

**FORWARDED ON BEHALF
OF
INSPECTOR ANDREW CHAN**

**To: All VPD Employees - Civilian and Sworn
COVID-19 Update: March 16, 2020**

Current Situation

A Pandemic Working Group has been established to coordinate the VPD's response to the COVID-19 outbreak. This response is being led by HR and the Emergency Planning Unit. In conjunction with health authorities and agency partners, the VPD continues to monitor and prepare for the situation as it evolves. This includes ensuring that the necessary actions are being taken to safeguard VPD staff and operations accordingly.

As of March 16, the Department Operations Center (DOC) has been activated to support advanced internal planning efforts in response to COVID-19. During this developing situation, the VPD's response will remain fluid and adaptive.

According to Health Canada, there is an increased risk of more severe outcomes for Canadians:

- aged 65 and over;
- with compromised immune systems; and,
- with underlying medical conditions.

There have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the VPD.

On March 16, 2020, the Province provided the following update on the COVID-19 outbreak in BC:

- There have been 30 new cases since the March 14 update, bringing the total for BC to 103.
- Events or gatherings of 50 people or more are prohibited going forward. Accordingly, all VPD events are under review.
- All elective surgeries will be cancelled to prioritize urgent patients.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0086-000499>

Key Updates for March 16, 2020

- Federal Travel Advisory – As of March 16, Canada's borders have been closed to all international visitors. Canadians abroad are being strongly advised to return home while commercial flight travel remains available. This will impact VPD staff who are currently travelling outside Canada.
- Commencing March 18, international flights into Canada will be restricted to four airports (Toronto-Pearson, Montreal-Trudeau, Calgary International, and Vancouver International).
- As of March 16, airlines will be ordered to ban travelers with symptoms from boarding planes. They will be required to conduct basic health assessments for every traveler. Asymptomatic Canadians abroad will receive support through a new program to help them return home.
- All work-related travel for VPD staff outside of BC remains cancelled until further notice.
- The VPD continues to adhere to the Province's March 12th directive regarding self-isolation for travelers returning to Canada. The VPD is currently not granting exemptions for any staff. Of note:
 - Unless other extenuating circumstances apply (e.g. there is medical direction for self-isolation, or an individual is symptomatic), staff who returned home prior to March 12th, 2020 @ 1600hrs, are not required to self-isolate.
 - Anyone returning home after March 12th, 2020 @ 1600hrs, must self-isolate for 14 days (regardless of length of stay). Questions on travel around the March 12th directive can be directed to HR.

- VPD staff members showing symptoms of illness should not come into work and should stay home. All VPD staff must call the sick-line if you are unable to attend work due to illness or self-isolation:
 - 604 - 717 - 9600 (Sworn)
 - 604 - 717 - 9700 (Civilian)

Work Related Travel

All work related travel for all VPD staff outside of BC, remains cancelled until further notice. Staff who are affected by work related travel restrictions are asked to please contact VPD Finance-Travel so they can coordinate any ticket refunds/credits and any other related costs (vpdfinancetravel@vpd.ca). Any exceptions to the current work related travel restrictions will require concurrence at the Deputy Chief level and final approval by the Chief Constable.

Currently, work related travel within BC is still permitted for all VPD staff. In light of the current concerns over COVID-19, VPD employees have the ability to opt out of work related travel and should consult with their supervisor if they have any concerns.

Personal Travel

On March 12, 2020, BC Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry and BC Health Minister Adrian Dix announced that **the Province is recommending all residents avoid all non-essential international travel, including to the United States.**

Effective March 12, 2020, **the Province has advised that anyone who travels outside of Canada will need to stay away from school or work for 14 days upon return.** This directive from the Province will impact staff who reside in the USA, or are currently travelling outside Canada.

Effective March 16, **the Federal Government has closed off Canada's borders to international visitors. Canadians abroad have been strongly advised to return home. Canadians have also been advised not to travel abroad. Any VPD staff abroad should return home immediately.**

<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice/221>

The VPD is adhering to Provincial directives on travel and self-isolation, and is currently not granting exemptions for any staff. In response to the travel restrictions, the following pay provisions apply:

VPD Employees entitled to sick leave benefits.

	Scenario	Compensation	Payroll coding
1.	Any illness (including COVID-19).	Sick Leave (paid or unpaid depending on balance).	Sick – Bank with Pay or Sick – Bank without pay (Consult HR)
2.	Medically directed to self-isolate – no symptoms of illness.	Regular Pay (new pay code) for duration of self-isolation (14 days).	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self isolation)
3.	Medically directed to self-isolate – no symptoms initially but develop during period of self-isolation.	Regular Pay (new pay code) until such point employee becomes ill, after which code as Sick Leave.	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self isolation) Sick – Bank with Pay or Sick – Bank without pay (Consult HR)
4.	Out of country, on vacation before March 12 th @ 1600hrs and return to country and must	Regular Pay (new pay code) for duration of self-isolation (14 days)	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self isolation)

	isolate for 14 days (No symptoms of illness).		
5.	Out of country on vacation before March 12 th @ 1600hrs and return to country and isolate. Then develop symptoms during period of isolation.	Regular Pay (new pay code) until such point employee becomes ill, after which code as Sick Leave.	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self isolation) Sick – Bank with Pay or Sick – Bank without pay (Consult HR)
6.	Travel out of country post March 12 th @ 1600hrs. Self-isolate for 14 days upon return.	Vacation/leave banks (all banks depleted except sick leave).	Vacation – any leave bank (current year, deferred, EDO, OTL, etc.) Sick banks cannot be used
7.	Travel out of country post March 12 th @ 1600hrs. Self-isolate for 14 days upon return. Then develop symptoms during period of isolation.	Vacation/leave banks (all banks depleted except sick leave until such point employee becomes ill, after which code as Sick Leave).	Vacation – any leave bank (current year, deferred, EDO, OTL, etc. with no symptoms) Sick – Bank with Pay or Sick – Bank without pay (Consult HR)

Auxiliary and TFT employees who receive % in lieu of sick time

	Scenario	Compensation	Payroll coding
1.	Any non-flu related illness	No paid time	No code required
2.	Any flu related illness(including COVID-19)	Regular pay (new pay code) for any shifts already pre-scheduled over 14 days period commencing with the onset of your symptoms	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self-isolation)
3.	Medically directed to self-isolate – no symptoms of illness.	Regular Pay (new pay code) for any shifts already pre-scheduled during period of self-isolation (14days)	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self-isolation)
4.	Medically directed to self-isolate – no symptoms initially but develop during period of self-isolation.	Regular Pay (new pay code) for any shifts already pre-scheduled during period of self-isolation (14days).	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self-isolation)
5.	Depart for Out of Country travel prior to 1600 March 12 th : - On return to Canada , must isolate for 14days	Regular Pay (new pay code) for any shifts already pre-scheduled during period of self-isolation (14days).	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self-isolation)
6.	Depart for Out of Country travel prior to 1600 March 12 th : On return to Canada , must self-isolate , if develop symptoms during period of isolation	Regular Pay (new pay code) for any shifts already pre-scheduled during period of self-isolation (14days).	Scheduled – TBD Coding (for self-isolation)

7.	Depart for out of Country travel after 1600 March 12 th : - Self-isolate for 14 days upon return	No paid time	AUX - No entry on time card TFT – code LWOP
1.	Depart for Out of Country travel after 1600 March 12 th : On return to Canada , must isolate , than if develop symptoms during period of isolation	No paid time	AUX - No entry on time card TFT – code LWOP

Impacted staff with any questions relating to travel restrictions and self-isolation directives should contact Human Resources.

In response to the Federal Government’s global travel advisory, VPD staff members are advised to avoid personal travel outside of Canada. **Canadians have also been advised not to travel abroad. Any VPD staff abroad should return home immediately.**

Although travel is not advised outside of Canada, staff still planning to travel should be aware that the situation around the world is changing rapidly, with many countries either closing, or partially closing their borders. Staff also need to consider that travel insurance and extended health benefits may not be valid when traveling at this time. Staff should check with their medical insurance provider before travelling.

Up to date health notices for COVID-19 are posted on the following Federal Government website.

<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/travel-health-notice/221>

Self-Isolation Tips

As per the March 12 directive, all Canadians returning from abroad are being directed to self-isolate, which means staying home and not going to work or school, and monitor for symptoms for 14 days after arrival in Canada. The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) provides the following tips for self-isolation:

- Stay at home. Do not go to work or school.
- Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer often.
- Consider asking friends or relatives to help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication. Alternatively, you can order groceries and medication by phone or online.
- Limit the number of visitors in your home. Only have visitors who you must see and keep the visits short.
- Avoid face to face contact; keep a distance of 1-2 metres (3-6 feet) from another person.
- Have ill people use a separate bathroom and bedroom if possible.

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing-isolation>

Health and Wellness: HR Supports

The VPD recognizes that the current situation may be stressful to members and their families. Efforts are underway to support all VPD member’s health and well-being during the Pandemic. Staff are encouraged to:

- Minimize overexposure to news.

- Engage in healthy activities, including eating healthy and moderate exercise.
- Communicate and listen to one another.
- Try not to catastrophize, as most people affected with COVID-19 recover unharmed.
- Follow the advice of medical experts rather than rumours.

The Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM)/Peer Support is available 24/7 should anyone be feeling anxiety or stress related to COVID-19.

- Sworn members can reach out to Ali Gailus (778-847-5452), Michele McKnight (778-227-0789), Dave Moe (604-404-9303) or any other team member. Their names/contact information can be accessed on the intranet: <http://references.sharepoint01.vpd.bc.ca/PeerSupport/Lists/Contacts/AllItems.aspx>
- Civilian members can reach out to Amanda Vetter (604-349-5713) or any other Civilian CISM team member. Their names/contact information can also be accessed on the intranet: <http://references.sharepoint01.vpd.bc.ca/CISMCivilian/Lists/CivilianCISMTeam/AllItems.aspx>

Operational Considerations

Efforts are underway to better prepare and inform VPD frontline members with regards to the VPD's COVID-19 preparedness. Upcoming Pandemic Working Group Patrol briefings will be provided as per the following schedule:

Date: Tuesday – March 17, 2020
 Location: Room 200 – **Graveley**
 Time: 0830, 1000, 1200, 1400, 1600, 1930

Date: Wednesday – March 18, 2020
 Location: Classroom 1 – 2120 **Cambie**
 Time: 0645, 0700, 0715, 1345, 1400, 1545, 1600, 1615, 1845, 1900
 Audience: All sworn and civilian staff wanting to attend

Districts 1 & 2 will attend at 0645, 1345, 1545, 1845
Districts 3 & 4 will attend at 0700, 1400, 1600, 1900
BET will attend at 0715, 1615

Date: Thursday – March 19, 2020
 Location: Room 200 **Graveley**
 Time: 0830, 1000, 1200, 1400, 1600, 1930

All other sworn and civilian staff may attend any of the briefings; however, **attendance will be limited to 50 people per briefing.**

In an effort to minimize group gatherings, e-briefings will be made available for staff that do not wish to attend the parade briefings in person. The e-briefings can be found on the COVID-19 intranet page:

<http://references.sharepoint01.vpd.bc.ca/COVID19/default.aspx>

Moreover, the following items are important operational considerations at this time:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Frontline Staff

Personal protective equipment continues to be available to staff 24/7 at the Spyglass Kiosk. This includes half-masks, gloves, and alcohol wipes. Additionally, these items will be available during business hours at the Health & Safety Office at Graveley HQ. Members are also reminded to carry their personal issued respirators to be used as deemed necessary.

Jail Procedure

The risk to Jail staff members and members attending the jail is low. However, early identification of detainees who require screening by the medical staff is paramount. The medical staff at the VPD jail will be conducting enhanced screening of all detainees in light of the COVID-19 virus.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Any detainees transported to VPD jail who are showing symptoms of COVID-19, or have had contact with an infected person, must remain in a police wagon at the sally port until the Jail NCO has been notified. This will allow the jail to prepare and limit exposure to staff and other detainees.

Additionally, please notify Fleet Services/ Kiosk to ensure the vehicle or transport wagon is disinfected appropriately.

Calls for Service at Hospitals

Like medical staff and hospital workers, it is essential that VPD personnel attending hospitals or other locations where COVID-19 may be present (or dealing with potentially infected persons) be mindful of infection control and take appropriate universal precautions: such as social distancing where possible, washing hands, and the use of PPE where appropriate.

As long as VPD personnel are mindful of these issues and taking these precautions, merely being in the same location as a person with flu symptoms would NOT render them “exposed” to COVID-19.

E-Comm

Steps have been taken at E-Comm to help mitigate first responder’s exposure to anyone that may be ill with COVID-19. A Temporary Operating Procedure for all police agencies has been implemented. Call Takers will:

- Ask if anyone appears sick or has had a known exposure to the COVID-19 virus (e.g. including having traveled to an area that has experienced a COVID-19 outbreak).
- If there are symptoms:
 - Ask the caller to describe the symptoms (i.e. cough, fever, shortness of breath).
- Document the answers in the CAD event.

Dispatchers will subsequently advise attending members if any symptoms or known exposures are documented in the CAD call.

Drug Analysis

Effective March 16, in relation to the COVID-19 situation, drug analysis services conducted by Health Canada will not be accepting samples for routine analysis. The Property Office will continue to accept drug exhibits and store them until the services of Health Canada resume.

Fingerprinting Services

Fingerprinting services provided by the VPD’s Public Safety Unit (PSU) will be suspended until further notice.

Fleet

Efforts are underway to enhance the cleaning of VPD facilities and equipment. Fleet Section staff engaged in a thorough overnight clean of the VPD fleet at Spyglass and Graveley on March 15, and a daily maintenance plan is underway.

How to Reduce the Risk of Exposure

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) recommends that **to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19**, the same measures that are taken in relation to colds and flu should be employed:

- Wash your hands frequently (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread).
- Practice other good hygiene habits: do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with your hands, and cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough (ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of your elbow).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched workspace surfaces.
- Maintain good general health (eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, exercise in moderation).
- **Stay home if you are sick.**

The VPD is undertaking enhanced cleaning efforts in all its facilities to help combat the potential spread of COVID-19 and other viruses. Facilities staff will be increasing the availability of cleaning supplies throughout the VPD.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Staff are advised to contact 8-1-1 (HealthLink BC - Nurse's Line) or your health care provider for questions about your personal health situation, available 24/7. This includes medical advice regarding your exposure to others in self-isolation.

Communication

The VPD Pandemic Working Group will continue to provide regular updates to the Department as the situation develops.

Managers and supervisors – please ensure timely email communications are disseminated to staff who may not have immediate access to work email.

A dedicated email address has been established to contact the VPD's Pandemic Working Group for questions or queries relating to COVID-19. Emails can be sent to: vpdpandemicworkinggroup@vpd.ca. At this time, the email will be monitored during business hours (7-days a week).

Furthermore, the COVID-19 VPD Intranet page will be updated as the situation evolves and can be accessed here:

<http://references.sharepoint01.vpd.bc.ca/COVID19/default.aspx>



Tyrone Sideroff | Sergeant 2368
Support Services Division
Vancouver Police Department
604.717.9183 | tyrone.sideroff@vpd.ca

NOTICE: CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION - This transmission may contain confidential or privileged communications, and the sender does not waive any related rights and obligations. If you are not the intended recipient and have received this in error, you must immediately destroy it. Unauthorized copying or distribution of any information herein is strictly prohibited and may constitute a criminal offence, a breach of Provincial or Federal privacy laws, or may otherwise result in legal sanctions. We ask that you notify the Vancouver Police Department immediately of any transmission received in error, by reply email to the sender.