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## **COVID-19 SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR REGIONAL PARKS SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Regional Parks has developed COVID-19 Safety Procedures to ensure the health and safety of program participants and Capital Regional District (CRD) staff. These safety procedures have been developed in alignment with the Province of BC's COVID-19 Orders and Notices, WorkSafeBC industry information, and the CRD Corporate Safety Program.

**Purpose:** To provide guidelines for minimizing the risk of COVID-19 exposure for CRD staff and all participants attending a school program led by Regional Parks staff. Participants include students, teachers and any adults providing supervision.

### **Procedures:**

#### **1. Associated Policies and Guidelines**

All school programs will be conducted while following existing health and safety policies and procedures developed by CRD or public health experts. Staff will receive additional and ongoing training on these procedures as necessary.

Associated policies and procedures include:

- CRD Communicable Disease Plan
- WorkSafeBC Communicable Disease Prevention
- Provincial COVID-19 Communicable Disease Guidelines for K to 12 Settings
- CRD Use and Care Instructions for Face Covering

#### **2. CRD COVID-19 Vaccination Policy**

While the CRD's COVID-19 Vaccination Policy is suspended as of April 8, 2022, confirmation of vaccination status remains required for:

- All employees,
- Direct service volunteers working alongside CRD employees,
- Contractors who are required to follow CRD safety policies and/or who work alongside CRD employees.

This information is necessary because the CRD must be prepared to implement or maintain additional measures at times when the risk of communicable disease in our region or workplace is elevated, as advised and directed by public health. This may include reactivating the CRD COVID Safety Plan and Vaccine Policy.

#### **3. Personal Health Check**

As required by WorkSafe BC, at the start of each workday, CRD staff must complete a personal health check and screen themselves for any symptoms of COVID-19 or declare any other reasons that they may be required to self-isolate or not attend work.

Program participants are asked to follow their school district's procedure for daily health checks and only participate in a school program if they have completed a daily assessment.

#### **4. Physical Distancing**

Public health officials recommend people maintain 2 meters of physical distance between themselves and others whenever possible to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Physical distancing will be maintained on school programs between staff and all participants.

#### **The following actions will be taken in order to ensure physical distancing is maintained:**

- Programs will take place entirely outdoors.
- Programs will take place in locations with ample space.
- Staff will be aware of trail traffic flow and avoid stopping in any locations that could create pinch points.
- Groups sizes will be small with a maximum of 15 students per guide, with the exception of the E.A.G.L.E Forest Cultural program which has one guide for the class.

- Staff will remind participants of physical distancing expectations at the start of the program and throughout the program, as necessary.

#### **5. Enhanced Cleaning Procedures for Props and Materials**

- There will be no props or materials passed between participants.
- Any props or materials used will be cleaned at the end of the program using a bleach and water solution.
- Any difficult to wash props such as taxidermy, bird's nests etc. will be placed in plexiglass cases and cases will be cleaned between programs.
- If a prop is used by a participant (e.g. small bowl for observing beach creatures) it will be washed with soap and water and left for 72 hours between uses.

#### **6. First Aid**

While CRD park naturalists make every effort to keep participants safe, and do carry a first aid kit, there will not be a certified first aid attendant leading the program. Teachers should continue to follow the first aid procedures in keeping with their school district's policies.

#### **7. Contact Tracing**

All school programs require pre-registration. CRD staff will maintain a record of contact information for teachers who registered for programs. These records will be made available to health officials should contact tracing be necessary.

#### **8. Washroom Access and Hand Hygiene**

Hand Hygiene is one of the most important ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Hand washing with soap and water or applying hand sanitizer are effective ways to clean hands.

- All programs will take place in locations where washroom facilities are available for participants
- Washrooms are cleaned regularly and equipped with either soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- Staff will wash or sanitize their hands before and after programs and participants will be encouraged to do the same.

#### **9. Face Coverings**

- Park naturalists have been supplied with non-medical face coverings and may choose to wear them while delivering programs outdoors.
- Participants may choose to wear face coverings.

#### **10. Monitoring and Updating of Safety Procedures**

- Staff will continue to monitor and assess all program activity and adjust the safety procedures as necessary in consultation with CRD health and safety advisors.
- School program participants are encouraged to provide input on the safety procedures.

#### **11. Program Cancellations:**

- In the event that participants need to cancel or postponed a program due to COVID-19 related concerns, there will be no cancellation fee retained. The program fee will either be refunded or the program will be re-scheduled, depending on availability of alternate time slots.

#### **Further Information**

- For updates on the CRD response to COVID-19 visit: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/covid>
- Please direct questions or feedback regarding CRD Regional Parks school programs to:

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**References**

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 August 22, 2022

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