



## Vulcan County Regional Emergency Management Partnership

April 22, 2020

### **RE: COVID-19 Update 36 (RED text indicates web link & New Information in BLUE)**

Vulcan County Regional Emergency Management Partners are continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation in Alberta. The latest Government of Alberta media releases can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/news.aspx>

All Vulcan County Fire Halls are closed to the public until further notice. The municipal offices of Vulcan County, the villages of Arrowwood, Carmangay, Champion, Lomond and Milo remain closed to the public while business operations are continuing. The Town of Vulcan municipal office remains open, however, **we are urging the public to use municipal websites, email and telephone** to answer their inquiries.

With increasing numbers of confirmed cases, it is imperative to follow proper personal hygiene and cleaning practices. Please follow these [guidelines](#) and watch your municipal websites for further updates.

Everyone, even persons not exhibiting symptoms or requiring mandatory self-isolation, is strongly encouraged to limit outings to a minimum and stay home; [observe social distancing](#) and avoid touching your face without first washing your hands.

#### **Cases in Alberta and Vulcan County**

The Government of Alberta is taking aggressive measures to slow the spread of COVID-19. Albertans are asked to be vigilant to prevent intensive care units from being overwhelmed.

**For today, 306 new cases have been confirmed bringing the total to 3,401. There are five (5) new fatalities resulting from COVID-19 bringing the total number to sixty-six (66). A total of 113,499 Albertans have been tested. There have been a total of 1,310 recoveries to date.**

There continue to be **no confirmed cases within Vulcan County or the urban municipalities within its region**, although testing has been undertaken for those with symptoms. Vulcan County is in the [Calgary Health Zone](#).

Alberta uses [modelling](#) to anticipate the number of COVID-19 cases over the coming months. This helps us make decisions and prepare hospitals to care for critical and acute patients.

#### **Support for Albertans**

For those in financial distress, [Emergency financial assistance programs](#) are available and information can be found online. Some local programs are also available through Family and Community Support Services (FCSS).

The Government of Alberta has introduced [rent controls](#) that prohibit evictions before May 1, 2020, or increasing rents until the State of Public Health Emergency has been lifted.

Alberta Health Services has developed a [COVID19 Resource Page for the Low German Mennonite Community](#). There is a Low German COVID19 overview video available [HERE](#), as well as Low German pandemic history



available [HERE](#). An English and Low German COVID19 Screening audio can be found [HERE](#).

**Alberta has expanded access to COVID-19 laboratory tests to better trace the spread of the novel coronavirus. In addition to testing in hard-hit areas and testing of vulnerable Albertans and essential workers, any individual exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 including cough, fever, runny nose, sore throat or shortness of breath, is now eligible for testing.**

A dedicated team of mental health professionals are available at the **Mental Health Help Line** by dialing 1-877-303-2643 or the **Addiction Help Line** by dialing 1-866-332-2323.

**Text4Hope** sends subscribers text messages of support and encouragement to ease stress or anxiety. Albertans can text COVID 19 Hope to 393939 to subscribe. Take the time to connect with family and friends digitally or over the phone.

**Alberta Connects Contact Centre** is available seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Albertans can call toll-free from anywhere in the province by dialing 310-4455 for general information about the Government of Alberta and its response to COVID-19, or for help contacting individual program areas. This line cannot provide medical advice. Anyone who has health concerns or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 should complete an online **COVID-19 self-assessment**.

### **Isolation**

You are legally required to self-isolate for:

- 14 days if you returned from international travel or are a close contact of a person with COVID-19
- 10 days if you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition

If you are self-isolating:

- Stay home — do not go to work, social events or any other public areas or community settings
- Avoid close contact with other people, including household members but especially seniors and people with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems
- Do not use public transportation or ride sharing
- Do not go for walks in public places. This includes children in mandatory self-isolation.
- If you go outside, you must remain on private property not accessible by others.
- If you live in an apartment building or high-rise, you must stay inside and cannot use the elevators or stairwells. If your balcony is private and at least 2 metres away from other balconies, you may use your balcony to get fresh air.

### **Testing**

- The Alberta Hope COVID-19 study will recruit 1,600 Albertans to determine whether a prescribed five-day treatment of hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) can prevent hospitalization for those at highest risk of developing a severe illness.
- HCQ is originally an anti-malarial drug currently used mostly for immunological disorders like rheumatoid arthritis. Laboratory studies suggest it may be helpful against COVID-19.
- Alberta has expanded access to COVID-19 laboratory tests to better trace the spread of the novel coronavirus. In addition to testing in hard-hit areas and testing of vulnerable Albertans and essential workers, any individual exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 including cough, fever, runny nose, sore throat or shortness of breath, are now eligible for testing.



### **811 Health Link**

Once again, people experiencing 7 symptoms are to take the [online](#) self-assessment.

As a further reminder, **811-health link is for those who are feeling ill and seeking advice.** DO NOT call 811 to report non-compliance of Public Health Orders; these can be reported to the [Environmental Health Complaint Link](#) or by calling (403) 943-2288.

### **Wearing Masks**

- N95 masks are special protective masks that protect the wearer from airborne particles. These masks are recommended for health-care workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings such as acute care, primary care, long-term care, ambulatory clinics and community care, homecare and other locations in the community where health care is provided.
- Alberta Health has specific guidelines for personal protective equipment for these roles. N95 masks are not recommended for the general public, who will typically not find themselves in these settings.

### **Alberta Health Services Comments on Playgrounds**

#### **Avoid Using Public Playgrounds**

Parents, caregivers, and children should avoid public playground use at this time due to the following reasons:

- There is limited access to handwashing or hand sanitizer in public playgrounds.
- There is no cleaning and disinfection between playground uses. Playgrounds are not cleaned on a regular basis.
- There is no way to limit the number of children on public play equipment and the recommendation for social distancing is hard to enforce.

Instead of visiting public playgrounds parents and caregivers can:

- Go for walks with children outside, keeping 2 meters away from others.
- Play in yards or open park areas, away from others.

### **CDC Guide to Mask Making**

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others

- Mental Health Help Line at 1-877-303-2642
- Addiction Help Line at 1-866-332-2322

Check in with your loved ones often. Virtual communication can help you and your loved ones feel less lonely and isolated. Consider connecting with loved ones by:

- Telephone
- Email
- Mailing letters or cards
- Text messages
- Video chat
- Social media



**Local Programs and Initiatives**

**Vulcan County – Health & Wellness Foundation**

**Vulcan – Medical Recruitment**

**Vulcan Regional Food Bank Society**

Above information sourced from:

<https://www.alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=70009006E7A24-0CB0-DB76-8FDE7FAC19DBB875>

Sincerely,

Nels Petersen

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nels Petersen'.

Regional Director of Emergency Management

Vulcan County Regional Emergency Management Partnership