

Dear Community Member,

Yesterday Premier John Horgan, Health Minister Adrian Dix, and Provincial Health Officer Bonnie Henry announced BC's Restart Plan.

This doesn't mean things will return to normal right away, but it's a first step towards recovery. We're planning a restart that works for everyone, while still protecting public health and continuing to flatten the curve.

COVID-19 has tested BC in ways we could never have imagined, and I'm proud to say that on the whole, people in Courtenay-Comox have stepped up, and together we've made a lot of progress. It's vital that our next steps protect all that progress, and that we continue to give people the support they need as we adjust to a new normal.

Throughout our recovery process, it will still be very important for everyone to do their part to slow the spread. Wash your hands, practice physical distancing, increase cleaning at home and work, limit non-essential travel, and always stay home if you are feeling sick.

Beginning in mid-May, one of the first parts of the plan will be [resuming non-urgent and elective surgeries](#), which were paused when the COVID-19 outbreak began. Other health services like physiotherapists, dentists and chiropractors will also begin to open up, with the appropriate precautions in place to prevent the spread of the virus.

[May 14 will see some provincial parks opening up, for day use only.](#) It is still important to limit non-essential travel, so you are encouraged to stick close to home and enjoy the provincial parks nearest to you.

[As of mid-May, small social gatherings](#) with people outside of your household will be possible, as long as you keep groups small (fewer than 6 people) and maintain your physical distance. Remember, outdoor gatherings are preferred over indoors, and anyone who is sick at all must stay home. As Dr. Henry says, "few faces and big spaces" is the rule to keep in mind.

This week I was happy to be involved in a public zoom call hosted by the Chamber of Commerce, with MLA Scott Fraser (Alberni-Pacific Rim) and Tom Conway, CEO of Small Business BC. We know that it has been tough but there are many resources to help businesses right now and Small Business BC has a great summary as well as a real person to talk to. Learn more at covid.smallbusinessbc.ca/hc/en-us

While these new plans are very encouraging, I know there are still many people in our community who are dealing with financial and emotional hardship as a result of COVID-19. Remember that support is still available. Visit www.gov.bc.ca/covid19 for more information on the B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers, the Temporary Rental Supplement, virtual mental health services, and many more supports for individuals, families, and businesses.

Virtual Music coming up!

Wish you were Beer Series Virtual Happy Hour! <https://www.facebook.com/events/988697561545219/>
Check out the VSO as they release some great orchestral recordings today this weekend:
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1621192664713298>

My constituency office remains open by phone or email. You can reach us at Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca or phone (250) 703.2410. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you need assistance or have questions about the supports that are available.

Sincerely,

Ronna-Rae Leonard
MLA Courtenay – Comox

COVID Resources:

- For medical info, visit www.bccdc.ca or call 811
- For non-medical info and provincial supports visit www.gov.bc.ca/covid19 or call 1-888-COVID-19 (1-888-268-4319) or text 604-630-0300
- Take the self-assessment at covid19.thrive.health
- For seniors looking for additional support, or for those looking to support seniors, call 2-1-1 or visit bc211.ca

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