

JOINT STATEMENT

For Immediate Release
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Ministry of Health
Office of the Provincial Health Officer

Joint statement on updates for novel coronavirus, patients recovering

VANCOUVER – Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, and Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s provincial health officer, have issued the following joint statement regarding updates on the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in British Columbia:

“B.C. continues to have only four confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV. All four cases are in stable condition and are recovering in isolation at home. All close contacts of these cases are being followed closely by public health officials and remain asymptomatic.

“On Tuesday, Feb. 4, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) public health lab identified the second presumed positive test for 2019-nCoV in British Columbia. On Thursday, Feb. 6, two additional presumed positive cases were identified in the same household. Samples were sent to the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) in Winnipeg for additional testing. Those results returned positive for 2019-nCoV, bringing the total number of cases confirmed by the NML in B.C. to four.

“As of Feb. 7, BCCDC has tested a total of 371 samples for 2019-nCoV. The testing numbers are posted each Friday on the BCCDC website. In B.C., we have selected testing criteria with an intentionally low threshold to ensure a wide range of people are eligible for 2019-nCoV testing.

“The second Canadian-operated repatriation flight carrying returning Canadians from Wuhan, China, arrived at the Vancouver International Airport late on Monday, Feb 10. The aircraft refuelled and proceeded to Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Trenton in Ontario. No crew members or passengers remained in B.C.

“The returning Canadians will spend 14 days at CFB Trenton, which is the 2019-nCoV maximum incubation period, so they can be assessed and monitored, and to support their transition back to Canada.

“We want to reassure people that the risk of this virus spreading within B.C. remains low at this time. We are watching the evolution of the outbreak in China closely and will notify the public if the measures we need to take in B.C. change.

“Now is the time for tolerance. We call on all British Columbians to come together as a community to help one another. In this time of uncertainty, this is not only the right response, but the necessary one. Fear obstructs the important work of our public health officials to protect the health and safety of British Columbians.

“Together with our federal and provincial partners, we ask people who have recently visited, or who have been in close contact with, someone who has recently visited the Hubei province in China to call public health officials and self-isolate for 14 days.

“The most important measures to prevent all respiratory illnesses, including 2019-nCoV, remain cleaning your hands regularly, avoiding touching your face, coughing or sneezing into your

elbow sleeve, disposing of tissues appropriately and staying home and away from others if you become sick.

“Anyone who is concerned they may have been exposed to, or are experiencing symptoms of, 2019-nCoV should contact their primary care provider, local public health office or call 811. Translation services for 811 are available in more than 130 languages.”

Learn More:

For more information and latest updates on 2019-nCoV, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter @CDCofBC or visit the website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>

Provincial health officer’s Jan. 29, 2020, statement confirming 2019-nCoV:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0016-000176>

For the Jan. 28, 2020, joint statement on 2019-nCoV, visit:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0015-000151>

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