

# INFORMATION BULLETIN

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**For Immediate Release**

October 14, 2021

## **Additional health measures introduced to stop COVID spread and protect health services for most of Northern Health region**

Northern Health (NH) is introducing new public health orders covering most of the NH region to manage COVID-19 activity.

The Delta variant is leading to faster transmission and more severe outcomes for people in communities with lower vaccination rates, including younger people. Immunization remains the most effective prevention against COVID-19. With a large unvaccinated population, these additional orders will provide additional protection. Areas such as the Northwest where vaccination rates are high, and transmission is low will be exempted from the new orders at this time. They will still be subject to the current B.C.'s Restart Step 3 requirements and the existing Provincial Health Officer order or Northern Medical Health Officer order.

“Hospitals in Northern Health are overstretched as beds become filled with COVID-19 patients, primarily unvaccinated. People needing critical care are being transferred to other regions of the province. Everyone needs to get immunized to help keep our hospitals open for treating people with other illnesses,” said Northern Health chief medical health officer Dr. Jong Kim. “Until more people make the choice to get vaccinated, we need to ensure we have orders in place to protect the most vulnerable and limit the spread.”

Effective at midnight Thursday October 14, 2021 the entire Northern Health region, **(with the exception of Local Health areas west of Kitiwanga: Terrace, Kitimat, Haida Gwaii, Prince Rupert, Stikine, Telegraph Creek, Snow Country and Nisga'a)** are under the following additional orders:

### New NH orders:

- Personal gatherings, both indoor and outdoor, are restricted to fully vaccinated people, including at private residences and vacation accommodation

- Indoor gathering: up to 5 people are permitted
  - Outdoor gathering: up to 25 people are permitted
- All indoor and outdoor organized events require a safety plan and for attendees to wear a mask and present their BC Vaccine Card showing they are fully vaccinated
  - Indoor event: up to 50 people are permitted
  - Outdoor event: up to 100 people are permitted
- Worship services: virtual services are required
- Restaurants:
  - Fast-food restaurants and unlicensed cafés without table service can provide take-out only or require patrons to present the BC Vaccine card showing they are fully vaccinated.
  - Licensed establishments and those with table service must not serve alcohol between 10pm-9am and must require patrons to present the BC Vaccine Card showing they are fully vaccinated.
- Bars and nightclubs (no meal service) will be closed
- Sport events spectators (indoor and outdoor) are limited to 50% capacity, must have a safety plan, and require attendees to wear masks and present their BC Vaccine Card showing they are fully vaccinated

These measures will remain in place until November 19 midnight and may be subject to extension if cases remain high and vaccination rates remain low.

In addition to these measures, people are strongly recommended to stay in their own community.

“We are under immense pressure in our facilities that is fueled by an unvaccinated population,” said Northern Health president and CEO, Cathy Ulrich. “We continue to encourage all people age 12 and up to get immunized.”

Not further restricted by today’s measures, but continuing to require attendees to wear masks and to present their BC Vaccine Card showing they are fully vaccinated:

- All indoor fitness classes allowed, normal capacity
- Gyms and recreation facilities, normal capacity

### **How to get vaccinated**

People can get their first or second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by dropping in to any NH immunization clinic or by making an appointment.

To make an appointment, register online by visiting the provincial website at: [www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/](http://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/), call 1-833-838-2323, or visit a Service BC office listed [here](#), and then book an appointment.

For a list of all Northern Health COVID-19 immunization clinics and other resources visit: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/covid-19-immunization-clinics>

To learn about B.C.'s Restart Plan and COVID-19 Immunization Plan, visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/covid](http://www.gov.bc.ca/covid)

If you have questions or wish to submit concerns: [php@northernhealth.ca](mailto:php@northernhealth.ca)

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