



# COMMUNITY UPDATE

*The latest from Northern Health*

December 1, 2021

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## COVID-19

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### COVID-19 orders

Northern Health's regional Public Health Order on Gatherings and Events has been updated. Effective midnight, November 30, 2021, updated measures go into effect for the entire Northern Health region.

Changes to the order reflect the ongoing risk of COVID-19, rates of transmission, and the impact they continue to have on health care resources. But gradual improvement in case counts and hospitalizations are allowing for some increased capacity at gathering and events, for those who are fully vaccinated.

The updated orders will be in effect until at least January 31, 2022, and allow for:

- Up to 10 fully-vaccinated people gathering inside personal residences, and up to 25 outside (increased from 5, and 15)
- Increasing capacity for indoor seated events, including weddings, funerals and theatre
- and performing arts events, to 50% of capacity venue (increased from 50-person cap) with proof of vaccination
- Increasing outdoor event capacity to 50% (increase from 100-person cap) with proof of vaccination
- Allowing drive-in worship services in addition to virtual services

For full details, visit: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/covid-19-orders>

For more information about current Provincial orders (such as the acute- and long-term care visitors policy, and restrictions around gatherings and events), please see:

- [NH Orders and FAQ resources](#)
- [NH Public Health COVID-19 Order Enforcement Actions](#)
- [Provincial and regional restrictions](#)

For complaints or concern related to orders, please call [250-565-7322](tel:250-565-7322) or email [php@northernhealth.ca](mailto:php@northernhealth.ca).

### **Safe, effective COVID-19 pediatric vaccine available for children aged 5-11**

On November 19, 2021, after a thorough review, Health Canada approved the Pfizer vaccine for children five to 11. This vaccine uses a lower dose (10 micrograms), at one-third of the dose formulated for older children and adults, which will provide effective protection tailored to children's immune systems. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) advises that children receive a two-dose series of the vaccine with an interval of eight weeks or more between the first and second dose.

For more information about this vaccine (including information about the vaccine and how to register a youth), please see [COVID-19 vaccines for children 5 to 11](#).

### **COVID-19 vaccination for children: Information for parents**

"To help doctors in their conversations with parents and caregivers about COVID-19 vaccination for children, [Doctors of BC](#) created [Kids 5-11 and the COVID-19 vaccine: A fact sheet for parents](#), a downloadable PDF providing answers to common vaccine questions.

More information: [What you should know about the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out for children.](#)"

(From the [Divisions of Family Practice website](#).)

### **COVID-19 immunization plan**

#### **Third dose**

The third dose of the COVID-19 vaccination is for some people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised. People who need a third dose [will be contacted](#) by the provincial [Get Vaccinated](#) system.

Third dose immunizations will be by appointment only, they are not available for walk-ins.

#### **Booster dose**

The booster dose is an additional non-urgent, non-compulsory vaccine that gets immunity back up to a desirable level of protection for an extended period of time. It will be available starting in January 2022.

To book a booster dose, please ensure you're registered in the [Get Vaccinated](#) system. If you have difficulty accessing online booking, please call 1-833-838-2323.

Booster dose shots will be by appointment only, they are not available for walk-ins.

## Northern BC community immunization coverage

Immunization coverage for every community in Northern Health is available for you on the [Northern BC community immunization coverage page](#). This link includes both first and second dose counts and percentages per community and is updated every week.

## Community Toolkit

To empower local partners to share helpful information, we have created a [COVID-19 Community Toolkit](#) - a digital resource for community partners, which includes vaccine clinic information (including [clinic schedules](#)), a community guide, trusted information and links, and more!

## BC vaccination coverage rates and COVID-19 activity

### BCCDC COVID-19 dashboard

Visit the BCCDC [COVID-19 surveillance dashboard](#) for information by local health area (LHA) and community health service area (CHSA).

### COVID-19 Numbers

As of November 30, **17,580** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **337**
- New cases: **56**
- Currently in hospital: **42**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **12**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **255**

For the latest provincial numbers, see the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated Monday-Friday. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested.

As well, for a visual comparison of COVID-19 cases in BC by HSDA to other Canadian and global jurisdictions, see the [COVID-19 Epidemiology app](#). It's updated on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

- [BC COVID-19 pandemic update](#) – November 30, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – November 24, 2021

## Trusted links and resources for COVID-19

- [Northern Health online booking form - COVID-19 test](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC COVID-19 page](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 content in other languages](#)
- WorkSafe BC - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- Northern Health Virtual Primary and Community Care Clinic: **1-844-645-7811**
- Northern Health Environmental Health Officer Line: **1-250-565-7322**
- Non-medical info: call 1-888-COVID19 / 1-888-268-4319 7 days, 7:30 am - 8 pm

For current information on restrictions on travel, gatherings and other issues, see the [Provincial Health Officer's COVID-19 webpage](#).

## Overdose prevention and response

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### British Columbia Emergency Alert

The BCCDC has issued a province wide emergency alert due to flooding/road closures and the impact on the illicit drug market.

Disruptions to supply chains include illicit substances can create increased toxicity of substances and as a result communities may experience increase numbers of overdoses.

Please share the provincial alert found [here](#).

#### For your safety

- Use an Overdose Prevention Site, if you can. [Find an OPS](#).
- Pick up a naloxone kit and harm reduction supplies near you. Some distribution sites may be affected by delivery disruptions so when possible, check in with the site first. [Find a site](#).
- Get your drugs checked. [Find a location](#).
- Avoid using alone. Find a buddy or have someone check on you.
- When using with a buddy is not possible, consider using an app like [Brave](#) or Lifeguard or virtual spotting. [Learn how to spot someone \(video by the Canadian Association of People Who Use Drugs\)](#).
- Talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner about how to access prescription medications to reduce overdose risk and prevent withdrawal. Refer them to these [guidelines](#) or [visit BCCSU for more information](#).

Pharmacies in BC can provide emergency refills of prescription medications – check with your local pharmacy for emergency refills as needed.

## Organizational news

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### FNHA announces call for proposals for services to support healing from trauma

“The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is offering funding for mental health, cultural and emotional services to support healing from trauma in response to the impact of Indian Residential School (IRS) findings on the health and wellness of Indigenous peoples and communities across BC.”

To continue, and for more information (including application criteria), please visit the [First Nations Health Authority website](#).