

FAQs: Individuals in custody

During this COVID-19 outbreak, we are all experiencing a time of worry about our health and overall well-being. We recognize that being in a correctional centre adds to your feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been developed to answer some of the questions you may have. Please don't hesitate to ask additional questions. The health and well-being of everyone in the centres is very important to us.

1. What is being done to stop COVID-19 from entering the centre?

We have strict rules to protect our centres from COVID-19. Here are some of the things we are doing:

- New admissions process for all intakes to screen for COVID-19.
- No visitors, non-essential contractors or official visitors are allowed into the centre, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Confidential visits with lawyers can occur without direct contact behind glass in secure visit booths, but video visits or telephone calls are preferred.
- No one, including staff, may enter the centre if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or if they have travelled outside of the country.
- Mandatory handwashing and cleaning protocols.
- Increased cleaning throughout the centre, living units, staff areas and all "high-touch" surfaces.
- Working with health care to make sure men and women in custody that are sick are screened and isolated if needed.

2. How are new admissions/intakes being screened?

There is a process for all new intakes coming into the centre to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This includes an in-depth questionnaire by correctional staff plus a health screen and temperature check.

New admissions will be isolated for up to 14 days and health care will be consulted before they are taken off assessment. During the assessment period, health care will check them frequently for signs of COVID-19.

ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION COVID-19 RESPONSE

3. Are staff being checked for COVID-19?

Staff are self-monitoring and following strict provincial health guidelines for self-isolation, when it is required.

4. How can I prevent getting infected?

The Provincial Health Officer has indicated that the most important thing you can do is wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your face. Using soap and water is the single most effective way of reducing the spread of infection. To reduce your risk of infection:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Do not touch your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow when you sneeze or cough.
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Do not share food, drinks, utensils, etc.

While you may not feel sick and these rules may seem like an inconvenience, please be mindful of others who are more vulnerable to COVID-19. We are all in this together.

5. How does social distancing work on the unit?

There are many ways to practice social distancing:

- Limit activities outside of your cell.
- If you are out on the unit, try to keep as much distance between yourself and others as possible.
- Keep your hands at your side when possible.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or sleeve.
- Stay in your cell when you are sick and advise the unit officer.

ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION COVID-19 RESPONSE

6. Why aren't we being given masks and gloves?

The use of personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, etc.) is determined by health care and our safety plan. Wearing a mask when a person is not sick can give a false sense of security and make it more likely that someone touches their face and doesn't participate in social distancing or hand washing.

Instead, keep as much distance between each other as possible and wash hands frequently.

7. Can all staff and people in custody be tested for COVID-19?

Medical staff determine who is tested for COVID-19. Currently the BC Centre for Disease Control does not recommend testing people who are not showing COVID-19 symptoms.

Please monitor yourself for signs of illness and tell health care staff if you are feeling unwell. Staff are also self-monitoring and they will seek medical advice if they are showing any symptoms.

The best defence is keeping distance from others as much as possible and washing hands frequently.

8. Will there be enough cleaning supplies on the unit?

Staff are making sure that each unit has enough cleaning materials supplied daily. Also, the unit cleaners have been instructed to clean common and "high-touch" areas more often, such as the handrails, tables, phones, etc.

9. Are the phones and other equipment being cleaned after each use?

All "high-touch" surfaces are being cleaned more regularly. You can also wipe down the phone with soap and water before you use it.

ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION COVID-19 RESPONSE

10. Should I still be eating my meal with a large group of people? What about being out on the unit with others?

We have added a lot of things to protect our centres from COVID-19: new intake screening, staff screening, increased cleaning, stopping visits and reminding everyone about social distancing and hand washing. These go a long way to keep our units safe.

During meal times and when you're out on the unit, be mindful of how close you sit beside another person, do not share utensils, do not share food, and wash your hands as much as possible.

11. Will programs continue?

Volunteer programs have been reduced or temporarily stopped. Contracted services for the most part continue to be available at this time. As the situation progress, things may change.

12. Why can't I have face-to-face meetings with my lawyer?

Visitors are limited right now to reduce the chance of COVID-19 coming into the centre. Confidential visits with lawyers can occur without direct contact in secure visit booths, or by video visit or telephone, depending on the situation.

From: [Macpherson, Stephanie PSSG:EX](#)
To: [PSSG ACD HQ Staff](#); [JAG SPSC Correctional Staff](#); [PSSG ACCW All Staff](#); [PSSG NCC All](#); [PSSG OCC All Staff](#); [PSSG PGRCC Staff](#); [PSSG VIRCC Staff](#); [PSSG FRCC All Staff](#); [SG FMCC Staff](#); [PSSG KRCC All Staff](#); [PSSG NFPC Staff](#)
Subject: Adult Custody Division's COVID-19 Update
Date: Friday, March 13, 2020 2:42:50 PM
Attachments: [C564405-ADM Memo-COVID-19.pdf](#)
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

As the COVID-19 situation is rapidly evolving, I wanted to take a moment to address everyone in the Adult Custody Division. Due to the sensitive nature of our work and the vulnerabilities of the men and women in our care and custody, it is critical that we adhere to the advice of BC's Chief Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry.

Dr. Henry is advising against all travel outside of Canada. Moving forward, those that still choose to travel outside of Canada may be required to self isolate from work, schools, and other public places for 14-days following their return. The Public Service Agency is drafting a FAQ for staff that will explain these measures in greater detail. We hope that this information will be released later today. **This 14-day self isolation will have dramatic impacts on the functionality of our correctional centres if individuals ignore this advice and choose to travel anyway.**

In addition to the travel advisory, Dr. Henry is recommending that anyone who is feeling unwell self-isolate and stay home from work, school, and other activities. The "boring stuff" is also very important. Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water, avoid touching your face, and cough or sneeze into your elbow. It is also recommended to avoid larger gatherings.

Dr. Henry is also providing a daily COVID-19 update around 3:30pm aired online [here](#) (by clicking on the yellow banner that reads live update). This will include the latest information available from the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) (BCCDC), [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) (PHAC), and [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).

As well, meetings are occurring regularly to discuss the latest COVID-19 information from the Correctional Health Services and the Public Service Agency, to determine next steps as required. We are working hard to plan for all possible eventualities to ensure that we can respond quickly and efficiently to any change in directions from Dr. Henry.

I understand many people have questions. Please connect with your supervisor at your correctional centre. Your supervisors may be able to answer your questions specific to your personal situation. While we may not have the answers to all your questions immediately, we will provide further information when it is available. I understand people have questions about benefits if they are required to self isolate, we will share that information with you when it is available, hopefully either later today or early on Monday.

It is important that we take a collective effort to protect ourselves and those in our care and custody. The best way to do this is to listen to the advice of BC's Chief Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Henry as described above.

Thank you for your efforts at this critical time.

Stephanie Macpherson

PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY & SOLICITOR GENERAL | BC CORRECTIONS | ADULT CUSTODY DIVISION

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It's all about the people!

I acknowledge my place of work is within the ancestral, traditional and unceded territory of the Coast Salish nations.

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C564405

March 12, 2020

All BC Corrections staff

Re: COVID-19

As the situation with the COVID-19 is rapidly evolving, I wanted to reach out to let you know that we are paying close attention to the global response efforts underway.

BC's Chief Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry is now providing a daily COVID-19 update around 3:30pm aired online [here](#) (by clicking on the yellow banner that reads live update). This will include the latest information available from the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) (BCCDC), [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) (PHAC), and [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).

With countries all over the world impacted, there is a lot of information circulating online. I want to urge you to refer to the BCCDC, PHAC and WHO as your source for accurate information.

Dr. Henry has urged British Columbians to practice "social distancing" and regular handwashing following the [BCCDC guidelines for handwashing or hand rubbing](#) with an alcohol-based sanitizer.

Social distancing is not to be confused with self isolation. There are a lot of definitions for "social distancing," essentially you are encouraged to refrain from all non-essential social interaction outside of work and school, etc.

Today, Dr. Henry advised against all travel outside of Canada. Moving forward, those that choose to travel outside of Canada will be required to self isolate from work, schools and other public spaces for 14-days following their return. Based on today's update from Dr. Henry, the Public Service Agency is drafting an FAQ for staff and supervisors that will provide us with more information regarding these new measures.

Dr. Henry has also advised that all events over 250 are now cancelled. Though it's been decided to cancel events of this size, Dr. Henry has confirmed that those working in buildings or spaces with over 250 people can continue to attend these practicing social distancing while in those environments.

All British Columbians are urged to take the guidance from Dr. Henry seriously. She will continue to update British Columbians regarding any new interventions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which we are committed to sharing with you in real time.

We understand several of you have questions. Your supervisors may be able to answer your questions specific to your personal situation. While we may not have the answers to all your questions immediately, we will coordinate efforts by consulting our senior management, ministry executive and/or one of the agencies noted above. Information will be shared with all staff by their provincial

director as appropriate. Additionally, question(s) and answer(s) will be added to an FAQ on CorrPoint to help keep all staff informed in the event you have similar questions.

Meetings are occurring daily to discuss the latest COVID-19 information and direction from the Public Service Agency, to determine next steps as required. We are working hard to plan for all possible eventualities to ensure that we can respond quickly and efficiently to any change in directions from Dr. Henry. This includes any required changes to policy and procedures during this time.

I want to assure you that your health and the health of the individuals we support is our top priority.

Thank you for your continued professionalism during this time – your efforts to keep yourselves and your workspaces healthy are appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Arend', with a stylized, cursive script.

Elenore Arend
Assistant Deputy Minister

Procedure Mask Use and Safe Work Procedures for COVID 19

Adult custody is adopting the precautionary mitigation measure of providing non-surgical procedural masks for officers, staff and contractors. Procedural masks will be worn when people are unable to maintain the recommended physical distance in their workspace.





COVID 19 is transmitted by large droplets which may be generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Droplets travel a short distance through the air (less than 2 meters) and can be deposited on inanimate surfaces or in the eyes, nose, or mouth of individual in the vicinity.

A non-surgical procedural mask can help containing your own droplets and protect others, but it will not protect you from COVID-19. Masks are not a replacement for physical distancing and frequent hand washing /sanitizing.

Masks can become contaminated on the area that you breathe through, including the outside, or when touched by your hands. When wearing a non-surgical procedural mask, you must take the following precautions to protect yourself and others:

- **Avoid touching your face mask while using it**
- **Change a mask by only touching the straps or ear-loops, as soon as it gets damp or soiled by putting it directly into the brown paper bag**
- **Dispose of masks properly in a no touch lined garbage bin or place in the brown paper bag for drying and re use**
- **Do not place a used procedure mask on any work surface, common area or equipment. There is a potential risk of infection due to droplet transfer**
- **Continue physical distancing and wash your hand often.**


Donning an Ear Loop Non-Surgical Procedural Mask

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash/sanitize your hand before taking your mask from supply and donning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull at the top and bottom to open the pleats or chamber With colored or printed side facing out, and the nose wire at the top, put your fingers through the ear loops position the mask over your nose and mouth. Place the ear loops securely around the ears.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull the mask from the top and bottom to fully open the folds of the mask, and adjust the mask around the face
	<p>Gently re-form (do not pinch) the nose wire (if equipped) Over the bridge of the nose and make any final adjustment.</p>

Removing an Ear Loop Non-Surgical Procedural Mask

Staff will be provided a brown paper bag which is the preferred item to store the mask between uses.

1. Move to a designated area.
2. Ensure that you are within easy reach of the brown paper bag/laundry/disposal bin/container.
3. Reach BEHIND your ears and grasp both ear loops
4. Remove the mask outward from your face by handling only the ear loops.
5. Place the mask into the paper bag provided
6. If disposing the mask: dispose of the the mask by touching only the ear loops into a no touch lined garbage
7. Wash/sanitize your hands

Donning a Tied Non-Surgical Procedural Mask	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash/sanitize your hand before taking your mask from supply and donning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull at the top and bottom to open the pleats or chamber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With colored or printed side facing out place nose wire over the bridge of the nose so it extends across the upper cheekbones and form the nose wire across the face using both hands.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While holding the mask in place with one hand, grasp the bottom of the mask, separating the folds, and fit the bottom of the mask under the chin towards the neck
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gently form (do not pinch) the nose wire (if equipped) over the bridge of the nose and make any final adjustment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tie the lower ties snugly and securely so the mask will not ride up the face
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With both hands, gently re-form the nose wire (if equipped) over the nose and cheekbones. This will insure a proper and secure fit.

Removing an Ear Loop Non-Surgical Procedural Mask

Staff will be provided a brown paper bag which is the preferred item to store the mask between uses.

1. Move to a designated area
2. Ensure that you are within easy reach of the brown paper bag/laundry/disposal bin/container
3. Remove the mask by handling **only the ties**
4. Untie the bottom, then the top tie
5. Remove the mask outward from your face
6. Place the mask into the paper bag provided receptacle by touching only the ties
7. Wash/sanitize your hands.