

## COVID-19 Bulletin

*This weekly bulletin is an update on the community response to COVID-19 pandemic for the DTES, with key messages for June 1-8*

### Dual Public Health Emergencies

The DTES is facing an overdose emergency and a public health threat with the COVID-19 pandemic. Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and the City of Vancouver Community Action Team will be distributing weekly updates on the status of the emergencies, with key information and messages to keep each other safe.

### Information on COVID cases in Vancouver

As of June 1st, of all confirmed COVID cases in Vancouver, less than 2% have been people who are under-housed or homeless. To date, 100% of the positive cases amongst under-housed or homeless people have recovered, with no current active cases. A comprehensive outreach program is in place to prevent COVID, test + trace, and support people who are symptomatic. As of May 25th, the testing rate in the DTES was 74.7 tests/1,000 people. This is more than twice the VCH average of 29.8 tests/1,000 people. Of the tests completed in the DTES, 0.8% came back positive. This is lower than the overall VCH positivity rate (2.4%).

### Key Messages for the Week



#### 1. Overdose Prevention

**We know everyone is doing their best to keep physical distance of 2m (6 ft) from each other, but using drugs alone is a bigger risk than COVID. Try to use at overdose prevention sites or with a friend who has Naloxone. If you need to use alone, follow these tips to keep safe:**

- Start with a small amount
- Make a plan and carry Naloxone
- Get your drugs checked
- Try not to share supplies
- Wash your hands before prepping your drugs and wipe down surfaces with cleaning solution.

If you are at risk of overdose and need assistance accessing treatment or safe supply, VCH's Overdose Outreach Team is available to help and can be reached 7 days a week, from 8:00am-8:00pm at **(604) 360-2874**.

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**2. COVID testing has expanded.** Doctors and nurse practitioners can order tests—phone your regular clinic to see if this is available. In addition, a mobile testing unit is serving shelters and supportive housing sites. VCH has also opened a walk-in DTES COVID testing site at 429 Alexander Street to serve residents of the DTES who have symptoms. Services include:

- Assessment and testing
- In-person COVID-19 information, education and advice
- Referral and access to COVID response centres/hotels/housing; and
- Connection to supports for urgent health care needs



### 3. Food Services

Updated information and locations of free and low cost meal programs can be found here: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/emergency-meal-program-map.pdf>



**4. Anti-Racism** - The City of Vancouver declared May 29 the Day of Action Against Racism and is committed to addressing racism and hate. The proclamation can be found online in multiple languages: <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/day-of-action-against-racism-proclamations.pdf> Anyone who experiences or witnesses racism or a hate crime is encouraged to report it to the police and/or the BC Human Rights Commission <https://bchumanrights.ca/>. The VPD's Diversity, Inclusion and Indigenous Relations Section can be contacted at [vpd.diversity@vpd.ca](mailto:vpd.diversity@vpd.ca) or **604-717-2736**.



### 5. Public Hygiene

All three washroom trailers are fully operational. The trailers will be monitored in partnership with RainCity, OPS and WISH. The locations are as follows:

- **Kingsway Chruch of the Nazarene, 998 E 19th Avenue** (monitored by Raincity Housing): 8:00 am - 6:00 am
- **WISH Drop-In Location, 334 Alexander Street** (monitored by WISH): 24/7
- **OPS, 62 E Hastings Street** (monitored by OPS): 9:00 am - 7:00 pm



**6. Peer Work Programs** - Community responders have been essential to the City's emergency/crisis response for decades. A number of peer programs will be sustained over the summer. Each week over 100 peers will be working at COVID-19 prevention (physical distancing, critical information and supply distribution); overdose prevention and response; and heat and wellness response through programs like:

- The Enhanced Community Stewardship Program (managed by CIRES);
- The DTES Resident Network, and the redeployment of DTES Market Peer programs;
- Peer monitoring and outreach support for the three washroom trailers;
- Anyone interested in peer work is encouraged to contact Eastside Works at 57 East Hastings Street.

