

From: **Health Minister** <[Health.Minister@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Health.Minister@gov.ab.ca)>

Date: Wed, Apr 28, 2021 at 12:59 PM

Subject: COVID-19 Restrictions

To: [REDACTED]

AR 184423

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your emails regarding COVID-19 restrictions. As Minister of Health, I appreciate the opportunity to respond on behalf of the Government of Alberta, and I apologize for the delay in responding.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Alberta has been a leader. Alberta's initial approach to contain the spread of COVID-19 and protect Albertans was measured, balancing the need to protect health system capacity and provide care to Albertans in need, while limiting the impact on our businesses. Unlike other provinces, Alberta has never issued a shelter in place, or "lockdown" order.

The recently introduced [Path Forward](#) offers a clear, step-wise approach to easing public health restrictions. This targeted approach will help to open more activities and opportunities for Albertans and businesses, while protecting the health care system.

Alberta Health Services has been working to increase hospital capacity, allocating approximately 2,250 acute care beds and 425 ICU beds for patients with COVID-19 across the province if required. In some cases, these will be new beds and, in other cases, these beds are spaces that will be made available as patients are moved into continuing care beds in the community. For every 1,000 new cases of COVID-19 identified, approximately 80 people will require hospitalization two weeks later. The health measures implemented to address hospital capacity ensures that critical treatments, such as heart surgery or cancer treatments, are still available.

Although there are some restrictions, such as capacity restrictions or requirements for appointments only or types of activity (e.g. gyms). Currently, we estimate that approximately 96 per cent of Alberta businesses are open and are substantially able to operate. That is, approximately 167,000 out of 172,755 businesses are open.

Albertans have a responsibility to slow the spread of the virus and make sure the health system can continue supporting patients with COVID-19 and other needs. We must work together to protect one another. The greater the community spread, the more likely it will infect those most at risk of severe outcomes, including death.

It is important to note that it takes a delicate balance to be able to protect Albertans' physical and mental health as well as our economy, small businesses and health care services.

Alberta Health continues to update COVID-19 information on [alberta.ca/COVID](https://alberta.ca/COVID). You are encouraged to visit this site regularly for the most up to date information.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

Tyler Shandro, Q.C.  
Minister of Health