



## Vulcan County Regional Emergency Management Partnership

March 29, 2020

**RE: COVID-19 Update 14 (red text indicates web link and blue text indicates new information)**

Vulcan County Regional Emergency Management Partners are continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation in Alberta. The latest Government of Alberta media releases can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/news.aspx>

All Vulcan County Fire Halls are closed to the public until further notice. The municipal offices of Vulcan County, the villages of Arrowwood, Carmangay, Champion, Lomond and Milo remain closed to the public while business operations are continuing. The Town of Vulcan municipal office remains open, however, **we are urging the public to use municipal websites, email and telephone** to answer their inquiries.

With increasing numbers of confirmed cases, it is imperative to follow proper personal hygiene and cleaning practices. Please follow these [guidelines](#) and watch your municipal websites for further updates.

### **Cases in Alberta and Vulcan County**

The Government of Alberta is taking aggressive measures to slow the spread of COVID-19. Given modelling provided by Alberta Health Services, current projections don't expect the pandemic to peak until well into April and Albertans are asked to be vigilant.

**On March 29, 40 new cases have been confirmed bringing the total to 661 with 41 hospitalized, 14 in intensive care units and 73 recovered. Another fatality has resulted from COVID-19 bringing that number to 3. A total of 44,999 Albertans have been tested.**

Comparing this to the **previous day**, Alberta confirmed 54 new cases on March 28, bringing the total to 621 with 38 hospitalized, 12 in intensive care units and 53 recovered. A total of 42,527 Albertans were tested.

There continue to be **no confirmed cases within Vulcan County** or the urban municipalities within its region, although testing has been undertaken for those with symptoms. Vulcan County is in the [Calgary Health Zone](#).

### **Support for Albertans**

For those in financial distress, [Emergency financial assistance programs](#) are available and information can be found online. Some local programs are also available through Family and Community Support Services (FCSS).

**The Government of Alberta has further restricted mass gatherings, restricting groups of no more than 15 from the previous limit of no more than 50.** It is believed that physical distancing has halved the projected spread of COVID-19 in British Columbia and will do the same in Alberta.

The Government of Alberta has introduced [rent controls](#) that prohibit evictions before May 1, 2020, or increasing rents until the State of Public Health Emergency has been lifted. More information is available online.

Automobile access to provincial parks and recreation areas has been restricted to encourage self-isolation.



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A dedicated team of mental health professionals are available at the **Mental Health Help Line** by dialing 1-877-303-2643 or the **Addiction Help Line** by dialing 1-866-332-2323.

**Text4Hope** sends subscribers text messages of support and encouragement to ease stress or anxiety. Albertans can text COVID 19 Hope to 393939 to subscribe. Take the time to connect with family and friends digitally or over the phone.

**Alberta Connects Contact Centre** is available seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Albertans can call toll-free from anywhere in the province by dialing 310-4455 for general information about the Government of Alberta and its response to COVID-19, or for help contacting individual program areas. This line cannot provide medical advice. Anyone who has health concerns or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should complete an online [\*\*COVID-19 self-assessment\*\*](#).

**New isolation timelines are now in effect.** For those who are sick, the isolation timeline has changed from 14 days to 10 days, following the onset of symptoms, and only if the individual is feeling well by day 11. Those who have been exposed or are returning to Canada but do not have symptoms will still have to isolate for 14 days. Isolation must continue 10 days from the onset of any symptoms. Those not experiencing symptoms are reminded they can still go outside, but this must be limited to activities such as walks, where the individual remains two metres away from others not in their household.

### Information for Businesses

- **Non-essential businesses are suspended immediately, including retail and dine-in restaurant service.** This includes: gift and specialty stores; jewellery and accessories; non-essential health and beauty care; luggage; art and framing; mens', ladies' and children's wear; shoes; bridal; computers and gaming; hobby and toy; photo, music and books; sporting goods.
- The list of what constitutes [\*\*Essential Services\*\*](#) has been expanded. **Unless a public health order or local authority directive has specifically identified a business or activity to cease—and being listed on the Essential Services list—then the business or activity can and should continue.**
- We are strongly encouraging businesses and employers to take this opportunity to review their own **business continuity plans** and consider how they would lower the risk of the spread of infection in the workplace.
- Appropriate steps include making sure staff are familiar with continuity plans and processes are in place in case of a community disruption.
- **Payment deferral programs are being introduced to assist businesses with immediate cash flow.**
- More information is available online at [\*\*alberta.ca/COVID19\*\*](https://alberta.ca/COVID19).

### Law Enforcement

Law enforcement agencies have been granted full authority to enforce the public health orders to assist Alberta Health Services in enforcing Alberta's Public Health Act, as well as the Chief Medical Officer of Health's orders in relation to:

- Prohibiting persons in the province from attending:
  - Schools, daycares (with some exemptions for core service workers) and post-secondary institutions;
  - [\*\*Mass gatherings\*\*](#) of more than **15 attendees**;



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- Public recreational facilities;
- Bars and nightclubs;
- Requiring self-isolation from:
  - An individual returning to Alberta from outside of Canada;
  - A close contact of an individual who is confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 or probably infected with COVID-19; and
  - An individual with symptoms including fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat, or nasal congestion.

### Consequences

On March 25, Alberta’s Chief Medical Officer of Health issued orders under the Public Health Act to legally require returning travelers to self-isolate for 14 days upon returning to Alberta. This legal requirement also applies to close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases. Those who violate the self-isolation orders:

- Can be fined by community peace officers and police \$1,000 per occurrence.
- Courts will also have increased powers to administer fines of up to \$100,000 for a first offence and up to \$500,000 for a subsequent offence for more serious violations of public health orders.

### Isolation

Albertans are legally required under public health order to **self-isolate** for:

- 14 days if they returned from international travel or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19.
- 10 days if they have any symptoms that are not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition: cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat.
- **Expect new restrictions on domestic travel effective March 30 to deny rail and air service to individuals exhibiting symptoms.**

### 811 Health Link

Once again, people experiencing symptoms are to take the **online** self-assessment.

As a further reminder, **811-health link is for those who are feeling ill and seeking advice**. DO NOT call 811 to report non-compliance of Public Health Orders; **these can be reported to the [Environmental Health Complaint Link](#) or by calling (403) 943-2288.**

Above information sourced from the Government of Alberta Press Releases of March 29, 2020, at 5:30 PM: <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=6995496444280-A170-CFA9-FE8A1EFC9B1B348C> and March 28, 2020, at 4:30 PM: <https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=6994961B710D8-D2DE-6861-BBDB802A896F6BE5>

Sincerely,

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Vulcan County Regional Emergency Management Partnership