

## 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 15-21*

## 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 15th, 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 among 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 June 15th, the testing rate in the DTES was 94 tests/1,000 people. This is more than twice the VCH average of 38 tests/1,000 people. Of the tests completed in the DTES, 0.8% came back positive. This is much lower than the overall VCH positivity rate (2.0%).

## 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
- Use the Lifeguard App
- 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. Lifeguard App

The Provincial Health Services Authority recently announced the launch of Lifeguard, a new overdose prevention smartphone application available for download now at the App Store and Google Play. Lifeguard connects people to emergency responders automatically if they become unresponsive after using drugs. The app can be activated anywhere there is data or wifi. For more information, including printable 'how to guides' and an instructional video go to: <https://lifeguarddh.com/>



### 3. 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



### 4. 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>



### 5. Washrooms

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 Church 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. Parklets

On Friday June 12th, five temporary road space re-allocations (parklets) will be implemented. Four in the Downtown Eastside (DTES), and one in Downtown South. These parklets will facilitate the ongoing health and safety of residents in the Downtown Eastside during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City is working with partner organizations to support the operation & monitoring of these spaces, including employment programs for peers. These parklets are part of a broader plan to provide safe outdoor spaces for people in the DTES

