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## Interior Health update on central Okanagan COVID-19 outbreak

IH WIDE – Interior Health continues to manage the growing Central Okanagan COVID-19 outbreak initially declared on July 28.

“COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to increase in the Central Okanagan,” said Interior Health president and CEO, Susan Brown. “Over 95 percent of COVID-19 cases related to this outbreak are among people not fully immunized and the majority are 40 years or younger.”

All Central Okanagan residents who test positive for COVID-19 since July 1 are counted among this outbreak. Since July 1 in the Central Okanagan:

- In total, 1,690 people have tested positive for COVID-19, and these numbers continue to trend upwards.

“We are calling on everyone, especially people under 40, and anyone working in health care or the service sector, to get immunized. It is the most effective way to bring this outbreak under control,” said Interior Health interim chief medical health officer, Dr. Sue Pollock. “It is important for everyone, even people who may have been sick with COVID-19 earlier this year, to get immunized because the vaccine protects you against the different strains of the virus.”

The interval between first and second COVID-19 vaccine doses has been decreased to 28 days bringing the option of full protection to more people, sooner.

The public is reminded Interior Health has placed the following restrictions for the Central Okanagan region including the District of Peachland, City of West Kelowna, City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country and the Regional District of Central Okanagan:

- Indoor and outdoor dining is allowed at restaurants for groups up to six people and liquor service must stop at 10 p.m.
- Casinos may remain open with a COVID-19 safety plan in place
- Nightclubs and bars are ordered to close (only those establishments with a full meal service may stay open)
- Sports and exercise:
  - Indoor low-intensity group exercise is permitted with reduced capacity
  - Indoor high-intensity group exercise is not permitted during this time
- Gatherings in vacation rentals (including houseboats) are limited to five guests, plus the occupants
- Outdoor personal gatherings (e.g., birthday parties, backyard BBQs, block parties) are limited to no more than 50 people, and indoor personal gatherings are limited to five guests or one other household
- Indoor organized gatherings and outdoor organized gatherings (e.g., weddings, funerals, seated events) are limited to no more than 50 people with a COVID-19 safety plan in place

Masks remain mandatory for all people age 12 and older in indoor public areas throughout the Central Okanagan. Non-essential travel to and from the region should be avoided.

These restrictions remain in place until further notice.

Although most cases are among individuals under 40 years old, IH is also now seeing COVID-19 exposures in health care facilities, businesses, restaurants and social settings. These additional measures will protect service industry staff, patrons and our broader community.

### **How to get vaccinated**

People can also get their first or second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine by dropping in to any IH immunization clinic or by making an appointment.

To make an appointment, register online by visiting the provincial website at:

[www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/](http://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/), call 1-833-838-2323, or visit a Service BC office listed [here](#), and then book an appointment.

For a list of all Interior Health COVID-19 immunization clinics and other resources visit:

<https://news.interiorhealth.ca/news/covid-19-vaccines/>

To learn about B.C.'s Restart Plan and COVID-19 Immunization Plan, visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/covid](http://www.gov.bc.ca/covid)

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