



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID-19 update: Masks required in City-operated facilities

The City of Vernon continues to closely monitor the COVID-19 situation in British Columbia and follow the directives and guidance of health authorities, senior levels of government, and WorkSafe BC in its response to the local impacts of the global pandemic.

Yesterday, Dr. Bonnie Henry, BC's Provincial Health Officer (PHO), released [new health orders and guidelines](#) to help slow and contain the spread of COVID-19 across the province.

Effective immediately, and in accordance with the PHO's order, the City of Vernon now **requires** members of the public to wear a non-medical mask to cover their mouth and nose while inside all City-operated facilities. This includes:

- City Hall and Council Chambers
- Community Services Building
- Operations Building
- Vernon Water Reclamation Centre
- Vernon Regional Airport Terminal
- Bylaw Compliance Office
- Fire Station 1
- Community Safety Office
- RCMP Building.

Additionally, everyone is **required** to wear a mask in lobbies, hallways, concourses, the Auditorium, and change rooms of all Greater Vernon Recreation facilities. Program leaders will advise participants whether masks are required for specific activities and programs.

Masks are required for those attending City Council meetings and Public Hearings. They are also required for all City of Vernon staff members, contractors, and volunteers inside City facilities where physical distancing cannot be maintained or where physical separation (plexiglass) is not in place.

Under the PHO's direction, people who cannot put on or remove a mask on their own, and children under the age of 2, are exempt from the mask requirement.

“As we have experienced over the last several months, these changes can happen quickly, so we must remain diligent and nimble in our response to the pandemic and the impacts of the COVID-19 virus,” said Mayor Victor Cumming. “Dr. Henry’s direction yesterday was clear – we must take immediate and specific actions to help slow and contain the spread of the virus in BC to protect ourselves, each other, our healthcare system, and our communities as a whole.”

“We are diligently following the directives outlined by health authorities. Therefore, we have implemented additional requirements for staff to wear masks in public areas and shared workspaces,” continued Mayor Cumming. “If you visit a City facility and see a staff member working alone behind a plexiglass window, they may not be wearing a mask, but if they leave that space, they are required to wear a mask to adhere to the health order and to help maintain a safe environment for our staff, citizens and visitors.”

Further to the enhanced safety protocols already in place, all City of Vernon staff, volunteers and contractors will also be required to complete a self-assessment health questionnaire when they enter a City facility each day, in accordance with the PHO’s direction.

To help reduce physical contact, members of the public are encouraged to [call or email the City with inquiries](#), and to make payments online or via mail or the all-hours drop box at City Hall, if possible.

“As we mentioned before, each of these steps we are taking – staying home if we are sick, washing our hands, keeping our physical distance, wearing masks, putting environmental controls like plexiglass in place – are adding layers of protection against the spread and transmission of COVID-19 and other infections,” said Mayor Cumming. “It is paramount that we continue to work together, and that we follow the advice of Dr. Henry to *be kind, be calm and be safe.*”

The City will continue to provide updates as they become available. For more information on the City’s response and community resources, please visit: www.vernon.ca/covid-19.