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B.C. has declared a state of emergency. Learn about [COVID-19 health issues](#). | [B.C.'s Response to COVID-19](#).



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Minister of Health, provincial health

Statement

Victoria

Tuesday, January 21, 2020 5:46 PM

Media Contacts

Ministry of Health

Communications
250 952-1887 (media line)

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Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, and Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s provincial health officer, have issued the following joint statement regarding novel coronavirus:

“The BC Centre for Disease Control and provincial and federal authorities are closely monitoring the outbreak of respiratory illness linked to a novel coronavirus.

“[The risk to British Columbians is considered low](#). Most cases have been reported in Wuhan and other cities in China. But cases have also been reported outside of China, including Japan,

Taiwan, South Korea and Thailand. Today, the United States Centre for Disease Control confirmed a case was detected in a Washington State resident who recently returned from travel to Wuhan.

“To date, there have been no cases of illness caused by the coronavirus in British Columbia or elsewhere in Canada.

“We are watching the situation closely and health-care workers have been asked to be vigilant and take a travel history for anyone reporting respiratory symptoms.

“In co-ordination with the Public Health Agency of Canada, our public health teams are responding by closely monitoring the situation and have implemented screening for early detection of infections for individuals arriving in airports. Quarantine officers are available at Vancouver International Airport to co-ordinate any response required, and Richmond Hospital infection control practitioners are ready to respond to any potential scenario where a patient may require further investigation.

“The BC Centre for Disease Control has also developed a diagnostic test for the new coronavirus, which is different from the SARS outbreak when there was no similar test. The centre is co-ordinating staff and supplies to ensure they are prepared to quickly and accurately detect potential cases.

“The provincial health officer has also shared awareness notifications to infection control practitioners, emergency department staff and primary care providers reminding them to screen for coronavirus symptoms and exposure. Providers who suspect an instance of coronavirus are asked to report it to their local medical health officers immediately.

“Canada's Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health is meeting regularly with the Public Health Agency of Canada, which is co-ordinating with the World Health Organization. Future actions to prevent the spread of this coronavirus will continue to be co-ordinated with these organizations.

“Anyone who is concerned that they may have been exposed to, or are experiencing symptoms of the coronavirus should contact their primary care provider, local public health office or call 811.

“We encourage anyone travelling to or from China to visit the federal source of destination-specific travel information that provides important advice to help travellers make informed decisions and travel safely while abroad. The website is here: www.travel.gc.ca”

CONTRACT STORY