Strong restrictions to slow the spread of COVID-19

November 24, 2020 Media inquiries

Alberta's government is declaring a state of public health emergency and putting aggressive measures in place to protect the health system and reduce the rising spread of COVID-19 cases.

New restrictions and increased enforcement will reduce the spread of COVID-19 in communities, protect hospitals, keep schools and businesses open as much as possible, and better protect vulnerable Albertans.

There are now 13,349 active cases of COVID-19 in the province. With rising hospitalizations and intensive care unit admissions, new restrictions are needed.

"We are taking strong, targeted new measures to protect both lives and livelihoods and bend the COVID-19 curve back down. Today we have declared a state of public health emergency, taking firm action to protect Albertans' health and our health-care system. Without these measures, we will soon have to cancel thousands of surgeries and other health services. Albertans must act together to protect the vulnerable."

Jason Kenney, Premier

"Most Albertans have done their best to follow the targeted health measures introduced 10 days ago, however, these efforts have not slowed the growth of COVID-19 sufficiently. Cases, hospitalizations and ICU admissions continue to rise. We are in a critical time. By taking further action now, we can slow this virus, ensure our health-care system has the capacity to respond and prevent the shuttering of more businesses."

Tyler Shandro, Minister of Health

Related information

COVID-19 info for Albertans
COVID-19 relaunch status map
COVID-19 public health measures and guidelines

Multimedia

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Media inquiries

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"The growth rate of COVID-19 cases is alarming. Even with the new measures, because of the lag time between announcing and impact, additional health system measures such as cancelling urgent surgeries may be needed temporarily to ensure hospitals can cope with COVID-related illness. All Albertans must take these additional measures very seriously; this virus is highly contagious. Only by working together can we protect each other, reduce the spread and protect our health system."

Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Chief Medical Officer of Health

New public health measures

Not following mandatory restrictions could result in fines of $1,000 per ticketed offence and up to $100,000 through the courts.

Provincewide measures

Public and private gatherings

Effective immediately, mandatory restrictions on social gatherings are in effect provincewide. These measures will be in place until further notice and include:

- No indoor social gatherings are permitted in any setting, including workplaces.
- Outdoor social gatherings are limited to a maximum of 10 people.
- Funeral services and wedding ceremonies must follow all public health guidance and are limited to a maximum of 10 in-person attendees. Receptions are not permitted.

Schools

In all schools, Grades 7-12 will move to at-home learning on Nov. 30, ending in-person classes early.

- Students in early childhood services and Grades K-6 will remain learning in-person until Dec. 18.
- All students will return to at-home learning after the winter break and resume in-person learning on Jan. 11, 2021.
- These measures are mandatory.

Diploma exams are optional for the rest of the school year. Students and their families can choose whether to write the exam or receive an exemption for the April, June, and August 2021 exam sessions.

Measures for regions under enhanced status

Effective immediately, mandatory restrictions on places of worship, businesses and services are in effect in areas under [enhanced status](). These measures will be in place until further notice.

Places of worship
- Places of worship are limited to a maximum of one-third normal attendance per service.
- Physical distancing between households and masking are required.
- Faith-based leaders are encouraged to move services online.
- In-person faith group meetings can continue, but must maintain physical distancing and public health measures must be followed.

Businesses and services

Starting Nov. 27, business and service restrictions fall under three categories: closed for in-person business, open with restrictions, and open by appointment only. Impacts by category are available here: [alberta.ca/enhanced-public-health-measures.aspx]().

These measures will remain in place for three weeks, but will be extended if needed.

Albertans are encouraged to limit in-person visits to retail locations, shop local and use curbside pickup, delivery and online services, where possible.

Specific measures for Calgary, Edmonton and surrounding communities

Mandatory mask requirements

Effective immediately, a new mandatory mask requirement for indoor workplaces is in place for Edmonton, Calgary and surrounding areas. This includes any location where employees are present, and applies to visitors, including delivery personnel, and employees or contractors.

This measure will be in place until further notice.

All existing guidance and legal orders remain in place in all areas. Alberta Health, AHS and local municipalities continue to closely monitor the spread across the province.

Quick facts

- A full breakdown of the new measures can be found [here]().
- There are 13,349 active cases and 35,695 recovered cases in Alberta.
- There are 348 people in hospital due to COVID-19, including 66 in intensive care.
- The total number of COVID-19 deaths is 492.
- Legally, all Albertans must physically distance and isolate when sick or with symptoms.

- Good hygiene is your best protection: wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds, avoid touching your face, cough or sneeze into an elbow or sleeve, and dispose of tissues appropriately.