



## Staying Safe During Alberta's Relaunch:

### What You Need to Know

**The province of Alberta has begun its COVID-19 relaunch strategy** which is composed of three phases. In Phase 1, we saw some businesses and services begin to re-open with many restrictions. Alberta has seen a significant decrease in the number of active COVID-19 cases, which is why the province is now moving forward with Phase 2, which means that more businesses, services and centers will be open.

As the province moves through its relaunch strategy, it is important to know how to stay safe, especially for those who are at higher risk for a serious COVID-19 infection. While there are fewer active COVID-19 infections in the province right now, this does not mean the threat has passed. The best way to stay safe is to understand how to protect yourself and those around you.

### Am I still at risk for getting COVID-19?

**YES!** Although there are fewer infections in Alberta right now, this does not mean that COVID-19 is gone. Everyone is still at risk for infection.

People over 60 years of age along with people with pre-existing health conditions, which includes chronic lung disease, asthma, heart conditions, obesity, diabetes, kidney disease or liver disease, are at higher risk for serious illness. This is why it is important to keep following the province's recommendations and take action to keep yourself safe.

### What services are available right now?

Right now, Alberta is moving into Phase 2 of its relaunch strategy. This means that many businesses and services are open again, but there are many restrictions still in place. The services that opened with Phase 1 and are currently available include:

- Retail businesses (example: furniture, clothing, bookstores)
- Farmer's markets
- Hair salons and barber shops
- Coffee shops and restaurants
- Museums and art galleries
- Places of worship
- Dog parks and playgrounds, unless restricted by the City of Edmonton

As Phase 2 begins, the following services will be available:

- Libraries
- Wellness services like massage, acupuncture & reflexology
- Personal services like esthetic services, manicures & pedicures
- Indoor recreation, fitness and sport, including gyms and arenas
- Movie theatres and theatres
- Community halls
- Pools
- Casinos and bingo halls
- Instrumental concerts

Please note that while these services are now available, businesses and service providers will be taking measures to ensure that clients and visitors are protected. It is important to follow any measures put in place by the business, place of worship or other public space that you visit.

## **What restrictions are still in place?**

With the introduction of Phase 2, there are significant changes to restrictions on gatherings:

- Indoor gatherings have a maximum of 50 people, including wedding and funeral receptions, and birthday parties
- Outdoor gatherings have a maximum of 100 people, including wedding and funeral ceremonies
- There will no longer be a cap on the number of people at worship gatherings, restaurants, coffeeshops, bars, casinos and bingo halls
- Individuals must maintain physical distancing measures
- Visitation in healthcare facilities will remain limited

While physical distancing measures should be maintained in most cases, Phase 2 will allow a household to increase its close interactions with other households to a maximum of 15 people. This means that you can start having conversations with family members or friends who live outside of your household about how to safely interact without physical distancing.

## **Will senior centers be opening back up?**

This is a good question! While some senior associations in Edmonton are permitted to open, not all centers will be opening their doors right now. The aim of every senior center is to protect the seniors they serve, their employees and volunteers. Organizations are working hard to continue serve their clients and ensure that people remain connected in this trying time.

If you have any questions about how your senior center is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic or the relaunch strategy, we recommend that you contact your senior center directly.

## How do I stay safe?

The best way to protect yourself is to stay home as much as possible and only leave the house for essential reasons. This could include trips to the grocery store, important appointments or for physical exercise.

If you need to leave the house, please follow these recommendations:

- Isolate if you feel sick
- Maintain a physical, 2-meter distance from people outside of your household
- Wear a mask when outside the house
- Wash your hands A LOT for at least 20 seconds with warm water & soap
- Cover coughs, sneezes with your elbow
- Avoid touching your face
- Limit your grocery trips to once per week, or as little as possible
- Shop during less busy times or senior-specific hours (list below)

Even though we need to stay at home as much as possible, it is still important to get fresh air and sunshine when we can. Walking or sitting outside is a very safe activity as long as you stay 2 meters away from other people.

## How do I wear a mask properly?

It is important to know how to wear your mask properly. The guide from the Government of Alberta has step-by-step instructions about how to put on and take off your mask safely. Please remember that a mask is not a substitute for handwashing or physical distancing. You should use a mask where you can't maintain a 2-meter distance:

- Public transit
- Grocery shopping
- Hair salons or barbershops
- Retail stores

## What if I get sick? Can I get tested?

The symptoms associated with COVID-19 are as follows:

- Cough
- Fever
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath
- Runny nose

If you feel ill, or come down with any symptoms, you are legally required to stay home (not leave your house or apartment) for 10 days and call Health Link at 811 to arrange for testing. If you are worried that you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you can also call Health Link at 811 to get tested. Right now, any Albertan can receive a test for COVID-19, even if you do not have symptoms.

## What if I feel lonely or don't have anyone to talk to?

It is very normal to feel isolated or lonely right now. You are not alone. Even though we can't visit each other in person, we can still connect with loved ones or friends over the phone. If you are able, try taking a walk outside or open a window for some fresh air.

If you need support, please do not hesitate to reach out to your local senior center and see what services they offer. You can also **call 211** or Alberta Supports at **1-877-644-9992** to find out what other supports or programs are available for seniors right now. Sage is operating a friendly phone call program. If you would like to receive a friendly phone call, please call **780-423-5510 ext. 5**.

**For more important tips about how to protect yourself, please refer to the pamphlet we have attached from the Government of Alberta.**