

COVID-19 Status

April 9, 2020

We have confirmed 50 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 1,423. Of the total cases in Alberta to date, 206 are suspected to have been acquired in the community, 95 have been hospitalized and 32 admitted to intensive care units (ICU). Today, there are 44 cases in hospital, with 16 in ICU. The number of recovered cases is now at 519. 68,762 tests have been conducted to date.

Today, we must report three more deaths related to COVID-19, all in the Calgary Zone. We send our condolences to the families and friends of these individuals. Every one of these people was valued and loved. We know this is a very hard day for you and we want you to know that we are grieving alongside you. In total, 29 Albertans have now passed away from COVID-19.

Things You Need to Know

Detailed Modelling Information

[More detailed modelling information](#) was released today by Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services. These models and numbers are helping us plan, prepare and do our very best to make sure that Albertans who need hospital care, whether it's related to COVID-19 or not, can get that care in the weeks and months ahead.

Guided by these models, AHS has been adding thousands of new hospital beds to the system, including additional intensive care spaces. We're bringing in more ventilators through our supply chain, and bringing older models out of storage, and we're training additional clinical staff to operate them. We're procuring more personal protective equipment (PPE) for frontline healthcare providers at AHS and across the province at continuing care sites, physician offices and centres set up for our homeless population. We are working with staff and physicians to ensure they feel protected with the personal protective equipment they have, and also that we have the supplies needed to last for the duration of the crisis.

Alberta responded early and aggressively to the threat posed by this pandemic, and because of that, our province has fared better than many jurisdictions.

Perhaps the most important tool we have in this fight is that we know how COVID-19 is transmitted and we know what we need to do to protect ourselves and our loved ones. It may feel that so much of what's happening is beyond our control, but in fact, as individuals we have the most control over what happens in Alberta in the coming weeks with regard to this pandemic. We can change the course of how COVID-19 affects our province and how long we face the restrictions. Changing our total infections in the province is literally in our frequently washed hands.

Stick to the public health guidelines. Keep disinfecting regularly touched surfaces, self-isolating if you feel sick, staying home as much as you can, and when you must be in public, practicing physical distancing by staying at least two metres away from others. Together, we have been making a difference. This is not the time to relax our approach.

Testing Criteria Updates

The criteria for COVID-19 testing has again expanded in Alberta to reflect our enhanced lab testing capacity and the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. These categories will continue to change

in the coming weeks and months, as we adjust based on the course of COVID-19. We continue to encourage anyone who fits into any of the below outlined categories to go to ahs.ca/covid and complete the online assessment. This will be faster than calling 811, and will ensure you get the testing you may need.

Newly eligible groups:

Effective today, in addition to those already eligible for testing, the groups outlined below are now eligible for testing in Alberta, if they have symptoms of cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat and:

- reside in Calgary Zone
- reside anywhere in Alberta and are living with someone aged 65 or older
- reside anywhere in Alberta and usually work outside of the home, but are unable to do so while self-isolating

Note: While people with symptoms are legally required to self-isolate, they ARE allowed to leave home to come for testing, [following the guidance outlined in this order](#).

All symptomatic individuals in the following roles also continue to be eligible for testing:

- Group home workers and shelter workers
- First responders, including firefighters
- Those involved in COVID-19 enforcement, including police, peace officers, bylaw officers, environmental health officers, and fish and wildlife officers
- Correctional facility staff, working in either a provincial or federal facility
- People who are hospitalized with respiratory illness
- Residents of continuing care and other similar facilities
- Individuals who work in a clinical care setting including hospitals, clinics, and any other settings where face-to-face patient care is provided in addition to pharmacists and pharmacy technicians

If you do not fit into any of the above testing criteria, and are symptomatic, you are required to stay home and self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the start of your symptoms, or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. If your symptoms worsen, call 811. Please do not visit a hospital, physician's office, lab or healthcare facility without consulting Health Link (811) first.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Planning

Right now, we have sufficient supply of PPE to meet the projected needs. But, we cannot be complacent – our PPE supply is going to be key in ensuring our frontline staff can do their life-saving work. We must continue to focus on conserving what we have. It is more important than ever that we use our PPE appropriately.

We are also extremely fortunate in Alberta to have one provincial healthcare system. This gives us enormous purchasing power, locally, nationally and internationally. AHS has been working

globally to secure additional PPE, including face shields, procedure masks, surgical gowns, and N95 respirators.

We have developed models that project PPE usage and needs, now and into the future. These models are being reviewed on an ongoing basis with actual information and then adjusted and compared to our in-bound stock and daily demand. We are reassured by the modelling predictions to date, and will continue to be diligent in this work. We continue to test some of that modelling now in the clinical settings to ensure that modelling assumptions hold true.

AHS has also created a [PPE Task Force](#) to consolidate best practice guidelines and information. And, we continue to look at other ways of doing things. AHS is investigating recycling or re-using some PPE equipment, after ensuring the equipment is cleaned and sterilized, just as other jurisdictions are doing.

We will continue to update you on details about PPE as we move through this outbreak together.

Allied Health Virtual Care Guidance

Many AHS programs and services have transitioned from face-to-face appointments, to telephone and other virtual platforms to provide care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student Placement Guidance Document

Emergency and crisis situations are an integral part of healthcare education. Where appropriate and safe to do so, we are supporting the continuation of student placements in AHS facilities.

AHS Zoom Reaches One Million Meeting and Virtual Care Minutes

AHS staff and physicians have now utilized more than one million meeting minutes on Zoom since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Zoom videoconferencing has been an invaluable tool for AHS teams to connect virtually, as well as provide remote care to patients. This has been particularly helpful to support patients who are unable to attend AHS clinics due to a variety of factors, including being in self-isolation or being located in rural or remote areas.

AHS uses an enterprise, or business-specific version of Zoom, which adheres to Canadian and international security standards, federal legislation and best practices for business and healthcare. At this time, Zoom's use within AHS is strictly for communication; it should not be used to share or store sensitive health information.

All AHS groups using Zoom, or any videoconferencing tool, are obligated to adhere to our legislation, policies, best practices, code of conduct, and guidelines when representing AHS.

In the Zones

Zone Emergency Operations Centre (ZEOC) Update – South Zone

Collaboration is at the heart of the assessment and testing measures for COVID-19 in South Zone. With teams working together, South Zone is able to provide same-day testing for many of those being referred.

Public Health, Environmental Public Health, and Community Infection and Prevention Control, have played a major role in the responsive and coordinated efforts across the zone, utilizing

their experience from the vaccine preventable disease outbreaks that have occurred in the southern parts of the province. Their quick action and familiarity with the process led to quick turnaround times for those needing to be swabbed.

On cold and snowy days, their staff have bundled up to operate parking lot drive-through swabbing locations at 11 satellite sites across the zone, allowing rural Albertans to be swabbed in their own communities without having to travel to a larger municipality. Meanwhile, in coordination with public health teams, community paramedics are providing testing for those in community who are unable to leave their homes, as well as those who live at-risk or are homeless. Testing is also being done in congregate living and other home settings by home care and other trained staff.

The close work of these teams, both on the frontlines and among South Zone leadership, has allowed testing to help monitor health and protect residents throughout the zone.



Public Health staff out swabbing in a parking lot in Lethbridge at one of 11 drive-through locations

First Nation Telehealth and Onehealth Resources:

- Onehealth can be found at <https://www.onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19>
- Telehealth Portal can be found at: https://fntn.ca/DesktopModules/TSAGTHSkinObjects/images/slider_01.jpg

Canadian Roots Exchange has a Community Support Fund offering \$5,000 grants for projects/initiatives that support Indigenous youth (14-29).

You can read more about that [here](#) – feel free to share with your networks.

Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary - Indigenous COVID-19 Task Force.

Poster:

ABORIGINAL FRIENDSHIP CENTRE OF CALGARY
Many Nations. One Family.™

INDIGENOUS COVID-19 TASK FORCE

This Task Force is comprised of community members, agency partners, and stakeholders assembled to ensure individuals in our community have access to basic necessities, mental health support, cultural support, and access to vital services during the crisis.

Information Line: 403-370-6422

Community support is available to you Monday - Friday from 9AM - 4PM:

- Food and non-food hampers (Single, Family or Senior)
- Assistance filling out Federal/Provincial emergency support applications
- COVID-19 awareness and information
- Referrals for mental health or addiction supports
- Elder cultural supports with Dakota Eaglewoman via telephone at **403-801-7482**

CONTACT US TODAY:
To inquire about these supports and services please contact our Indigenous COVID-19 Task Force Coordinator:
LORI JOHNSTONE | 403-370-6422 | ICTF@AFCCALGARY.ORG

Remember, as one of the wise Grade 3 students said today, this virus is strong, but not stronger than we are. Together, we've got this.

Thank you and stay safe.

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

*****For Alberta Health Services – Indigenous specific questions/concerns please email ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca *****

*****For Indigenous Services Canada please email sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca *****

Josipa Pavicic on behalf of Nadine McRee