

## COVID-19 Information for Parksville Residents

On March 11, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global health pandemic based on the number of people affected in more than 100 countries. At this time, COVID-19 is not considered a pandemic in British Columbia and our region is still considered to be at low risk.

As the lead agencies in British Columbia, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and the BC Ministry of Health are closely monitoring the situation and will provide guidance. The City will follow the advice and guidance of Island Health, which has the expertise to assess the level of risk posed by a pandemic influenza such as the coronavirus. As a support agency, the City of Parksville, similar to other local governments, will respond to and distribute accurate information to residents on behalf of the BCCDC, Ministry of Health and Island Health.

As stated in earlier information distributed by the City, in a COVID-19 pandemic situation, the City's main role is to protect staff so healthy employees can continue to provide and maintain service levels for our residents. The City has pandemic influenza policies in place; should it become necessary, the City will activate its policies and communications strategy.

Following the advice from the Ministry of Health and BCCDC, in an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19, we are encouraged to stay home if sick. Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease caused by a new virus not previously identified in humans. The virus causes respiratory illness (like the flu) with symptoms such as a cough, fever and in more severe cases, pneumonia. You can protect yourself by washing your hands frequently and avoid touching your face. The coronavirus spreads primarily through contact with an infected person when they cough or sneeze, or through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose.

When coughing or sneezing, use a tissue or the sleeve of a shirt or jacket to cover the spread of droplets reducing the possible spread of the virus. Most importantly, washing your hands multiple times a day will help to reduce the risk and spread of COVID-19. Unless you have travelled to one of the areas where COVID-19 is spreading, or have been in close contact with someone who has and is feeling unwell, your chances of getting it are currently low.

When new information is issued by the lead agencies, we will pass along the updates to our residents. The City has made general information, resources and links available at <https://letstalkparksville.ca/covid-19-information-and-resources>. This site provides links to the World Health Organization, BC Centre for Disease Control and Island Health among others.

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**For more information:**

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