

COVID-19 UPDATES

Continuing care updates, additional doses

Effective Wednesday, February 16, fully immunized workers in continuing care settings will be able to work in multiple locations. COVID-19 protocols and outbreak procedures will continue to be in place at this time.

The change was one of several announcements made Thursday, February 10 by Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr Deena Hinshaw. In addition, effective Tuesday February 15:

- Booking for third-dose vaccine appointments for Albertans aged 12 to 17 with underlying health conditions, as well as individuals in this age group who are First Nations, Métis or Inuit, will open
- Fourth doses for 12- to 17-year-olds who have immunocompromising conditions will also open
- Children aged five to 11 with immunocompromising conditions will be able to book a third dose

There is not currently a recommendation for third doses for all children and youth.

[More information.](#)

Public health measures lifted

Alberta's three-phase approach to the lifting of health restrictions is detailed [online](#).

- **Step 1** began earlier this week with the removal of the Restrictions Exemption Program, along with most associated restrictions. It continues Monday, February 14 with the removal of mask mandates for children and youth in schools, and children aged 12 and under in all settings
- **Step 2** is due to begin on Tuesday, March 1, if hospitalizations are trending downwards. At that point, indoor masking will no longer be required, indoor and outdoor social gathering limits will be lifted, and any remaining school requirements will be removed. Mandatory work from home orders will be lifted
- **Step 3** timelines, which are yet to be determined, will also depend on hospitalization rates continuing to trend downwards. This step involves the removal of COVID-specific continuing care measures and an end to mandatory isolation

[Click here](#) for more information on business restrictions, schools and masking.

Pathways updated

The adult and pediatric COVID-19 pathways have been updated once again to add new treatment options and resources. Available via specialistlink.ca, the [adult pathway](#) now includes information about Paxlovid, while the [pediatric pathway](#) adds a new resource related to pulmonary function testing for long COVID patients:

- [Adult pathway](#)
- [Pediatric pathway](#)
- [Long COVID pathway](#)

More [Specialist Link pathways](#).

Paxlovid treatment in Long Term Care

When patients meet the eligibility criteria for Paxlovid treatment, the patient or a family member should call Health Link at 1-844-343-0971. If the patient is a resident, a primary care physician or nurse practitioner can call on their behalf. Family consent is required. [More information](#).

Quick links

COVID-19 webinar

On Tuesday, March 1, at 10 a.m., the College of Family Physicians of Canada hosts *Treatment Options for COVID-19 in the Community: What Family Docs Need to Know*. [Register](#).

Common questions about virtual care

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta has released an FAQ that focuses on common primary care questions related to virtual care. [Read the FAQ](#). The CPSA's newsletter also features some helpful [COVID-19 FAQs](#).

Template letter for travel

The Alberta Medical Association has produced a [travel letter template](#) to support physicians who are asked to provide notes to their patients.