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Opening soon

Alberta's relaunch strategy

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Message from Premier Jason Kenney

Albertans' response to the most significant health and economic emergency of this century has been tremendous. Through your efforts and sacrifices, you have continued to contain the spread of the virus well below the scale seen in other parts of the world. This has allowed our healthcare system to focus their efforts on our most at-risk populations.

A sound pandemic response plan, implemented by Dr. Hinshaw and our team at Alberta Health, is also responsible for our success. Through astute planning and quick action, Alberta's inventory of medical supplies and our aggressive testing regime has set a standard for Canada and, indeed, the rest of the world.

Our relaunch strategy balances a path to economic revitalization with continued emphasis on safety.

Stage 1 of this relaunch has been met by Albertans with individual determination and collective responsibility. Albertans have followed health orders and followed medical advice. And though we cannot lower our guard entirely, we can set our gaze on the future with hope and confidence.

Stage 2 of relaunch marks the next step we take towards a renewed economy. Based on strong public health data, we can now further relax restrictions and expand activities.

Our ongoing success will depend on continued testing and safety measures, with a healthy dose of personal responsibility Albertans are famous for. Together, we have come a great distance and, with common sense and compassion, we can continue to forge ahead.

Premier Jason Kenney

Message from Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Chief Medical Officer of Health

As we move forward with the next stage of Alberta's re-opening, I thank all Albertans for helping us to get here. We have arrived where we are today because of your sacrifices, discipline and commitment to look out for each other by following public health orders even when it was difficult to do.

Our continued success depends on the actions we take every day. The greatest act of kindness we can show others is to wash our hands, stay home when we are sick, maintain physical distance from others, stay socially connected, and look out for our friends, family and community. Maintaining these habits will become even more important as we start leaving our homes more often.

Our health system is well-positioned to respond to COVID-19 as we move forward with our relaunch strategy. We have expanded testing to all Albertans and have established rigorous protocols to identify and swiftly contain outbreaks. Our decisions will continue to be guided by a thorough public health risk-analysis that considers both risks of infection and the health, social and economic impact of restrictions.

I know the idea of re-launching our economy evokes strong emotions, and many look ahead with a mixture of optimism and concern. It's okay to have different perspectives. I am listening, and I will continue to make recommendations about next steps with your health as my top priority.

We will need each other more than ever through every stage of this relaunch and into the future.

After all, we are all in this together.

Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Chief Medical Officer of Health

Overview

While we face a long road to recovery, there are good signs our collective efforts of physical distancing, good hygiene practices, and staying safe together are helping slow the spread of COVID-19.

That has given government confidence to implement Alberta's relaunch strategy, a plan that puts safety first while gradually reopening businesses and activities to the public, and getting people back to work. Stage 1 was a success - case numbers remain low and Albertans continue to follow public health measures while resuming activities. We expect similar results as we move to stage 2, but encourage everyone to remain vigilant.

Unlike other provinces such as Quebec, we were able to safely keep areas like construction, manufacturing and energy operating throughout the pandemic by enforcing physical distancing and following the guidance of our Chief Medical Officer of Health. Thanks to that, we started from a strong place, and we were able to apply that same guidance to other businesses across the province.

To be successful, we must ensure the sacrifices we have made to contain the virus are not wasted. Continued care, common sense and resilience will move us forward. Here are some of the highlights of how we plan to get there.

Conditions for relaunch

The following elements will help ensure a successful relaunch	
	Enhancing our nation-leading COVID-19 testing capacity With more than a quarter million tests completed, Alberta is one of the leading jurisdictions in the world for COVID-19 testing. Anyone can be be tested, with or without symptoms.
	Robust and comprehensive contact tracing, aided by technology, to quickly identify and notify people who are at risk ABTraceTogether, the voluntary mobile contact tracing app, helps let Albertans know if they've been exposed to COVID-19 while protecting your privacy.
	Support for those who test positive to enable isolation and containment of spread Updated information is available at alberta.ca/COVID-19 for those who are isolating.
	Stronger international border controls and airport screening People entering Alberta from outside Canada must stop at at provincial checkpoint to submit an isolation questionnaire and undergo a touch-free temperature check.
	Public use of masks in specified crowded spaces, or mass transit 40 million non-medical masks will be distributed free to Albertans.
	Strong protections for the most vulnerable, including those in long-term care Strong public health measures include visitor restrictions, daily screening of staff, strict cleaning requirements, and mandatory outbreak protocols. Additional government funding supports staffing and the implementation of public health guidelines.
	Rapid response teams to deal with future outbreaks
These foundational elements will ensure a safer reopening.	

Key measures and timing

Getting to each stage of relaunch depends on our ability to keep infection rates low, and well within the capacity of the healthcare system. Health measures we are watching include:

	Percentage of tests that are positive
	Hospitalization and intensive care unit (ICU) rates

Confirmed cases continue to be monitored in real-time to inform proactive responses in localized areas of the province.

We need to learn as we go and evaluate as we take careful, considered steps from one stage to the next. There may be times we need to take a step back, but in time, we will adjust and move forward together.

Continuous evaluation of health triggers could result in restrictions being removed or reapplied in some localized areas of the province.

Early actions

Because of the sacrifices Albertans have to prevent the spread, were able to begin some activities before stage 1 of relaunch was implemented.

	Alberta Health Services resumed some scheduled, non-urgent surgeries as of May 4.
	Dental and other regulated health-care workers such as physiotherapists, speech language pathologists, respiratory therapists, audiologists, social workers, occupational therapists, dietitians, chiropractors, optometry and more resumed services started May 4, as long as they followed approved guidelines set by their professional colleges.
	Vehicle access to parking lots and staging areas on public land and parks opened May 1.
	Alberta Parks' online campground reservation system opened May 14 for bookings at select campgrounds starting June 1 onward.
	Access to boat launches opened in select provincial parks May 1.
	Golf courses opened May 2, with restrictions including keeping clubhouses and pro shops closed.
For details on these early actions, visit alberta.ca	

Relaunch stage highlights

Stage 1 May 14	**Stage 2** June 12	**Stage 3** (timing to be determined based on health indicators with gradual implementation)
With increased infection prevention and controls, some businesses and facilities resumed operations May 14, with two metre physical distancing requirements and other public health measures in place. Retail businesses like clothing, furniture and book stores All farmers' market vendors Hairstyling and barber shops Cafés, restaurants, pubs and bars reopened for table service at 50% capacity Some scheduled, non-urgent surgeries resumed Museums and art galleries Daycares and out-of-school care, with occupancy limits Day camps, including summer school, with occupancy limits Post-secondary institutions continued course delivery, with flexibility for in-person delivery Places of worship and funeral services, with sector-specific guidance Dog parks and playgrounds, unless restricted by municipal authorities In Calgary and Brooks, stage 1 relaunch was gradual over 18 days due to higher COVID-19 case numbers in these communities	**This stage will allow additional businesses and services to reopen and resume operations with two metre physical distancing requirements and other public health measures in place. This includes:** K-12 schools, for requested diploma exams and summer school, following guidance Libraries, with restrictions Places of worship Additional scheduled surgeries Wellness services such as massage, acupuncture and reflexology Personal services (esthetics, cosmetics skin and body treatments, manicures, pedicures, waxing, facial treatment artificial tanning) Movie theatres and theatres, with restrictions Community halls, with limits on attendance based on activity Team-based sports, with restrictions Indoor and outdoor recreation, fitness and sports, with measures in place Indoor fitness centres, pools and arenas, with measures in place Instrumental concerts Casinos and bingo halls Arcades and video lottery terminals (VLTs) in restaurants and lounges Provincial campgrounds at full capacity	**Timing of this stage is to be determined and will involve:** More businesses and services reopening with restrictions Permitting larger gatherings (number of people to be determined)
Visitors to patients at health-care facilities continue to be limited	Visitors to patients at health-care facilities will continue to be limited	To be determined
Public attendance at businesses, facilities and events that have close physical contact was not permitted, including: arts and culture festivals, major sporting events, and concerts Movie theatres, pools, recreation centres, arenas, spas, gyms and nightclubs remained closed In-school classes for kindergarten to Grade 12 students remained prohibited	Nightclubs, amusement parks, and hookah lounges (permitted for food and drink only) will remain closed Arts and culture festivals, concerts and major sporting events will continue to not be permitted.	Arts and culture festivals, concerts and major sporting events will be permitted with enhanced protection controls in place Nightclubs will reopen with enhanced protection controls in place Physical distancing restrictions will be maintained Resuming industry conferences with restrictions
Non-essential travel was not recommended	Non-essential out-of-province travel is not recommended	Non-essential travel no longer discouraged
Remote working was advised where possible	Remote working is optional for most workers; workplaces must follow public health measures	To be determined
Enhanced infection prevention and control measures will be in place in all phases.		

Key public health measures

Public health measure	Pre-Stage 1	Stage 1 May 14	Stage 2 June 12	Stage 3
Physical distancing	Maintain distance of 2m	Maintain distance of 2m	Maintain distance of 2m	Maintain distance of 2m
Gatherings	Max. 15 (indoor/outdoor)	Max. 15 (indoor) Max. 50 (outdoor)	Max. 50: Indoor social gatherings Max. 100: Outdoor events and indoor seated/audience events No cap: Worship gatherings; restaurant, cafes, lounges and bars; casinos; bingo halls as long as physical distancing is maintained	Size of permitted gatherings will increase
Public masks	Encourage wearing a mask where unable to physically distance	Encourage wearing a mask where unable to physically distance	Encourage wearing a mask where unable to physically distance	Unnecessary
At-risk Albertans (outside facility)	Remain home unless medically necessary	Stay at home as much as possible	Resume normal activities and interactions, with caution	Resume normal activities and interactions
At-risk Albertans (facility-based)	Visitor, staff, and operational restrictions	Visitor, staff, and operational restrictions	Visitor, staff, and operational restrictions	Restrictions lifted
Isolation and quarantine	14 days for cases, close contacts, and people entering Alberta from outside Canada 10 days if symptomatic but don't fit above categories	14 days for cases, close contacts, and people entering Alberta from outside Canada 10 days if symptomatic but don't fit above categories	14 days for cases, close contacts, and people entering Alberta from outside Canada 10 days if symptomatic but don't fit above categories	Restrictions lifted

Protecting seniors and vulnerable populations

Alberta continues to take steps to protect seniors and at-risk populations.

Restrictions and measures intended to protect seniors, such as continued limits to visitors (long-term care facilities, licensed supportive living facilities including seniors lodges and group homes) and strict health protocols for staff are expected to remain in place through all stages of relaunch. Any changes would be guided by the advice of Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Strengthening the economy

More information on a new blueprint for economic recovery, which will set the course for our province's future prosperity, will be provided soon.

Do your part

We're confident Albertans will face relaunch with the same adaptability and resilience they have shown throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our individual actions are the strongest tool we have to protect our health-care system as we pull together to relaunch our economy. People are encouraged to get tested, even if they don't have symptoms. This helps us to trace the spread of the virus so we can identify steps to limit further spread.

Everyone is also encouraged to download and use the ABTraceTogether mobile contact tracing app when out in public. This voluntary app helps let you know if you've been exposed to COVID-19 – or if you've exposed others – while protecting your privacy.

Learn more about steps you can take to stop the spread of COVID19 at: alberta.ca/covid19