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PLEASE POST

## COVID – 19 UPDATE 32

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Due to the rapidly changing circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and its impact on workers, program support criteria are subject to change. Be sure to visit [www.unifor.org/covid19](http://www.unifor.org/covid19) to download updated versions of the fact sheets available to our members and their families.

*The Local wants to take this opportunity to thank all our members who have been working during this pandemic, your sacrifices and courage to go to work each and every day does not go unnoticed, you are all heroes in your own rights especially to those of us who rely on your daily services. To those members who have been adversely affected, laid off, or not called into work for your regular hours our thoughts and prayer are with you and your families and we all look for a restored economy where we are back to normal activities. So again, thank you so much for your service and dedication to go to work throughout this pandemic.*

We would like to start featuring in our next issues a Local 114 member(s) who have been working throughout this COVID-19 Pandemic. If you would like to be featured please send a photo of yourself (along with your name(s)) and a brief explanation of where you work and what you do. Send to [gaucher@uniforblocals.ca](mailto:gaucher@uniforblocals.ca) Mark in the subject line: Local 114 Member working during COVID-19.

<https://www.unifor.org/en/take-action/campaigns/paid-sick-days-bc-now>



We have entered the final critical push to get paid sick leave in B.C.—during the pandemic and permanently.

The government is under tremendous pressure to introduce something, and we understand that they might be in the late stages of deciding on the exact format paid sick leave will take.

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There is a serious risk the government will cave to aggressive employers and be too timid. But if COVID-19 has taught us anything, *timid government policies don't work*.

Paid sick leave in B.C. must be bold and follow the following parameters:

1. 7 permanent paid sick days;
2. 14 additional paid sick days during a pandemic or related public health emergency;
3. Universality (i.e. it applies to all workers, regardless of status);
4. Sick notes not required;
5. Flexible (i.e. not just for short-term illness; more akin to "personal emergency" days);
6. Employer-paid;
7. No administrative burden.

The BC NDP government knows this and knows what workers deserve, but pressure from business groups could block a fair paid sick leave policy.

**Our voice must be louder!**

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021PREM0033-000887>



## **B.C.'s paid sick leave will support workers, reimburse businesses**

Workers will soon have access to a made-in-B.C. paid sick leave program that will support workers to stay home when they are sick during the pandemic and afterward, including permanent paid sick leave, as a result of legislation tabled Tuesday, May 11, 2021.

To better support workers during the pandemic, amendments to the Employment Standards Act will bring in three days of paid sick leave related to COVID-19, such as having symptoms, self-isolating and waiting for a test result. Employers will be required to pay workers their full wages and the Province will reimburse employers without an existing sick leave program up to \$200 per day for each worker to cover costs.

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“The best way to protect workers, their families and co-workers during this pandemic is to have a paid sick leave program in place,” said Premier John Horgan. “Our made-in-B.C. program will help cover the costs for hard-hit businesses so we can all get through this pandemic together and move to a strong economic recovery.”

The legislation will also create a permanent paid sick leave for workers who cannot work due to any illness or injury beginning Jan. 1, 2022. The number of paid sick days and other supports will be determined following consultations with the business community, labour organizations, Indigenous partners and other stakeholders.

“We are stepping up to create permanent paid sick leave protection for British Columbians as part of our commitment to a better future for workers and workplaces,” said Harry Bains, Minister of Labour. “We will consult widely and base the long-term entitlement on what we hear, so it meets the needs of workers and supports healthy businesses.”

The short-term paid sick leave related to COVID-19 will bridge the gap for workers between when they first feel sick and when they can access the federal Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit. B.C.’s COVID-19 paid sick leave will continue to protect workers longer - to Dec. 31, 2021.

To support this leave, WorkSafeBC will set up and, beginning next month, administer the employer reimbursement program on behalf of the Province. This will include reimbursing employers up to \$200 per day per worker. For the small percentage of employers that have a highly paid workforce, but do not already have paid sick leave, those employers will be required to cover any remaining wages owed above \$200 for each COVID-19 sick day taken.

“Since the outset of this pandemic, B.C. has led the way in supporting workers and making sure they don’t go to work when they’re sick,” Bains said. “As a result of this legislation, if a worker wakes up in the morning and feels unwell, they can stay home in self-isolation and get tested without worrying about losing their income. This is good for workers, good for businesses and good for the economy. It will help avoid workplace transmission and put the pandemic behind us.”

These amendments build on a series of legislative improvements and supports provided by the B.C. government, the Ministry of Labour and WorkSafeBC since the beginning of the pandemic.

#### **Quick Facts:**

- An estimated 50% of B.C. employees do not currently have access to paid sick leave. This means upwards of one million workers in B.C. will benefit from receiving these new paid sick leaves.
- The ability to take paid leave will be especially beneficial to many vulnerable and low-wage workers (often women or migrant workers) who lack benefits.

#### **Learn More:**

For more information on B.C.’s employment standards, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/employment-standards-advice/employment-standards>

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For more information on federal Employment Insurance sickness benefits, visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness.html>

For information on the COVID-19 paid sick leave, visit: <https://gov.bc.ca/covid-paid-leave>

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<https://onlineeducation.unifor.org/>

## **Unifor Online Education**



### **Webinar Sign-Up**

<https://onlineeducation.unifor.org/webinars>

Unifor's Education Department will host a series of informative Webinars throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Webinars related to mental health, human rights, activism, women's leadership, health & safety, workers' rights, public pension programs and politics ensure that issues important to our members remain in the forefront.

By participating in these free webinars, members can engage with experts and get answers to urgent questions quickly and effectively.

Unifor remains committed to providing members with timely assistance and support during this very challenging and difficult time.

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## Online Courses

1-DAY



**Please Note: If you require time off work (Leave of Absence) to participate in a course, do not register until you have the approval of your Local Union.**

### **B.C. | Basic Health & Safety (Online)**

This one-day introductory course is intended for new health and safety representatives. Participants will learn about provincial health and safety legislation, worker rights, and the role of health and safety reps in the workplace.

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<https://links.bellmedia-ctv.mkt4301.com/servlet/MailView?ms=MzMzNDU3NjYS1&r=MzExNTI5NTE5OTU5S0&j=MTk0MzY2MzMwNOS2&mt=1&rt=0>



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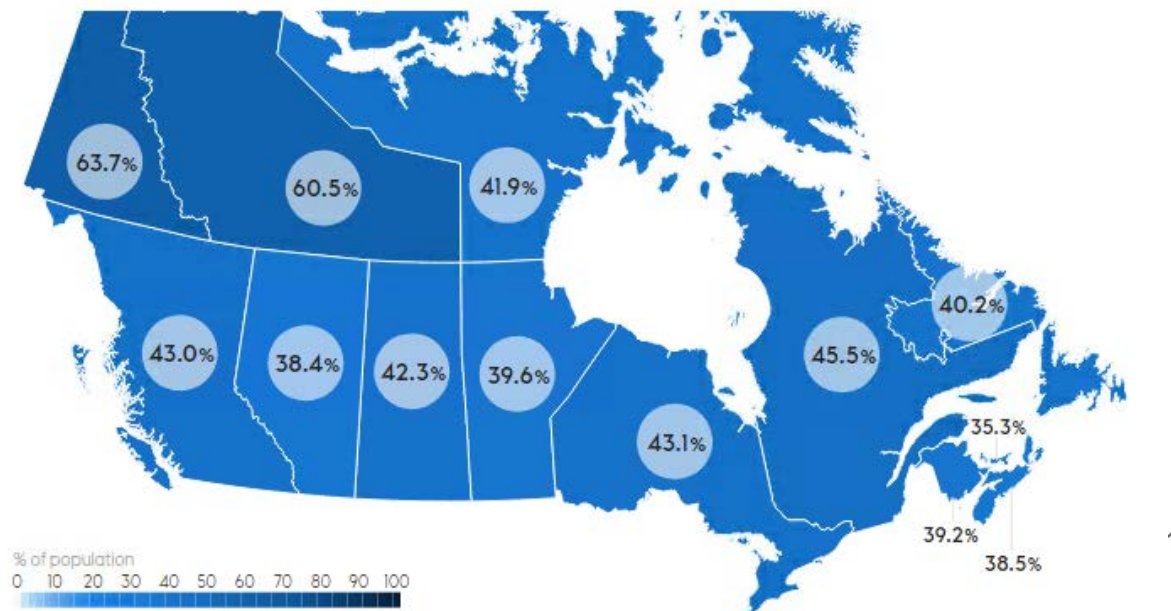
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# THE COVID-19 BRIEF

## CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Your resource for cutting through fear and misinformation. Check your email for trusted reporting and analysis



### Vaccinations by the numbers (as of 1:00 p.m. EST Tuesday, May 14, 2021)

- **Globally:** 1,400,071,901 doses administered | 8.79% of population
- **Canada:** 15,961,692 first doses | 1,336,187 second doses | 42%
- **British Columbia:** 2,215,822 first doses | 119,691 second doses | 43.0%
- **Alberta:** 1,697,466 first doses | 322,247 second doses | 38.4%
- **Saskatchewan:** 498,011 first doses | 47,448 second doses | 42.3%
- **Manitoba:** 526,731 first doses | 78,824 second doses | 38.2%
- **Ontario:** 6,221,763 first doses | 407,600 second doses | 42.2%
- **Quebec:** 3,804,396 first doses | 210,447 second doses | 44.4%
- **New Brunswick:** 296,332 first doses | 31,301 second doses | 37.9%
- **Nova Scotia:** 364,312 first doses | 38,421 second doses | 37.2%
- **Prince Edward Island:** 56,329 first doses | 11,429 second doses | 35.3%

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- **Newfoundland and Labrador:** 209,971 first doses | 9,855 second doses | 40.2%
- **Yukon:** 26,778 first doses | 23,492 second doses | 63.7%
- **Northwest Territories:** 27,310 first doses | 22,501 second doses | 60.5%
- **Nunavut:** 16,471 first doses | 12,931 second doses | 41.9%



## [Here's what's been happening in Canada](#)

**Snapshot across Canada.** Earlier this week, we saw **Manitoba** become second after **Alberta** -- which continued to set [ICU records](#) this week -- for having the [most number of infections](#) on a per capita basis among provinces and U.S. states. That remains the case as Manitoba also marked [1,000 COVID-19-related deaths](#) this week and continued to set [new infection records](#). You can take a look for yourself at how things have changed in the U.S. and Canada since January 2020 in this [interactive timelapse](#) of COVID-19 cases by CTVNews.ca's digital content editor, Jesse Tahirali.

There are **legal conflicts** between some Western provinces and religious groups as well, with [seven churches](#) and three individuals challenging Manitoba's pandemic restrictions, and a Calgary pastor and two rodeo organizers have been [ordered to appear in court](#) for violating public health orders.

As the total number of infections [cross 500,000](#) in **Ontario**, the province said it is extending its stay-at-home order for [another two weeks](#), in hopes it will help bring a more "normal" summer. Separately, an audit found the provincial government [failed to properly track \\$4.4 billion](#) in relief spending for programs such as pay increases for front-line workers and that many initiatives had weak vetting, documentation and verification procedures.

**Paid sick leave.** A bit of good news for essential workers: More COVID-19 sick leave programs are being rolled out, with **Nova Scotia** announcing up to [four paid sick days](#) and **B.C.** giving all workers [up to three days](#).

**Border politics.** Tensions rose this week between Ontario premier Doug Ford and Ottawa, as [Ford criticized the federal government](#) for "weak and porous border measures" that have failed to keep

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variants out. The province has sent four letters to federal officials regarding enhanced border restrictions, but Ottawa expressed frustration that the requests did not provide enough details, including who restrictions should apply to.



## [The latest headlines in...](#)

**VACCINE NEWS.** The mixed messaging around **AstraZeneca** continued to confuse this week with a [number of provinces](#) announcing they would [stop giving it](#) as the first dose, while the federal procurement minister reminded the public that [all three main party leaders](#) received AstraZeneca. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said he planned to take the [second shot](#) as well, if available. Ontario is expecting a [shipment of 254,500 doses](#) next week, which it will now reserve for second shots.

- **Watch:** [Get the facts on the vax](#) -- CTV News Channel **answers your questions**

Meanwhile, public health officials have issued early guidelines of what a "[one-dose summer](#)" will look like if vaccination targets are met, including some easing of restrictions and perhaps small outdoor gatherings. But until at least 75 per cent of the population is fully vaccinated, officials expect that basic health measures like masks, personal hygiene, and physical distancing will remain.

With Canada saying we could be [mixing and matching](#) different vaccines in the coming months, preliminary results from a new U.K. study suggests [this is safe](#), but the chances of mild side-effects like headaches, chills or a fever, appear higher. Results on whether mixing and matching is more effective, however, will likely come in June.

- [What does the science say about AstraZeneca? A blood clot expert weighs in](#)
- [U.S. CDC identifies 28 clotting cases after J&J vaccine](#)
- [Who decides if the world needs COVID-19 booster shots?](#)
- [Ontario will begin vaccinating students ages 12 to 17 and their families at the end of May](#)
- [Canadian firm sees positive signs in vaccine trial, says courted to move production out of country](#)



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**RESEARCH & DATA.** More than a year into the pandemic and we still sometimes hear people downplay the virus. A [new study out of the Mayo Clinic](#) found that 80 per cent of 'long-haulers' -- those diagnosed with post-COVID-19 syndrome -- reported unusual fatigue, while 59 per cent had respiratory and neurologic complaints. Most of the patients in the study had no pre-existing conditions and many did not experience symptoms serious enough to require hospitalization. A [separate and larger global study](#) found that **neurological issues** were present in 82 per cent of those who had to be hospitalized.

- [Can't smell or taste after COVID-19? 'Olfactory training' could help](#)
- [Infected children may not show typical symptoms, racial minorities kids at higher risk](#)
- [Continued COVID-19 measures may prevent seasonal influenza, study says](#)
- [Ontario's strict lockdown measures associated with fewer early preterm births: study](#)

**THE WORLD THIS WEEK.** The global inequity of the pandemic is becoming more stark, as the situation in India contrasts with the **U.K., the U.S., Canada** and elsewhere. Thanks to an efficient vaccine rollout program, the mood in the [U.K. appears jubilant](#) as museums, restaurants, bars, and theatres all begin to reopen. In the U.S., the CDC advised that fully vaccinated people [do not need to wear masks](#) or distance in most instances, a decision that drew a decidedly mixed reaction. Canada will likely take a "[collective or community approach](#)," according to one of the country's top doctors, suggesting public health officials may take a different approach towards a return to normalcy.

- [WHO urges rich countries to donate shots instead of vaccinating children](#)
- [Ohio offers vaccinated people chance of winning millions, scholarships through lotteries](#)
- [Why this year's Eid is a 'very tough one emotionally' for Canadian Muslims](#)

## **And one last thing...**

It's been a tough year financially for many families and individuals. Some have taken on extra work, or turned a hobby into a money-making side-hustle. CTV News' Chief Financial Commentator, **Pattie Lovett-Reid** cautions us that the [CRA is paying closer attention](#) to these "platform economies" and will go to great lengths like looking through social media to try to connect the dots. The CRA says it is already getting [a lot more calls](#) from taxpayers this year compared to a year ago. Lovett-Reid suggests reaching out to the agency if you're not sure where you stand and to take the first step, before the CRA comes calling.

Thank you for reading,  
*Solarina Ho, CTVNews.ca writer*

Have feedback about the newsletter? Send [your comments here](#).

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For more news on the coronavirus in Canada:

- [Vaccine tracker: How many people have received shots?](#)
- [Variant tracker: What are the strains and where are they?](#)
- [LIVE UPDATES: What's the latest in Canada and around the world today](#)

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**List of locations: Here's where to get tested for COVID-19 in B.C.**

Internet Explorer

<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/list-of-locations-here-s-where-to-get-tested-for-covid-19-in-b-c-1.5065190>

<https://bcgov03.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/7f71191c6e0c4e65a644c1da3f53eb68>

Mobile and Desktop

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/3862560c5a41418e9d78f4f81688e9d0>

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**Unifor's website is constantly being updated as new information is provided. Unifor has many websites to direct you to for assistance.**

**Resources:**

Unifor COVID-19 Information and Resources: <https://www.unifor.org/covid19>

Government of Canada Outbreak Update: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

Government of Canada Income Supports for Workers/Individuals:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

**Please also check the websites of your respective provinces for any additional provincial supports or resources that may be available to you.**

BCCDC website for Health info about COVID-19: [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca)

British Columbia Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website: <http://covid-19.bccdc.ca/>

**Health Issues: Dial 811 and follow your Provincial Protocols**

**Mental Health Issues: Dial 211 or access your EAP benefits:**

**Other useful websites with information**

**Federal Government Financial Support Resources:**

Government of Canada COVID-19 Financial Assistance for Canadians Outside of Canada: <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-info/financial-assistance/covid-19-financial-help>

Government of Canada Economic Plan & How to Apply for Support: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>

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COVID - 19 Employment and Social Development Canada Information Guide: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

Canada Revenue Agency COVID-19: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/covid-19-employee-info.html>

**Provincial Government Financial Support Resources:**

BC Preparedness Response: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

Income Assistance: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance>

Income Assistance Offices in the Lower Mainland: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/access-services#lowermainland>

**Health & Preparation Resources:**

COVID-19: Being prepared: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/being-prepared.html>

Government of Canada Symptoms & Treatments: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>

BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment

Tool: <https://covid19.thrive.health/?fbclid=IwAR1NzQXV3eUgFa5bSimQ2wiRpXVVMZc1LPbqp5fUNIDFIK1Sc7yjhcc4aB>

Health Link BC & 811: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/about-8-1-1>

**Other Useful Links:**

World Health Organization Myth Busters: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/myth-busters>

World Health Organization Public Advice: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Government of Canada, Community-based Measures: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html>

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**If you have any questions, please contact your Local Union Representative.**

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Follow phone directory to get to your Local Rep and if not available leave a message you will get a call back.

**Employment Insurance questions or EFAP: Barbie Zipp Cell # 1.250.881.3515**

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