

COVID-19 Safety Plan Interpretive Programming

With the broader reopening of parks activities on June 24, 2020 under [Phase 3 BC Restart Plan](#), Metro Vancouver Regional Parks resumed in-person nature programs on July 3rd, 2020. Regional Parks has developed the following *COVID-19 Safety Plan – Interpretive Programming* with enhanced protocols.

The *Plan* was written in keeping with the Province of BC's COVID-19 [Orders, Notices and Guidance](#), protocols established by Metro Vancouver Corporate Safety, as well as WorkSafeBC and the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association, and was reviewed by David Leavers, Co-Chair, Parks and Environment Joint Health and Safety Committee.

The timeline for implementation of the *COVID-19 Safety Plan - Interpretive Programming* is effective immediately, and lasting until the Province of BC is able to enter into Phase 4 of its BC Restart Plan.

Purpose

To provide guidelines for minimizing the risk of COVID-19 exposure during interpretive programs to ensure a safe environment for Metro Vancouver Regional Parks staff and members of the public attending interpretive programs and events.

Risk Assessment

Interpretive programs such as seashore walks, biking and evening hikes are led by Metro Vancouver parks staff (Park Interpreters) and will include a reduced number of participants. All programs take place outdoors where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is reduced due to the ease of physical distancing and open air ventilation. Movement pathways for each program site will be evaluated prior to the start of each program to identify potential pinch points to avoid.

Protocols

These protocols are based on the *BC Recreation and Parks Sector: Guidelines for Restarting Operations* and *WorkSafeBC Parks Protocols for Returning to Operation*.

Metro Vancouver (MV) interpretive staff will review internal Corporate Safety COVID-19 policies, protocols and measures before delivering programs and events.

- **Staff Personal Health Check**

Metro Vancouver staff will begin each program by assessing their personal health as related to symptoms of COVID-19. It is based on the [BC Covid 19 Self Assessment Tool](#) developed by the BC Ministry of Health (MoH) and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BC CDC).

- **Physical Distancing** (Metro Vancouver, 2020)

Public health officials and WorkSafeBC advise people (including workers) to keep two metres away from each other at all times when possible. This is one of the most important things we can all do to prevent COVID-19.

In an effort to help staff contain the potential spread of COVID-19, the following protocols have been established:

- Interpretive programs will be limited to locations that allow for staff and participants to maintain a distance of 2 meters (6 feet).
- Although the Provincial Health Order presently allows for groups of 50 people or fewer with physical distancing in place, group sizes for interpretive programs activities will be set at much lower levels to ensure that physical distancing can occur and program experience expectations can be maintained.

- **Hand Washing and Hygiene**

Good hand hygiene is one of the most important ways to protect participants and others from COVID-19. Soap and water and hand sanitizer are effective to clean hands.

- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer (ABHS) with at least 60% alcohol will be available at every interpretive event (Metro Vancouver, 2020; PHAC, 2020).
- For visibly soiled hands, dirt should be removed with a hand wipe first, followed by an ABHS (PHAC, 2020).
- If available, wash hands with warm water and soap for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Staff and participants must wash or disinfect hands:
 - Upon arriving at a worksite or program location;
 - Before and after breaks (*e.g.* washroom, food or water breaks);
 - Before and after handling interpretive props;
 - After the program ends.

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

MV interpretive staff will be provided with non-medical PPE, including gloves and hand sanitizer.

MV staff may choose to wear non-medical masks while leading programs but these are not required as long as physical distancing is possible. Participants may bring their own non-medical masks, and wear the masks during the program.

- **Refreshments, Food and Water**

- Participants will be encouraged to bring their own food and water, and take home any garbage.
- Snacks will not be provided.
- Snacks will not be shared.

- **Waste**
 - Metro Vancouver staff will encourage participants to pack out all waste or dispose of it in designated garbage bins.

- **Potential COVID-19 Tracing**
 - All participants must register for all interpretive programs.
 - The registration process requires full names and contact information, to enable contact tracing.
 - During the registration process, participants must initial that they have read and agree with Metro Vancouver's COVID-19 protocols for interpretive programs.
 - Interpretive staff should carry a registration list of program participants to each program location. Attendance should be taken to ensure which registrants actually participated.

- **First Aid (Metro Vancouver, 2020)**
 - Minimize unnecessary exposure to the patient by verbally assessing them from a distance of 2 meters, if possible.
 - Although participants should already be pre-screened for the event, double-check to make sure they are not exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days.
 - If patient is not able to self-treat under your direction, apply the following treatment procedures:
 - If patient needs immediate help, or is unresponsive, call 9-1-1 immediately and report their travel history if known;
 - If a qualified staff person is present, ensure they are wearing gloves and a disposable mask before coming within 2m of the individual requiring first aid treatment;
 - Document all assessments in First Aid Record.

- **Cleaning Protocols for Interpretive Props**
 - Plastic/metal equipment will be washed in hot soapy water with a brush with an effort made to clean hard-to-reach areas. After washing the equipment, it will be disinfected with *Vert2Go Saber Ready-To-Use* (Hydrogen Peroxide 0.5% solution), a Health Canada approved disinfectant product.
 - Sensitive equipment that cannot be cleaned (e.g. binoculars, digital microscopes) will be stored in a labelled plastic tote for a minimum of 3 days. The label will include contents and date they were stored.
 - MV staff will avoid the use of soft surface props, such as taxidermy or fabric items unless they can be washed and disinfected after every program.

Monitor and Update Plan

- Staff will continually assess work sites and activities for COVID-19 risks, and change procedures as needed.
- Issues and concerns will be shared and discussed with co-workers and supervisors.
- Participants are encouraged to provide input.
- Policies and protocols may be updated if necessary.

References

- BC Centre for Disease Control (2020). *Bleach-water ratios table*. <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/bleach-water-ratios-table.pdf>. Accessed July 17, 2020
- BC Centre for Disease Control (2020). *Cleaning and disinfecting*. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/cleaning-and-disinfecting>. Accessed July 17, 2020
- BC Government (2020). *BC's Restart plan*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>. Accessed July 17, 2020
- Health Canada (2020). *Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19): List of disinfectants with evidence of use against COVID-19*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>. Accessed July 17, 2020
- Metro Vancouver (2020). *COVID-19 Information & Updates – Safety Protocols*. <http://intranet/human-resources/covid-19/Pages/default.aspx>. Accessed July 17, 2020
- Public Health Agency of Canada (2020). *Community-based measures to mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Canada*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/public-health-measures-mitigate-covid-19.html>. Accessed July 17, 2020
- Work Safe BC (2020). *COVID-19: A guide to reducing risk*. <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/covid-19-guide-to-reducing-risk?lang=en>. Accessed July 17, 2020

Appendix A: Public Program Delivery Procedure

1. All interpretive programs will occur outdoors.
2. At the start of each day before delivering any programs MV interpretive staff must complete a personal health check. If the staff member presents with any symptoms related to COVID-19 they are to immediately notify their Supervisor and stay home. The Supervisor will then make arrangements for another staff member to deliver the program or cancel if necessary.
3. Participants will be reminded that if they are at greater risk (over the age of 60, or with underlying medical conditions), they should evaluate their risk tolerance and take extra precautions (BC Government, 2020).
4. MV staff will ensure washrooms are stocked with liquid soap, running water and paper towels before the program starts. If washroom facilities are not available, hand sanitizer will be made available to participants.
5. Staff will sanitize any equipment being used by the participants before and after the program. Participants will not be required to share equipment with anyone outside their household group. For sensitive equipment that cannot be cleaned (e.g. binoculars, digital microscopes), it will be stored in a labelled plastic tote for 3 days.
6. Staff will request that all participants wash their hands with soap and water or hand-sanitizer before the start of the program.
7. Participants will be informed of COVID-19 measures during the registration process, and at the start of each program. Signage may be posted if necessary. The Safety Plan will be posted on the MV website.
8. MV interpretive staff will start each program with a brief safety introduction that will include information on appropriate physical distancing and wellness checks.
The Safety Introduction will remind the program participants that:
 - Participants must maintain a 2 metre distance from the MV Park Interpreter at all times;
 - Participants must maintain a 2 metre distance from other participants at all times unless they are from the same household;
 - Participants must verify that they have done a personal health check and are not suffering from any symptoms related to Covid-19;
 - Participants must wash their hands with soap and water or sanitize their hands before the start of the program;
 - Participants must acknowledge that they agree to adhere to these guidelines.
9. Physical distancing of 2 metres will be maintained between participants and MV interpretive staff and participants from a different household/group. Participants from the same household/group do not have to be physically distanced from each other during public programs or *Book a Nature Guide* programs.
10. Staff will consider movement pathways to identify and avoid pinch points.
11. No program will exceed 50 people (including both participants and staff).
12. Participants will not share equipment unless they are from the same household and all equipment will be disinfected and sanitized after each use.

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13. Participants will be ensured that Metro Vancouver is committed to the health and safety of all participants and have put the following measures in place:
- Reduced number of participants per program to accommodate physical distancing;
 - All equipment is disinfected before and after each program;
 - During the program, equipment will not be shared with other participants outside of their household;
 - Participants must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before the start of the program;
 - If participants are showing any symptoms of COVID-19 they will not be able to participate in the program. Anyone from the public presenting symptoms on the day of the program will be sent home.
14. *All participants must register for programs to allow for contact tracing. After the registration process, MV staff will have access to the phone number and email address of all participants, or households. Drop-ins are not allowed.*
15. At interpretive events, Metro Vancouver staff will create a safety plan specific to each event based on the above COVID-19 protocols. The plan will include:
- a. Cleaning protocols for the registration area, and any props being used
 - b. Designating a closed-off event area with signed entrance and exit, so unregistered participants are not able to drop in to the event
 - c. Creating an area to accommodate physical distancing during registration