

June 29, 2021



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## COVID – 19 UPDATE 34

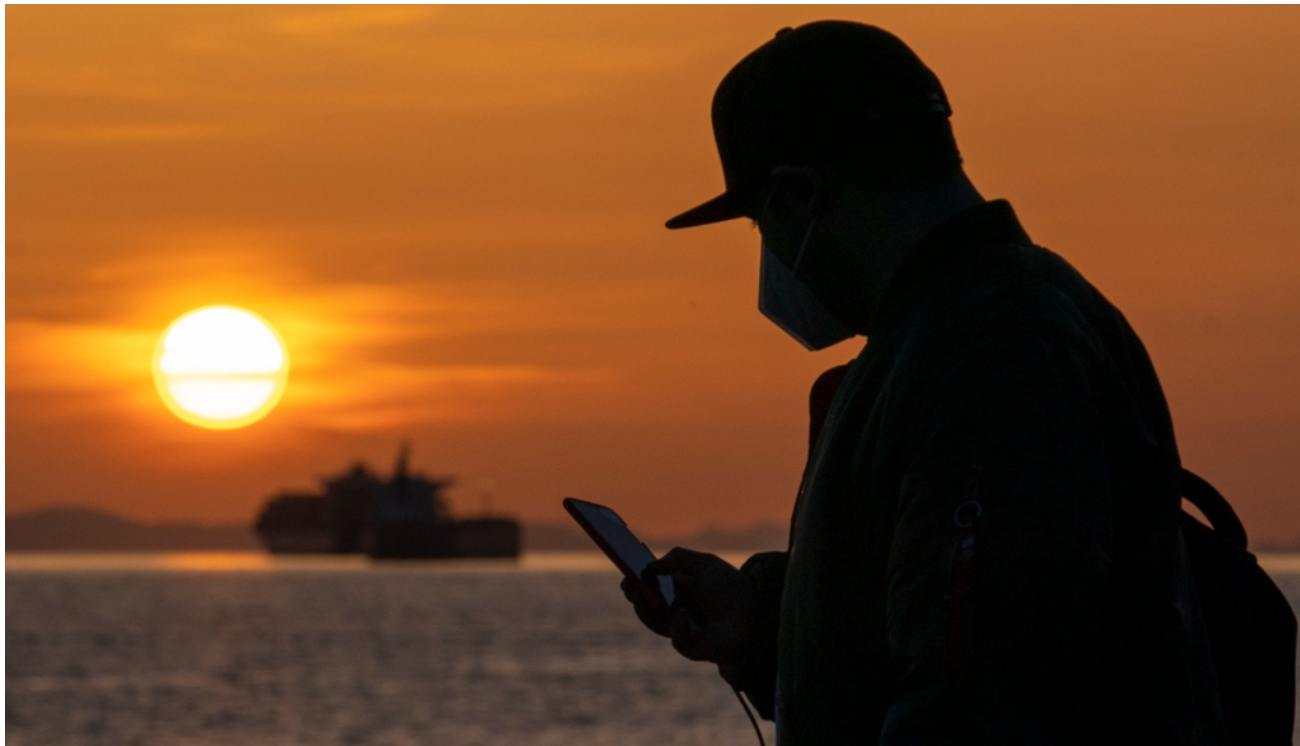
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

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.

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<https://bc.ctvnews.ca/b-c-is-on-track-to-move-to-step-3-of-covid-19-reopening-plan-say-health-officials-1.5489389>

**CORONAVIRUS**  
COVERAGE



VANCOUVER -- British Columbia is on track to proceed to the next step of its COVID-19 reopening plan on July 1, which is expected to include lifting the mandatory indoor mask policy.

The news came during a COVID-19 briefing update on Monday.

“Things are looking really good in terms of going to Step 3,” said provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry

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Henry refused to go so far as to say that B.C. would be entering phase three on July 1, which was the government's initial target date, but said “we'll have an announcement about that very soon.”

Under the plans presented earlier this year, Step 3 promises a "return to usual for indoor or outdoor personal gatherings," increased capacity for organized gatherings that would allow for fairs and festivals, the lifting of party size limits and extension of liquor hours at restaurants, and the reopening of nightclubs and casinos with limited capacity.

This third phase will also likely make masks optional. According to the restart plan, masks will be “recommended in public indoor settings.” People will also be allowed to “engage in careful social contact.”

“We're at the point where risk in our community is changing dramatically,” Henry said.

This means that masks may no longer be a necessary “last line of defence” for those who have received two vaccines.

B.C. initially resisted a mandatory indoor mask mandate, with public health officials saying that voluntary mask-wearing was preferred. [Henry had said](#) that a universal order would create “unnecessary challenges with enforcement and stigmatization.”

However, the province eventually implemented a mandatory [mask policy](#) in November 2020.

Now, Henry says she's eager to lift the requirement, and instead make it a recommendation.

“As we have protection through immunization, and we have decreasing transmission rates, it's really important for us to give agency to people, and you wear masks based on your own risk,” Henry said.

Henry emphasized that although mask-wearing may not be necessary for people who are fully vaccinated, those who aren't vaccinated may continue to need the protection of a mask.

“We are at the point where we (should) take away orders, and as soon as we can,” she said.

The province's criteria for moving to Step 3 includes having at least 70 per cent of the adult population vaccinated with at least one dose, along with low case counts and declining COVID-19 hospitalizations. As of June 28, 2020 78.1 per cent of the adult population in B.C. has been vaccinated, and both case counts and hospitalizations are continuing to decline.

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<https://links.bellmedia-ctv.mkt4301.com/servlet/MailView?ms=MzM0NzQzNDgS1&r=MzExNTI5NTE5OTU5S0&j=MTk2NTUxMzcyOQS2&mt=1&rt=0>

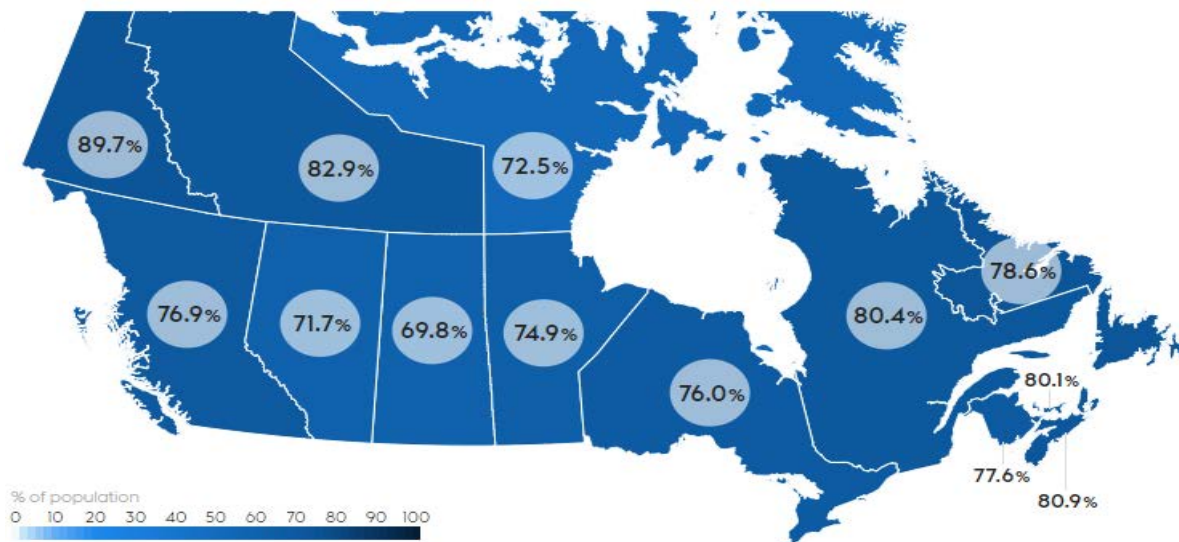


# THE COVID-19 BRIEF

## CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

*Your resource for cutting through fear and misinformation. Check your email for trusted reporting and analysis to help differentiate between fact and fiction.*

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### Vaccinations by the numbers (as of 2:00 p.m. EDT Tuesday, June 29, 2021)

*Map shows percentage of eligible population (12+) vaccinated with at least one dose; percentages below are for total population*

- **World:** 3,001,136,566 doses given | 23.18% first dose | 10.7% fully vaccinated
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- **Canada:** 67.4% have received at least one dose | 28.8% fully vaccinated
- **British Columbia:** 69.0% at least one dose | 25.6% fully vaccinated
- **Alberta:** 61.1% at least one dose | 32.9% fully vaccinated
- **Saskatchewan:** 61.2% at least one dose | 34.5% fully vaccinated
- **Manitoba:** 63.2% at least one dose | 34.3% fully vaccinated
- **Ontario:** 67.3% at least one dose | 31.0% fully vaccinated
- **Quebec:** 70.2% at least one dose | 25.2% fully vaccinated
- **New Brunswick:** 68.8% at least one dose | 28.2% fully vaccinated
- **Nova Scotia:** 72% at least one dose | 19.7% fully vaccinated
- **Prince Edward Island:** 70.6% at least one dose | 14.9% fully vaccinated
- **Newfoundland and Labrador:** 72.8% one dose | 15.4% fully vaccinated
- **Yukon:** 73.8% at least one dose | 64.3% fully vaccinated
- **Northwest Territories:** 69.6% at least one dose | 60.7% fully vaccinated
- **Nunavut:** 53.8% at least one dose | 41.3% fully vaccinated



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

**Canada's real death toll.** Canada has recorded more than 26,000 deaths caused by COVID-19, but the [real tally could be double](#) that figure, according to an unsettling new report published by the Royal Society of Canada. The report also suggests that many of those people may have died at home, unrecognized with COVID-19. A number of factors, including a lack of testing conducted in the early days, lax requirements around death reports, and inattention to marginalized communities likely contributed to Canada's inaccurate record.

**Snapshot across Canada.** First dose vaccinations may have slowed down significantly, but second dose shots are ramping up quickly across the country. Over the weekend, Scotiabank Arena, home to the Toronto Raptors and the Toronto Maple Leafs, ran a massive vaccination clinic that saw 25,793 second doses and 978 first doses given, hitting [a world-record](#) for most vaccinations administered in a single day at a single site. (CTV News' regular

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guests, including infectious disease specialists **Isaac Bogoch** and **Abdu Sharkawy** ("[The VaxStreet Boys](#)"), were [among those on hand](#) to administer the shots).

Everyone is forging ahead with reopening plans: **P.E.I.** [opened](#) its borders to vaccinated residents in **Atlantic Canada**, while **Quebec** declared the entire province a "[green zone](#)," which permits greater indoor and outdoor gatherings, among other allowances. Quebec's ministry of health also said [masks were no longer needed](#) for fully vaccinated individuals gathering inside private homes. In **Edmonton**, city officials voted in favour of [dropping indoor mask requirements](#) altogether for public spaces as of July 1.

**Delta variant spreading fast.** Speaking of Alberta, Premier Jason Kenney appears confident the province's vaccination efforts will help stave off a Delta variant-driven [fourth wave](#), despite ongoing concerns from experts in Canada and internationally about the possible impact of the variant. We've already seen other countries delay reopening plans or resume restrictions as a result. In the **U.S.**, this variant now accounts for about one in every five new infections and is forcing U.S. officials to [rethink their pandemic measures](#), even for the vaccinated. It has also prompted the **World Health Organization** to urge fully vaccinated people to [continue wearing masks](#) and follow physical distancing measures.

**Kids and COVID-19 can be serious.** We often hear about how kids are less likely to get sick, but 15-year-old Kayleigh McCue, who used to be an avid hockey player and long-distance runner, is a reminder that's not always true. She has been struggling with lingering symptoms after getting sick last fall and is one of a growing number of children and teens who are presenting with what appears to be a [pediatric version of long-haul COVID-19](#).

Data from England found that out of roughly 617,000 children who had tested positive, around 50,000 kids aged 0-19 still experienced long COVID-19 at 12 weeks. Meanwhile, over the weekend, Manitoba health officials announced that a [child under the age of 10](#) died. With many children unable to get vaccinated or still unvaccinated, experts are [urging the public](#) to "step up and get vaccinated" and continue to be mindful of their vulnerability.

**Breaking the rules.** Have you found yourself bending the rules, even just a little? A whopping 30 per cent of respondents in a newly released Canada-wide survey [admitted to breaking COVID-19 rules](#) -- and felt justified doing so, with the most common transgressions involving gathering limits and wearing masks.

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

**IN VACCINE NEWS.** A new peer-reviewed study suggests that mRNA vaccines, such as the ones made by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, [could offer years of protection](#) against

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COVID-19. At the same time, researchers at Oxford University say they have developed a method to [predict the efficacy](#) of new COVID-19 vaccines based on a blood test, potentially offering a short-cut around massive clinical trials that are increasingly difficult to conduct.

A separate Oxford study also found that mixing and matching the AstraZeneca vaccine with Pfizer-BioNTech's mRNA one [produces better immune responses](#) than those who were given a second shot of AstraZeneca. The results support recommendations in Canada and elsewhere that say AstraZeneca recipients can get a mRNA vaccine as their second dose.

- [Moderna vaccine shows promise against Delta variant in lab study](#)
- [Canadian vaccine yields promising early results](#)

**IN OTHER RESEARCH & DATA.** A new study has found that [long-term symptoms after a mild infection](#) can persist for up to six months, even in young people. While long-term complications after COVID-19 are common in hospitalized patients, the study, conducted by researchers out of the University of Bergen in Norway, noted that symptoms in milder cases can also linger for months.

Students are celebrating the end of a challenging school year, but one question is likely top of mind as educators look ahead to the fall: How safe are schools when it comes to transmission? A study out of B.C. that looked at the Vancouver School District found that [infection rates were no greater](#) among staff than other adults in the general public. The authors acknowledged some of the [study's limitations](#), however, including the fact that it did not study hot spot communities where some schools received numerous exposure notices.

- [Vaccine-linked heart inflammation tends to resolve quickly](#)
- [U.S. begins clinical trial testing COVID-19 vaccine in pregnant women](#)
- [Did COVID-19 take your taste and smell? Here's when they may return](#)

## **How it affects you**

On the topic of schools, we recently asked parents to share their [thoughts on the past school year](#) and their worries for the new term this fall. After a year of back-and-forth learning, the education levels of children will likely fall on a spectrum - some thrived, others struggled. Experts say there is a recognition that a lot of kids will be behind and curriculums should be altered to reflect the needs of students.

And an Associated Press story this week takes a closer look at [suicidal crises and mental fatigue](#) among youths, and just how much some students have struggled during the pandemic or are grappling with the challenges of getting back to how things were.

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## One last thing ...

Comparisons and reflections on the 1918 flu has often been made throughout this pandemic. The harrowing nature of what happened a hundred years ago has had permanent implications for how some people would respond to disease outbreaks in the decades that followed; the COVID-19 pandemic will be no different, academics say. We have a piece that takes a look at life after the 1918 flu and [the lessons it offers](#) us as we look ahead at the years to come.

Thank you for reading,

*Solarina Ho, CTVNews.ca writer*

<https://links.bellmedia-ctv.mkt4301.com/servlet/MailView?ms=MzM0NzQzNDgS1&r=MzExNTI5NTE5OTU5S0&j=MTk2NTUxMzcyOQS2&mt=1&rt=0>



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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>

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:**



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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=IwAR1NzQXV3eUgFa5bSimQ2wiRpXVRMZc1LPbpg5fUNIDFIK1Sc7yjhcc4aB>

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.**

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