longer. Canadians are reminded that it is safe and effective to receive one vaccine product for your first dose and a different vaccine product for your second dose to complete your two-dose vaccine series for optimal protection from COVID-19.”

### **B.C. moves to Step 2 of its restart plan**

Tuesday, June 15, British Columbia took the next step in safely bringing people back together, transitioning into Step 2 of BC’s Restart plan, including lifting restrictions on travel within B.C.

The transition into Step 2 of the four-step restart plan aligns with key metrics for moving forward. More than 75% of adults are vaccinated with their first dose, exceeding the target Step 2 minimum threshold of 65%. The other metrics for moving through the stages – COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations – continue to steadily decline.

Public health safety protocols, such as mask wearing in all indoor public spaces and physical distancing, will remain in place during Step 2. As well, personal indoor gatherings will be limited to five visitors, or one other household.

Moving from Step 1 to Step 2 includes:

- B.C. recreational travel – non-essential travel ban lifted. Out-of-province non-essential travel advisory continues;
- maximum of 50 people for outdoor personal gatherings;
- maximum of 50 people for indoor seated organized gatherings (e.g., movie theatres, live theatre, banquet halls) with safety plans;
- indoor faith gatherings – a maximum of 50 people, or 10% of a place of worship’s total capacity, whichever number is greater – with safety plans;
- maximum of 50 spectators for outdoor sports;
- liquor service at restaurants, bars and pubs extended until midnight; and
- indoor sports games (no spectators) and high-intensity fitness with safety plans.

The earliest target start date for Step 3 is July 1, and Sept. 7 for Step 4.

Since the launch of the restart plan on May 25, government has been working with sector associations and WorkSafeBC to help prepare for the transition into Step 3 when public health orders will be lifted and new guidelines will come into effect. Businesses can expect to see updated guidance available through [WorkSafeBC's website](#) prior to July 1. Businesses will then adapt their safety plans to reflect this updated guidance.

The Province has formally extended the provincial state of emergency through the end of the day on June 22, 2021, allowing health and emergency management officials to continue to use extraordinary powers under the Emergency Program Act to support the Province's COVID-19 pandemic response.

### **First dose vaccination appointments can be booked sooner**

On June 16, 2021 the get vaccinated system invited (via email or SMS) approximately 45,000 people who are booked for Dose 1 later in June giving them the option to book their Dose 1 appointment sooner.

Now that B.C.'s vaccine supply is improving for the second half of June, the first dose vaccination can be offered sooner. The officials also anticipate the time for people to book their second dose will also become shorter.

The best way to secure your first or second dose is to register in the system:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register>.

Also, to improve access to help people get their first shot, many clinics are now offering drop-in times where people can simply show up at a clinic, register and get vaccinated at the same time. The availability of drop-in times can be checked at the health authorities websites.

### **[Employer reimbursement program launches for COVID-19 paid sick leave](#)**

Starting June 17, employers can apply for reimbursement of wages paid to workers who have taken sick leave related to COVID-19.

The temporary reimbursement program is retroactive to May 20, when legislation was passed. The amendments to the Employment Standards Act (ESA) require employers to pay sick workers their regular wages. Employers can then apply for reimbursement up to \$200 per day, to a maximum of three days per worker. Any employer whose workers are covered under the ESA but does not currently provide paid sick leave benefits to its employees will be eligible.

The reimbursement program is available to employers where workers need to stay home because they:

- have been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- are waiting for COVID-19 test results;
- need to self-isolate or self-monitor in accordance with a public health order or guideline; and/or
- have been directed to stay home by their employer due to exposure risks.

WorkSafeBC is administering the program with funding from government. WorkSafeBC's IT systems and employer information allowed it to set up a new process to deliver the reimbursement program on behalf of government, which will be available to employers until Dec. 31, 2021. The program is not part of the workers' compensation system and will not affect WorkSafeBC's employer premiums or its accident fund. Costs of administering the program will also be covered by government.

To apply for reimbursement, employers must be registered for WorkSafeBC compensation coverage and signed up for WorkSafeBC's online services. Employers will be required to complete a short online form that collects information about their employees' COVID-19 related sick leave. Once submitted, processing of the application and payment by electronic transfer can take up to 10 business days.

#### **Learn More:**

For information on B.C.'s paid COVID-19 related sick leave, or to apply for the reimbursement, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/paid-sick-leave>

### **[Government of Canada launches Ask the Experts campaign to encourage vaccine uptake](#)**

Jun 15, Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health, announced the launch of the *[Ask the Experts advertising campaign](#)*. This campaign features short videos by trusted experts answering some of the most common questions people have about the COVID-19 vaccines. These videos will encourage vaccine uptake by providing people across Canada with credible COVID-19 vaccine information so they can make informed choices.

- The *Ask the Experts* campaign will run from June 15, 2021, to July 31, 2021. The ads will appear on TV, web sites, social media and in search engine marketing. Through a series of videos, the campaign answers a variety of questions such as the importance of getting the second dose of the vaccine, why people who are young and healthy need to get vaccinated, and how the vaccines work.
- The *Ask the Experts* campaign complements the *[Ripple Effect campaign](#)*, which runs until July 4, 2021, and is intended to remind Canadians about the collective vaccination effort required to see a reduction in restrictions and public health measures.

## Associated links

- [Ask the Experts video series](#)
- [#MyWhy video series](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccines: We can all help by getting vaccinated \(canada.ca\)](#)
- [Canada.ca/covid-vaccines](#)

## 'Phased approach' to vaccine passports, loosened border restrictions

Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LaBlanc said a “phased approach” to reopening the border may be necessary in the coming months as the federal government works with provinces to ensure Canadians have a reliable way of proving their vaccination status.

Healthcare falls within the domain of provinces, while borders are the domain of the federal government. With the expectation that international travellers show proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, Canada’s constitutional setup complicates the federal government’s efforts to facilitate vaccination passports.

“The provinces, by virtue of their jurisdiction, have ownership of the health information, the vaccination information regarding their citizens. So the conversation began a few weeks ago and it’s been ongoing between deputy ministers of health,” LaBlanc said.

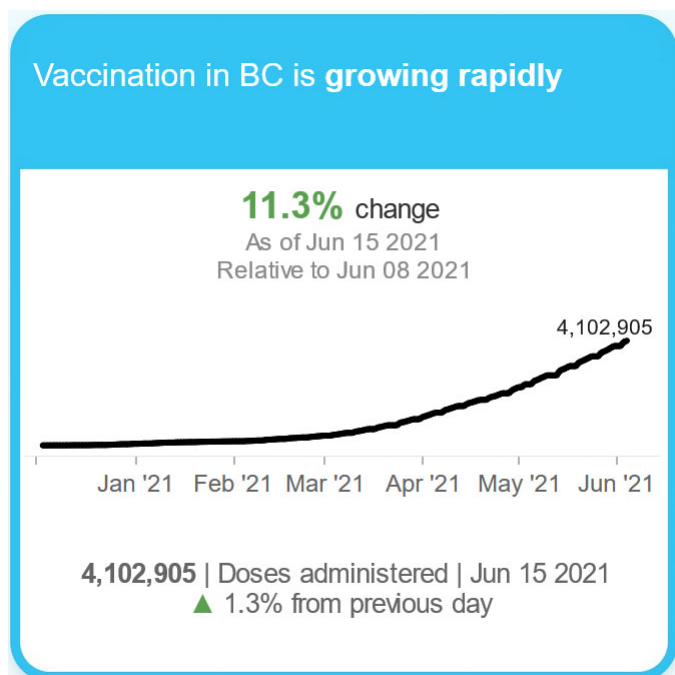
“We are working with allies, obviously, in the European Union, the United States and others to find the most appropriate way to recognize proof of vaccination for citizens who want to travel internationally.”

LaBlanc said more details about Canada’s vaccination passport strategy would be made available in the coming weeks.

Canada is set to slightly loosen restrictions for its own citizens returning home beginning next month. Instead of quarantining 14 days, fully vaccinated Canadians will need to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test prior to departure before taking another test upon arrival. They will then need to self-isolate until the second test comes back negative.

“The urgency of coming up with a secure, reliable, probably digital proof of vaccination is something that we’re working collaboratively with provinces and there may have to be a transitional measure, for example, if there’s a phased adjustment of border measures in July or later in August,” the minister said.

## Immunization dashboard



Stay safe.

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

#



CONSTRUCTION LABOUR RELATIONS ASSOCIATION OF BC

#

97 Sixth Street,  
New Westminster, BC V3L 5H8

**O** 604-524-4911

**F** 604-524-3925 **C** 604-968-4911

**E** [kenm@clra-bc.com](mailto:kenm@clra-bc.com) **W** [www.clra-bc.com](http://www.clra-bc.com)

*CONFIDENTIALITY DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this transmission may contain privileged and confidential information. It is intended for review only by the person(s) named above. Dissemination, distribution or duplication of this communication is strictly prohibited by all recipients unless expressly authorized otherwise. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply email and destroy all copies of the original message. Thank you.*