

Provincial Health Orders for Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health

Q & A

General:

Does this rule apply to people who live alone?

- We know this is very challenging for those who live alone. People who live alone cannot host gatherings but can continue to see one or two members of their pandemic bubble at each other's homes.
- Your pandemic bubble is your household.
- If you live alone it is one or two people, the same consistent people that have been part of your pandemic bubble.
- This order is about taking a step back, reducing your social connections and spending time with only those who you consider to be your immediate family or bubble.

Is my pandemic bubble the same as my safe six?

- We understand this can be confusing.
- Our goal is to limit the number of close contacts that people have in the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health regions.
- Your pandemic bubble is your household.
- If you live alone it is one or two people, the same consistent people that have been part of your pandemic bubble.
- You cannot see people outside of your pandemic bubble at this time, which may include some of your safe six. You should only belong to only one pandemic bubble, which may be your family, the people you live with, a partner or relative you do not live with or a close friend.
- These are the people you spend the most time with and are physically close to.
- They should have the same core bubble as you.
- You should not be seeing people outside of that one pandemic bubble for the next two weeks.

So if I live alone I can still see six people, but if I live with my family I can only see them?

- No, we need to take a step back to the beginning of this pandemic when British Columbians flattened the curve so successfully.
- Those who live alone should only be seeing one or two people in their pandemic bubble, which may be a family member they don't live with or a close friend.
- We know this is difficult, but British Columbians have done this before to keep each other safe and we can do it again.

Is a worship service considered a social gathering?

- No, churches and other religious centres have put important safety measures in place to protect people, including physical distancing.
- As long as those safety plans are in place, people can continue to worship in those centres.
- Places of worship still need to abide by the 50 person limit that is in place for events and gatherings, they must also have COVID safety plans in place.

I am supposed to look after my grandchildren this week, can I?

- Yes. The Provincial Health Officer's order applies to social gatherings so if you are part of a social group, now is the time to take a break from that activity or do it virtually. Right now it is very important that everyone in the Vancouver Coastal and Fraser Health regions reduce their social interactions so that essential visits, such as taking care of a grandchild can continue.

I work with more than six people, but I can't see a few friends?

- We know this is hard, but it is a critical part of keeping our businesses open and our schools and our community safe as we go into winter.
- We want to keep things happening as much as possible in our communities, because we know that too has an effect on our health and wellbeing.
- This is about stepping back from social gatherings.
- We need to keep up our COVID-19 safety precautions in the workplace as well.

Will enforcement actually happen?

- It is expected that the vast majority of people will voluntarily comply with the order.
- Enforcement may happen if there is concern about COVID-19 transmission.
- Police and bylaw officers can enforce the orders with fines, charges and operation shutdowns for businesses, organizations or citizens who break the rules.
- It is our hope that British Columbians will recognize the importance of taking these measures now for this short two-week period, without enforcement, so we can bend the curve and protect our province.

Are people still able to socialize outside with their safe six?

- No. For now, there are to be no social gatherings of any size at your home, inside or outside.
- People who live alone must not host gatherings, but can continue to see one or two members of their pandemic bubble at each other's homes.

Can I still have a wedding ceremony or funeral service?

- Yes, wedding ceremonies and funeral services may proceed with a limited number of people and a COVID-19 safety plan in place – but there are to be no receptions inside or outside your home, or at any public or community-based venue.

Why isn't Dr. Henry mandating masks in the Lower Mainland?

- Dr. Henry expects everyone, who can, to use masks – the same way she expects everyone to maintain a safe distance from others, clean their hands, and cough into their sleeves. We must use all these layers of protection to stop the virus from spreading.

Why is it safe for a teacher to be in a classroom of 26 students, but not see a few close friends?

- This order is based on evidence that social gatherings, particularly in household settings but also in other social situations such as gathering before or after sports events or indoor group physical activities are causing significant COVID-19 transmission.
- People who violate this order bring exposure risks into their home – risks that they later take with them to their workplaces. We all need to reduce our social interactions so we can keep our schools and workplaces open.

Can school age children/teenagers have playdates or gatherings if they're in the same school or childcare cohort?

- No. For the next two weeks we need to limit our social interactions so we can bend the curve, protect our communities and our health care system.
- Kids can still play together at school as part of their school and childcare cohorts where safety measures are in place to protect children and staff.

Can I still go to a movie theatre?

- Yes. Movie theatres are not considered social gatherings because they are controlled settings.
- There is no mixing with others in attendance, theatres have the chairs and common areas marked to ensure physical distance.
- Now is the time for businesses to go back to those plans and reinforce them.
- We will be conducting inspections with Public Health, WorkSafe BC and our bylaw officers in the local area.

- If businesses cannot maintain their COVID-19 safety plans, they may be shut down.
- We cannot see important health and safety measures slip in businesses, including movie theatres.

Where can I find the new order?

- All of Provincial Health Officer's orders are posted here: www.gov.bc.ca/phoguidance
- Details about the regional orders are available at: www.gov.bc.ca/regionalrestrictions

What communities does this actually impact?

- The order applies to the following communities: Abbotsford, Agassiz, Belcarra, Boston Bar, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Coquitlam, Delta, District of Kent, Harrison Hot Springs, Hope, Howe Sound, City of Langley, Lions Bay, Maple Ridge, Mission, New Westminster, North Vancouver, Pemberton, Pitt Meadows, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Powell River, Richmond, Sunshine Coast Regional District, Surrey, Squamish, Township of Langley, Vancouver, West Vancouver, Whistler, White Rock.
- The following communities are not included in the order: Central Coast Regional District, Bella Coola Valley.

Why are certain communities exempt from the order?

- They are geographically quite different, in terms of where people travel to and from and their interactions with health care services.
- They are more closely aligned to some of the lower-risk areas in the province right now, so we didn't want to put in restrictions that weren't necessary in those regions.

What is essential travel?

- There is no order restricting travel -- however this virus is spreading through communities in these regions and we must do all we can to limit our interactions with people outside our households -- so we can keep our schools and businesses open.
- British Columbians should only travel in and out of these regions if absolutely necessary.
- Essential travel includes regular travel for work within the region or travel for things like medical appointments etc. Travel for social or recreational reasons is what should be curtailed.

Can you still travel inside the regions and between Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health regions?

- There is no order restricting travel -- however this virus is spreading through communities in these regions and we must do all we can to limit our interactions with people outside of our households -- so we can keep our schools and businesses open. British Columbians should postpone recreational and social travel in and out of these regions for the next two weeks.

I have an appointment at B.C. Children's Hospital next week. I live out of town and cannot do the trip in a day. Am I allowed to stay at my parents' house in Langley?

- Yes. You are asked to be diligent about limiting your other social interactions in order to keep your parents and your home community safe.

Can I still practice physical distancing to visit with friends?

- There are to be no social gatherings with those outside of your household.
- You can go for a walk with friends; but keep it small.
- If you live alone it can be with one or two members of your pandemic bubble.

Should we stop cleaning services, house repairs, in home tutoring, working with the disabled, music lessons and other services that come to your home?

- The order restricts social gatherings. This is nothing like a social gathering.

Can you report people who break the rules? Is there a penalty or fine if someone has a social gathering?

- Inspections and surveillance from Public Health Inspectors, Bylaw Officers and the Police are being conducted in these regions.

- These officials can enforce the orders with fines, charges and operations shutdowns for businesses, organizations or citizens who break the rules.
- It is our hope that British Columbians will recognize the importance of taking these measures now for this short two-week period, without enforcement, so we can bend the curve and protect our province.
- The current fines are \$200 for an individual and \$2,000 for an event organizer.

Can parents still carpool kids to and from school?

- Yes. The order restricts social gatherings. This is nothing like a social gathering.

Are children allowed or not allowed to play outdoor games?

- Nothing in the order affects outdoor sports – except the requirement to stay in your region.
- We are asking people to not leave the province – unless it is essential travel.