

# COVID-19 Status

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As of Sept. 23, a total of 17,190 cases of COVID-19 have occurred in Alberta, of which 1,462 cases are currently active. The average number of daily new cases for the week ending Sept. 23 is 128, compared to 142 cases the previous week, which is a 10 per cent decrease. **AHS** Edmonton Zone accounts for 53 per cent of all active cases, an increase from 51 per cent last week.

Currently, 58 people are in hospital with the virus and 14 of them are in an intensive care unit. From the start of the pandemic, 805 individuals have been hospitalized, which is a rate of 4.7 individuals per 100 cases. The average age of all hospitalized COVID-19 patients is 62 years old. In all, 15,467 Albertans have recovered from COVID-19.

Seven Albertans passed away between Sept. 17 and Sept. 23. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of these individuals, and to all who have lost loved ones during this time. In total, since the start of the pandemic in this province, 261 Albertans have died from COVID-19. Of all the deaths, as of Sept. 21, 74 per cent had three or more underlying conditions, while three per cent had no comorbidities.

As of Sept. 23, a total of 1,255,039 tests have been conducted. In the past week, 85,630 tests were completed for an average of 12,233 per day. As of Sept. 10, Albertans have the ability to receive their COVID-19 test results – either positive or negative — through a text message or an automated phone call. This is helping to reduce the time it takes for individuals to receive their test results. In the last seven days, public health initiated more than half of case investigations within five hours of a positive result being available.

As of Sept. 24, **AHS** has confirmed 149 individuals with COVID-19 were present at schools while infectious. Currently, 109 out of 2,415 schools in the province have reported that an infectious individual has attended their school.

## Things You Need to Know

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### **COVID-19 Testing for Healthcare Workers: The Latest Numbers**

We continue to update the testing data for healthcare workers in the [AHS Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Testing dashboard](#). These statistics provide the total number of **AHS**, Covenant Health and Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) employees and physicians tested, including a breakdown of the number of positive tests and those who were confirmed to have been exposed in the workplace.

As of Sept. 23:

- 50,817 employees (**AHS**, APL, and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those tested, 526 (or 1.04 per cent) have tested positive.

- Of the 526 employees who have tested positive, 76 (or 14.4 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure (with 135 of the 526 positive results still under investigation as to the source of infection).
- 3,272 physicians (AHS, APL, and Covenant combined) have been tested for COVID-19 and, of those tested, 39 (or 1.19 per cent) have tested positive.
- Of the 39 physicians who have tested positive, three (or 7.7 per cent) acquired their infection through a workplace exposure (with three of the 39 positive results still under investigation as to the source of infection).

For more information, see the [AHS](#) Healthcare Worker COVID-19 Testing [infographic](#) and [dashboard](#).

### **COVID-19 Daily Fit for Work Screening Update**

Specific screening questions for staff working at continuing care facilities (hospice, long-term care, designated supportive living or congregate living) have been updated to meet requirements from the latest Chief Medical Officer of Health [Orders](#). The Online Fit for Work Screening Tool can be found at [ahs.ca/fitforwork](https://ahs.ca/fitforwork).

There is also now a separate paper questionnaire specific for [visitors to continuing care facilities](#). Information related to screening for people visiting residents and patients is available at [ahs.ca/visitation](https://ahs.ca/visitation).

Please remember, we all have a shared responsibility in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace to provide quality and safe patient care. It's important to complete your [COVID-19 Daily Fit for Work Screening](#) before coming into work.

Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to each other, our patients and community.

### **Verna's Weekly Video Message: Orange Shirt Day and Indigenous Health**

Our goal is to support Albertans in staying healthy and provide them with the best possible healthcare experiences. In order to do that, we need to understand the unique culture and perspective of the various peoples we serve.

This includes the more than 220,000 Albertans who self-identify as Indigenous, making Alberta home to the third-largest Indigenous population in Canada.

It is important to honour, recognize and celebrate the strengths and resilience of the First Peoples of this land. By focusing on these and building greater understanding and awareness, we can build a better and more inclusive health system.

Reconciliation is also an important part of building understanding. [Orange Shirt Day](#)— Wednesday, Sept. 30 — is as an opportunity for us to show a personal commitment to reconciliation and creating culturally safe environments for Indigenous patients and families.

Wearing an orange shirt is meant to recognize the harm done to residential school students, and show a commitment to the principle that every child matters.

Joining me (Verna) today to tell us more about this event and [Indigenous Health](#) are:

- Marty Landrie, Executive Director, Indigenous Health.
- Shannon Dunfield, Manager of Indigenous Health and Diversity in the North Zone.
- Simon Ross, a Senior Advisor with the Cultural Competency team.

[Marty, Shannon and Simon share their thoughts](#) on Orange Shirt Day, how we can create a culturally safe environment, and how we work with Indigenous communities.




**PPE Question of the Week: Which N95 Respirators are Available at AHS?**

Alberta Health Services is no longer using certain N95 respirators due to supply chain concerns. In this week's PPE Question of the Week, Rod Kaliel — Executive Director of Workplace Health and Safety — talks about which N95 respirators are no longer used or being phased out at AHS, and which N95 respirators are taking their place.

The video series is available on the PPE webpage at [ahs.ca/covidppe](https://ahs.ca/covidppe).

PPE Question of the Week



Which N95 respirators  
are available at  
AHS? 



Rod Kaniel answers PPE question of the week.

## Be Well - Be Kind

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### **Celebrity Shout-Out – Country Singer Terri Clark**

Messages of gratitude for our healthcare staff keep pouring in from musicians, actors and athletes all over the country.

Today's shout-out comes from [Canadian country star Terri Clark](#).

“Thank you so much for putting your lives on the line on a daily basis and being on the front lines for all of us. Our thoughts and prayers are with you every single day, and we appreciate you more than you will ever know,” says the Medicine Hat-born musician, best known for her hits If I Were You, Poor Poor Pitiful Me and Emotional Girl.

Follow [AHS](#) on [social media](#) for more celebrity shout-outs.



### **Sharing the Love**

Thank you for recognizing your team members and colleagues as we continue to work together to respond to the needs of Albertans during this pandemic. We love how you share the love and appreciate each other.

### *Addiction and Mental Health Staff Dialed In*

Historically, the Mental Health Helpline and Addiction Helpline have been operated by Health Link. However, to ease increasing demand on Health Link as a result of the pandemic, the Emergency Co-ordination Centre asked Provincial Addiction and Mental Health (AMH) staff to start operating the two helplines. More than 80 staff from Provincial AMH and all five **AHS** zones offered to answer the calls, and this work continued until the redeployment ended on Aug. 28. During this time, AMH staff members answered more than 13,500 calls from Albertans who needed resources and support with their addiction and mental health concerns. We are so thankful for their commitment to help Albertans. Temporary AMH staff are now answering the helplines.

### *You're Invited to Light Up the Night with Brett Kissel*

The Airdrie Health Foundation is extending an invitation to Alberta Health Services staff to attend its *Light Up the Night* virtual concert with Brett Kissel on Saturday, Oct. 3, at 7:30 p.m. As a gesture of gratitude to our staff who have worked tirelessly during the COVID-19 pandemic, the foundation is offering complimentary tickets to healthcare providers who wish to attend.

This concert marks the end of the foundation's two-week *Light Up the Night* campaign, which has featured virtual events for all to take part in. We are grateful to the foundation for this incredible offer of support, and hope you have a chance to join them. If you are interested in receiving a ticket, please visit [here](#) for details.

### *Gratitude from Albertans*

“It was a chilly, windy morning today. I took my granddaughter in for symptomatic COVID testing. Every one of the workers we encountered was very pleasant yet efficient and compassionate. Thank you.”

-Anonymous

“Thank you for your friendly, efficient, caring, and exceptional service. I so appreciate being treated with kindness and respect by support staff, nurses and physicians!”

-Cheryl Blair

### **Wrapping Up — A Few thoughts As We Head Into Fall**

With the arrival of fall earlier this week, we head into a season when people start spending more time indoors and when influenza begins to circulate. This has always been a demanding time of year for our healthcare system and, with the COVID-19 pandemic, we know the next several months will be even more difficult for all of us — in terms of increasing pressures on the system, and in terms of protecting patients, clients, families and each other from illness. We know you are up to the challenge. We also know that **AHS** staff, physicians and volunteers will always look after the people we serve and each other.

You are likely aware of outbreaks in some of our acute care facilities. Please know multiple **AHS** teams are working daily to determine where these infections have started, how they were transmitted, and who needs to be contacted and tested to limit the exposure and keep people safe. Our acute care facilities remain safe places to receive care — and safe places to work.

It's natural to be worried. This is an unsettling time with many unknowns. But there are things we can all keep doing to reduce the risk of transmission. Do not come to work if you are feeling ill. Wear personal protective equipment appropriately. Support visitation policies. And adhere to the continuous masking directive by continuously wearing medical masks in all patient care areas and any place, including corporate areas, where two metres of distance cannot be maintained.

Thank you for your hard work, dedication and courage during what we know is a difficult and emotional time. We will continue to provide exceptional care to Albertans, and we will get through this together.

*Please Note: This message has been modified from the **AHS** Daily Updates.*

**\*\*\*Please share this information as appropriate\*\*\***

**\*\*\*For Alberta Health Services – Indigenous specific questions/concerns please email [ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca](mailto:ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca) \*\*\***

**\*\*\*For Indigenous Services Canada please**

**email [sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca](mailto:sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca) \*\*\***

*Forwarded on behalf of the Provincial Indigenous Health Hub*

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