

Dear housing providers,

As you are aware, the BC Centre for Disease Control along with local health authorities continue to monitor the current situation with COVID-19 (Coronavirus). While the risk in British Columbia continues to be low, we recognize that some of the people we serve have higher rates of health concerns and may be at greater risk if exposed to the virus. We wanted to reach out so that we can continue to work together to reduce the possible spread of the virus and take the steps necessary to protect the people we support.

What Can We Do?

The following recommendations have been pulled together to assist housing providers in preparing themselves and their employees in case the situation with COVID-19 continues to evolve:

1. Communicate with your employees / tenants / shelter guests

It is important that everyone have access to accurate, up-to-date information on how to protect themselves and their families. Key items to include in an all staff email, include:

- What is happening?
- What employees / tenants / shelter guests can do to protect themselves?
- What the society is doing to prepare?
- Where can they go for more information?

The [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) is a good resource with lots of information on their website. This also includes information translated into other languages. Several websites also have posters, which you might find helpful:

- [Fraser Health – Hand Washing](#) (including a multi-lingual poster)
- [Fraser Health – Coughing & Sneezing Etiquette](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada – Know the Facts about Coronavirus](#) (Multiple languages available)
- [HealthLink BC – Hand Washing](#) (Multiple languages available)
- [US CDC – Stop the Spread of Germs](#) (Strong visual poster; minimal text)

2. Have a response plan

Now is a good time to review or create a response plan. The New York City Health Department has created some [Interim COVID-19 Guidance for Homeless Shelters](#) with some good items to consider, especially for those providers working with people experiencing homelessness.

A few other items to consider, include:

- *Sick employees* - Coordinate with your leadership team to determine how best to support sick employees. Encouraging employees who are sick to stay home. Consider if teleworking is an option for your employees.
- *Supplies* - Determine what supplies might be necessary to support your teams if the situation escalates. Many stores are now reporting shortage for supplies, such as masks and hand sanitizers.
- *Review your critical business functions* – Work with your leadership team to determine what services are required *if the situation continues to escalate* and what services could be adjusted or temporarily suspended to minimize contact with people, if necessary.

- *Cleaning protocols* – This is a good opportunity to review cleaning requirements to minimize the spread of the virus.

What to do if you have an employee, tenant or shelter guest you suspect might have COVID-19?

Please contact your local health agency or health authority and follow their instructions. Check out the health authority websites below for specific instructions for your area.

Planning Templates

The following planning templates are available to assist those providers needing to develop a pandemic plan:

- [Pandemic Plan template](#)
- [Non-profit Resource Page](#) (with the Business Continuity Plan template)
- [Safety, Security & Emergency Preparedness Guide](#)

3. Monitor the Situation

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website contains the latest information about the disease, particularly as it relates to the health and well-being of British Columbians. Relevant BCCDC resources and channels include:

- [Information for the public](#)
- [Latest coronavirus disease case counts \(updated every Friday\)](#)

BCCDC channels to follow:

- Twitter: @CDCofBC
- RSS feed: <http://feeds.phsa.ca/bccdc-news.xml>

Other regional, provincial and national resources about the virus:

- [Vancouver Coastal Health](#)
- [Fraser Health](#)
- [Interior Health](#)
- [Island Health](#)
- [Northern Health](#)
- [HealthLink BC](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

Find more information and resources on the [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\): Resources for BC Public Agencies fact sheet](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact your local BC Housing NPPM or SHA
- General BC Housing inquiries can be directed to communityrelations@bchousing.org