

---

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2021PSSG0004-000081  
Jan. 19, 2021

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
Emergency Management BC

### **State of emergency extended to continue B.C.'s COVID-19 response**

VICTORIA – The Province of British Columbia has formally extended the provincial state of emergency, allowing health and emergency management officials to continue to use extraordinary powers under the Emergency Program Act (EPA) to support the Province's COVID-19 pandemic response.

The state of emergency is extended through the end of the day on Feb. 2, 2021, to allow staff to take the necessary actions to keep British Columbians safe and manage immediate concerns and COVID-19 outbreaks.

“I know this has felt like the longest winter ever, but we’re starting to see light at the end of this pandemic tunnel, so don’t give up now,” said Premier John Horgan. “The hard work of British Columbians in flattening the curve continues to pay off, vaccines are on the way, and we’re working on a strong recovery. There is too much at stake to let our guard down now.”

The extension of the provincial state of emergency is based on recommendations from B.C.’s health and emergency management officials. The original declaration was made on March 18, 2020, the day after Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.’s provincial health officer (PHO), declared a public health emergency.

On Dec. 16, 2020, the Province announced enhanced enforcement measures to keep British Columbians safe and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. This included strengthening COVID-19 fine collection measures and asking provincial enforcement officers to support police and increase enforcement by issuing violation tickets during their normal course of duties or when in public places.

“I want to thank all those British Columbians who are following public health orders, as well as the police working hard to enforce those orders with the support of bylaw officers and local governments,” said Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. “And to the minority of British Columbians who continue to miss the message that we’re all in this together, we will continue to penalize selfish and unlawful actions and work to ensure the public does not face unnecessary risks.”

The Province, with the support of police and other enforcement officials, continues to use measures under the EPA to limit the spread of COVID-19, including issuing tickets for owners or organizers contravening the PHO’s orders.

On July 10, the COVID-19 Related Measures Act came into force, enabling provisions created for citizens and businesses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to continue as needed, should the provincial state of emergency end.

**Quick Facts:**

- Between Aug. 21, 2020, and Jan. 15, 2021, 693 violation tickets were issued, including:
  - 119 \$2,300 tickets to owners or organizers contravening the PHO's order on gatherings and events;
  - 26 \$2,300 violation tickets for contravention of the PHO's Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order; and
  - 548 \$230 tickets issued to individuals who refused to comply with direction from law enforcement.
- The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is continually working to align EPA enforcement orders with those of the restrictions enacted by the PHO.
- Additionally, since the pandemic began, police agencies in British Columbia have issued 85 violation tickets to individuals who were in contravention of the federal Quarantine Act, totalling \$93,466. The purpose of the Quarantine Act is to protect public health by taking comprehensive measures to prevent the introduction and spread of communicable diseases.
- Declarations of provincial states of emergency may be issued by the minister responsible under the EPA.
- The provincial government can extend the period of a declaration made by the minister responsible for further periods of up to 14 days at a time.

**Learn More:**

On Dec. 16, 2020, enforcement measures were expanded.

Details are available here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0108-002083>

On Nov. 24, 2020, Farnworth introduced a mask enforcement order under the EPA, requiring masks for people over the age of 12 in public indoor settings, unless they are exempt.

Details are available here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EMBC0061-001960>

For information on all recent orders and guidance, as well as general COVID-19 information for all British Columbians, visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/covid19](http://www.gov.bc.ca/covid19)

For more information and latest medical updates on COVID-19, follow the BC Centre for Disease Control on Twitter @CDCofBC

Or visit the centre's website: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>

**Contact:**

Jordan Turner  
Media Relations  
Emergency Management BC  
250 952-5062

---

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [news.gov.bc.ca/connect](https://news.gov.bc.ca/connect)