

Extension of province-wide restrictions

On January 7, 2021 BC's Provincial Health Officer (PHO) ordered an [extension to existing province-wide restrictions](#) to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Specifically, the sections of the [gatherings and events order](#) concerning visitors in private residences and allowable/prohibited events (sections A, B and C) that were to expire on January 8th have been extended to February 5, 2021 at midnight.

- All events and social gatherings are suspended to significantly reduce COVID-19 transmission related to social interactions.
- All non-essential travel should be avoided. This includes travel into and out of B.C. and between regions of the province.

PHO updates re: varsity sport and retail occupancy limits

Varsity sport

On December 24, 2020 BC's Public Health Officer (PHO) amended the [Gatherings and Events Order](#) to expand and clarify restrictions on sports and fitness activities. These changes include permitting varsity sports subject to conditions, such as allowing participants to train or practice only with their home institution, ensuring participants maintain three-metre physical distancing, and prohibiting spectators.

For the sake of clarity, "varsity sport" includes only formally recognized sports rather than intramural or other informal fitness activities. It is defined as follows:

- "Varsity sport" means a sport for which the eligibility requirements for participation are established by a national association for the regulation of intercollegiate athletics, or which is designated as a varsity sport program by a post-secondary institution, and includes fitness training, sport training, practice and competition.

Retail occupancy limits

Previous guidance on retail occupancy limits has been incorporated into the [Gatherings and Events Order](#) to emphasize the need for stores and malls to prevent overcrowding and congestion. This includes requiring operators to calculate maximum occupancy based on five square metres/person in publicly-accessible areas.

Thank you for the important role you play in supporting the provincial COVID-19 response. Please share this update broadly within your respective institutions.

COVID-19 Resources:

- *Guidelines for BC's post-secondary sector are hosted on the [Ministry's public website](#).*
- *Guidance and recommendations from the Provincial Health Officer are available online at the [COVID-19 Provincial Support and Information](#) website.*
- *If you require advice regarding a potential COVID-19 case, please contact your local [Medical Health Officer](#).*