

**Date:** January 28, 2020

**Title:** Special Update - Coronavirus

---

The B.C. Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, [announced](#) earlier today that the first case of novel coronavirus has been confirmed in B.C.: a man in his forties from the Vancouver Coastal Health region who is currently isolated at home. All public health protocols have been followed and the local health authorities are closely monitoring the situation.

The Provincial Health Officer has made clear, that close contacts to the first case of novel coronavirus are not showing any symptoms and are being monitored closely.

The risk of spread of this virus within B.C. remains low at this time and all necessary precautions are being taken to prevent the spread of infection. B.C. has a strong ongoing monitoring system in place through its local health authorities and at this point, there are no reasons for parents, guardians or school staff to be concerned about student health while at school. The Ministry of Education will continue to work the Ministry of Health and Provincial Health Officer to monitor the situation and communicate with the education sector if there are developments to ensure student and staff safety.

The B.C. Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) has more information about the coronavirus on [its website](#). The BCCDC's recommendations to reduce the risk of exposure are the same as fighting colds and flu:

- Frequent hand washing (it is the single most effective way of reducing infection spread)
- Practicing other good hygiene habits (avoiding touching face/eyes/mouth with hands, and covering one's mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, ideally with a disposable tissue or the crease of the elbow)
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched workspace surfaces
- Maintaining good general health (balanced diet, getting adequate sleep, exercising in moderation)
- Staying home when sick

Anyone who is concerned about their personal health situation should contact their primary-care provider, local public health office or call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1.

---