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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2021PSSG0043-001208  
June 22, 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 July 6, 2021, to allow staff to take the necessary actions to keep British Columbians safe and manage immediate concerns and COVID-19 outbreaks. In keeping with BC's Restart plan and recommendations from Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.'s provincial health officer (PHO), the state of emergency may be cancelled before July 6 if B.C. continues to see solid progress on case numbers, hospitalizations and vaccination rates.

"Better days are within reach this summer, but we need to carefully guard our progress against COVID-19," said Premier John Horgan. "People in B.C. have been doing their part by getting vaccinated, following the rules and working together to put the pandemic behind us. I'm asking everyone to stay on track through Step 2 of our restart so we can look forward to the opportunities that come with Step 3."

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 the provincial health officer declared a public health emergency.

"I know everyone is excited about the restart, but keep in mind that the state of emergency and many of the orders remain in place until we move to Step 3 of BC's Restart plan," said Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. "We all look forward to the day things go back to normal. To do that, we need to keep following the orders and public health guidance. If we all work together and do the right things, it is my hope that by Canada Day we will be in a position to enter Step 3 of the restart plan, further relax restrictions and finally put this provincial emergency behind us."

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

#### **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, a mask enforcement order was introduced 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/>

A backgrounder follows.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **Facts about B.C.'s state of emergency**

- Between Aug. 21, 2020, and June 18, 2021, 2,269 violation tickets were issued, including:
  - 429 \$2,300 tickets to owners or organizers contravening the provincial health officer's (PHO) order on gatherings and events;
  - 41 \$2,300 violation tickets for contravention of the PHO Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order;
  - 1,690 \$230 tickets to individuals who refused to comply with Emergency Program Act (EPA) orders;
  - 100 \$575 tickets, using the increased violation fines, to individuals who promoted or attended a non-compliant event;
  - eight \$575 tickets to an individual for failing to comply with the travel restrictions; and
  - one \$230 ticket has been issued for failing to stop at a road check.
- The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General is continually working to align the EPA enforcement orders with those of the restrictions enacted by the PHO.
- Additionally, since the pandemic began, police agencies in British Columbia have issued 197 violation tickets to individuals who were in contravention of the federal Quarantine Act, totalling \$439,329.
  - The purpose of the Quarantine Act is to protect public health by taking comprehensive measures to prevent the introduction and spread of communicable diseases.
- Since the start of the pandemic, WorkSafeBC has conducted 28,798 COVID-19 related worksite inspections.
- 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.
- 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.

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