

COVID-19 IN THE WEST

# Sask. premier wants provinces to co-ordinate on restrictions

The Canadian Press

Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe says having a patchwork of rules across the provinces isn't helpful in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

Saskatchewan reported 14 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, bringing the provincial total to 66.

Moe told a news conference that further restrictions on public life are likely to come down as the infection rate continues to climb.

He was set to speak to other premiers and the prime minister later Monday and planned to raise whether restrictions between provinces can be aligned.

Different premiers have been moving at different paces, Moe said, and he wants to know if there can be more co-ordination.

"Is there an opportunity through our federal government, with our federal government and all of the premiers on the phone to ... align our restrictions and provide that clarity for all Canadians?"

Moe also addressed the provincial government's decision to overrule its capital's own declaration on dealing with COVID-19.

Regina's mayor, Michael Fougere, wants the province to shutter all non-essential retail businesses and limit gatherings to no more than five people, as has been done in some other jurisdictions.

Regina city council approved the restric-

tions in a declaration last week, but Fougere says the province overruled it in favour of its own orders to ensure uniformity throughout the province.

He had hoped the Saskatchewan government would follow Regina's lead.

Moe has said no more than 25 people should be in the same place at once, except where two-metre distancing between them can be maintained. As well, rules closing restaurants and recreational facilities and limiting daycares to a maximum of eight children came into effect Monday.

The province should move faster on putting more crowd restrictions in place, Fougere says.

"Speed trumps perfection in many ways," he said at a news conference Monday.

"We need to grapple with this sooner rather than later. It's not something we can look at next week or a month after that. We have to do it right now."

The province's chief medical health officer said Monday there's still no evidence of community transmission and most of Saskatchewan's cases are travel-related.

But Dr. Saqib Shahab says the province is at a critical point for preventing the virus's spread and urged people to stay at home and avoid any unnecessary gatherings.

Last week, Moe gave police the authority to make arrests or hand out \$2,000 fines if people do not self-isolate for the required 14 days after returning from international travel.

## Man. premier says rent freeze will help people

The Manitoba government announced a rent freeze and a suspension of non-urgent eviction hearings Tuesday to help people cope with the economic fallout of COVID-19.

Premier Brian Pallister said any rent hikes slated for April 1 and after are temporarily off the table so that people who have lost their jobs or who have reduced income due to health issues can more easily make ends meet.

"These measures announced today will help to reduce the financial uncertainty and stress for many Manitobans," Pallister said. "For them, this is just one less worry to carry."

Non-urgent eviction hearings for things such as unpaid rent are postponed until at least May 31. Urgent issues such as illegal tenant activity will continue to be heard.

The Opposition New Democrats have called on the province to go further and offer financial aid so that tenants can defer rent payments for up to six months.

Pallister said his plan is fair to both renters and landlords. He also said renters who have lost their jobs can draw on federal Employment Insurance.

"It is providing significant support to people at a time of need," he said.

The province also announced Tuesday that it is temporarily suspending non-essential, routine diagnostic tests to protect health-care workers and patients from the spread of COVID-19.

"This includes laboratory

blood tests, diagnostic imaging and cardiac services," Lanette Siragusa, the province's chief nursing officer said.

Affected patients will be contacted. "Urgent diagnostic testing ... of course will continue with appropriate screening and cautions in place."

Health officials revealed one new probable case of COVID-19, bringing the total of confirmed and presumptive cases in the province to 21.

## B.C. makes preparations for influx of patients

British Columbia's health minister says nearly 3,900 empty beds are available in hospitals around the province in preparation for a possible influx of patients sickened with COVID-19.

Adrian Dix says the cancellation of thousands of elective surgeries was necessary to ready the health-care system for "a much more difficult situation" given that 617 people in B.C. have now been diagnosed with the virus.

He says the number of cancellations will put a strain on home-care and assisted-living services for people needing operations.

Provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry says 145 people have been diagnosed with the virus in the last two days, with 59 people in hospital, 23 of them in intensive care.

Henry says an increasing number of people are being infected but greater adherence to measures such as social distancing will make a "huge" difference in the number of infections in next 10 days.



## Time to support the little guy

Supporting local business has never been more critical than now. Truth is folks, we have received a startling wake-up call that should force us to take a serious look at the future of brick-and-mortar and global ecommerce. No longer can we turn away from our local businesses to order online and then express sentiments when doors close. The time is here and the time is now.

Big box retailers are no doubt well positioned to weather the corona-recession. In fact, the big dog, Amazon is predicted to increase revenues and has proposed to hire 100,000 new employees to meet demand. According to eMarketer Amazon realized an estimated \$586 billion in retail sales in 2019.

By buying local you are investing in the community. For every \$100 spent an estimated \$73 is returned to the



Sandra Blyth

community. Local businesses buy from other local businesses and service providers. Their tax dollars support our schools, infrastructure, parks, and community programs and events. By supporting local you are single-handedly stimulating economic growth.

As we isolate at home over the coming weeks I would encourage everyone to think

about how to support the little guy and shop local. Ways this can happen include:

Call and place an order. Pay with a credit card and arrange a time for pick up or ask to have it delivered.

Call / email to purchase gift certificates for yourself and others. There has never been a better time for early Christmas shopping.

Visit the business but use social distancing. Many stores are still open but limiting access.

It is difficult to know what lies ahead but what is certain is we are much stronger when we are working together. Invest Medicine Hat and Invest Southeast Alberta once again, have brought together local economic, business and workforce development agencies to form an Economic Recovery Team. The team will be supporting local business by:

Addressing the 'infodemic'. Business is overwhelmed by the flood of information coming forward. So many news reports, emails, and social media posts all sharing the same information. Its hard to know what's current and what isn't. The Team will be filtering the information and providing it in a simple and easy to access format at [www.medicinehat.ca/businessrecovery](http://www.medicinehat.ca/businessrecovery)

Forming Task Teams who will be gathering information and providing answers to questions in four key areas including: financial support, business support, employee support and other support This information will be posted to the site as it becomes available.

Requesting input from business to tell us: what information we are missing; an innovative idea that will support business; or innovative

ideas a local business is implementing others can use or we can celebrate them. Any complaints must come with solutions. Do this by emailing [info@InvestSoutheastAlberta.ca](mailto:info@InvestSoutheastAlberta.ca) with subject line "Business Input for Recovery"

Other actions will be determined in the coming weeks as more evolves.

Lastly, if you have expertise in human resources, accounting and income tax, financial / investment planning, or government programs we need volunteers to lend a hand and help answer questions. Please [info@InvestSoutheastAlberta.ca](mailto:info@InvestSoutheastAlberta.ca) if you can assist.

Join the movement once again, support your local business today.

Last month we started a six-part series that will continue again at a future date.

## 50/50 SALE

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## Upcoming Auctions:

Go to [www.gwacountry.com](http://www.gwacountry.com) for complete listing.

ONLINE ONLY AUCTION MARCH 28, 2020  
CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

Auction is now open to bid ONLINE - CLOSURE 7:00 PM MDT Saturday, March 28

Register to bid online [www.gwacountry.com](http://www.gwacountry.com) or call for assistance

Arrangements will be made at the close of the auction for pickup, as COVID 19 Conditions apply

Partial Listing: Cars, Trucks, Tires, Rims, 20" Chevy Rims, 9' Trailer Single Axle, 16' Trailer Dual Axle, Flow Back Tank Trailer Dbl Axle, Large Potable Water Tank, Commercial Floor Scrubbers, Coin Operated Washing Machine & Dryers, Work Bench, Tool Bench, Mr Heater-Contractors Series, Pallet Jack, Kubota Shop Vac, Champion Generator 8800W, Lawn Mowers, Snowblower, Power tools, Hands tools, Parts Washer, 5" Wheel Tailgates, Jeep Hood, F350 Hood, Shop Supplies BBQ, Fish TV Fish Finder, Amika High Tide Deep Waver, Antique Ringer Washer, Furniture, Antiques and more.....

If you need help bidding online or would like us to place a bid for you - Contact us 1-866-304-4664, 403-378-4664 or 403-594-9995 or email [gwacountry@gmail.com](mailto:gwacountry@gmail.com)

Contact Kathy or Trevor at 403-594-9995 or Monday - Friday between 9 & 4

1401 Dirkson Drive NE Redcliff, AB

Cell 403-363-1729 • Email: [gwacountry@gmail.com](mailto:gwacountry@gmail.com)  
[www.gwacountry.com](http://www.gwacountry.com)

If you are new to Medicine Hat, Dunmore, Redcliff or Ralston or know of someone who is please call **1.844.299.2466**

We would be more than happy to pay you a short visit and drop off a welcome package filled with civic information and small gifts from participating sponsors to welcome you to our area!

...or if you are

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- Planning a wedding
- New business or professional
- Interested in becoming a sponsor, contact us today!

1.844.299.2466

[www.welcomewagon.ca](http://www.welcomewagon.ca)

## There is a family behind every soldier. We are there for both.

If you are having trouble with the transition from military to civilian life and are or have been medically released, we are here for you and your family. Find a coordinator at Military Family Resource Centres across Canada or start by finding us online or calling the Family Information telephone line. You are not alone.

1-800-888-4546

[CAFCONNECTION.CA/VFP](http://CAFCONNECTION.CA/VFP)

Veteran Family Program

For medically releasing CAF members, medically released veterans and their families.

Easing your transition

For your local VFP Coordinator contact the Suffield MFRC: Ph: 403-544-5567 • Email: [mfrcl.information@gmail.com](mailto:mfrcl.information@gmail.com)

VETERANS & FAMILIES

FAMILLES & VÉTÉRANS

Veterans Affairs Canada

Anciens Combattants Canada

## PUBLIC NOTICES

8AM - 4PM SPECIAL SERVICES	
Electric Outages.....	403.529.8260
Gas Emergency.....	403.529.8191
Water & Sewer Emergency.....	403.502.8042
After Hours Special Services.....	403.526.2828

NOTICE OF SPECIAL CLOSED CITY OF MEDICINE HAT COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to s.194(3) of the Municipal Government Act, the Chief Elected Official of the City of Medicine Hat hereby gives notice of a Special Closed Council meeting on Friday March 27, 2020 at 2pm in Council Chambers, 580 1st St SE for the purposes of discussion regarding COVID-19. The meeting is being closed to the public pursuant to s.23 & s.24 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Personal Privacy Act Chapter F-25.

Dated at the City of Medicine Hat, in the Province of Alberta, this 25th day of March, 2020.

Angela Cruickshank, City Clerk  
Phone: 403.529.8234  
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[www.medicinehat.ca](http://www.medicinehat.ca)