



## RCABC Recommendations for Courses and Club Programs during Covid-19

The RCABC takes the Covid-19 pandemic very seriously and understands that we all need to work together continue to limit transmission, protect vulnerable citizens, and prevent community transmission. This is an added risk to paddling, but we are no strangers to managing risk with protocols and PPE. We cannot eliminate risk, but we can minimize it to a reasonable and responsible level that ensures personal and community health and safety.

Recently the spread Covid-19 in the province has lessened, and the Provincial government is relaxing some of its restrictions and measures. **As such the RCABC will permit sanctioned day activities to resume as of May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Overnight tripping and other multi-day camping based canoeing activities will be permitted to commence as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.** These are based on the same time frame that most Provincial Parks will re-open and when commercial canoe guiding is permitted to resume in those parks.

Not all individuals, businesses or clubs will be comfortable with this timeline. The personal risk varies from person to person and region to region, with individuals own health and their work and home life (who they interact with regularly) being a major factor. These are general recommendations, but we all must make the best decision for our own health and the health of our family and community looking at our specific circumstances.

**The following timeline has been provided by BC Parks:**

### **Phase 1 – May 14, 2020**

*Re-opening of most parks for day-use activities only*

*Activities such as guided hiking, nature tours, canoe rentals, access to private infrastructure, and research may resume provided they do not involve overnight use of a park. Generally, this means no access to any part of a park between 11 pm and 7 am the next day, or as otherwise indicated by sign.*

### **Phase 2 – June 1, 2020**

*Re-opening of overnight use along with most camping facilities and any remaining day-use areas in most parks*

*Overnight camping activities (both front-, back-country and marine) and overnight use of privately-owned recreational facilities may resume.*

### **Phase 3 – TBD**

*Parks that are highly used will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine when public access may safely resume*

*Any permitted activities may only be undertaken in closed parks by written exemption.*

**Covid-19 conditions can change at any time. Please continue to monitor the latest recommendations of Public Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, the Provincial Government, and BC Parks each week.**



More information [BC Governments plan to re-start BC](#)

More information from Public Health [Covid-19 Update as of May 5<sup>th</sup>](#).

### Key considerations on Covid-19:

- Covid-19 is a serious respiratory illness that can hospitalize or even kill people of any age. It is however primarily causing severe and dangerous complications in older people and those with underlying heart and respiratory conditions.
- The risk is likely thought to be lower during the summer months but transmission is still possible and there is a very real threat of a second wave especially next fall as we go into “respiratory season”, in the cooler months of the year when other diseases (Cold, Flues, etc.) flourish.
- Covid-19 is a droplet transmitted disease that is principally transmitted through coughing, sneezing and moist talking. These droplets may be inhaled directly but typically quickly fall or land on surfaces which then are touched and transferred to orifices (mouth, nose, etc.) by touching the face or eating without washing hands. Covid-19 can persist on surfaces for extended periods of time (days).
- Covid-19 is principally transmitted by symptomatic carriers, but it can also be transmitted by pre-symptomatic and asymptomatic carriers.
- Covid-19 is a relatively “fragile” virus that can be destroyed by washing with soap and water thoroughly or by disinfecting with commercial disinfectants, a %10 bleach solution, or a minimum 70% alcohol solution. More information is available on the BCCDC website.
- Covid-19 transmission is much more likely indoors in a crowded location where droplets can land directly on each other or where many “high touch surfaces” are continually being contaminated. In the outdoors when physical distancing can be maintained, transmission is very low.

[More information from the BC Centre for Disease Control information on Covid-19](#)

### RCABC Recommendations managing Covid-19 Risk for Sanctioned Canoeing Activities

All RCABC sanctioned activities must only take place if the organizers, supervising leaders, or instructors can ensure that the group is able to comply with the requirements and recommendations of the Provincial Public Health Officer. The following are our recommendations for how to comply:

1. As always, ALL participants must sign an RCABC waiver. The waiver’s section on assumption of risks has been updated to include the risk of pathogens such as viruses and bacteria.



2. It is not suggested to include participants who are elderly and/or who have serious underlying health issues or who live and work with those who do; the choice is theirs', but make sure they are aware of the risks.
3. No participants are to be permitted to attend or participate if they have any symptoms of illness: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, etc.  
See more on [Covid-19 symptoms](#)
4. As much as possible, participants must maintain physical distancing or at least 2 meters: no touching, handshaking, hugging, and sharing of food or equipment is to be permitted.
5. The limit of group size mandated by the BC government is still 50. **The RCABC recommended maximum group size limit will be set at 8 as of May 14<sup>th</sup>. This limit will likely increase as of June 1<sup>st</sup> and we will advise on any new recommendations at that time.** Any stricter group size rules mandated by the Province must be adhered to, as well as our regular instructor to student ratios.
6. Instruct participants to wash and/or sanitize hands regularly (especially before eating) and to cough and sneeze in their elbow-pit.
7. Participation should include outdoor activities only (with the exception of short "shuttles". See shuttle recommendations below) – Indoor sessions should be avoided.
8. Participants should be encouraged to register from their local region so as not encourage large amounts of long-distance travel. Also, registration in courses based on pre-existing family/social groups should be encouraged to minimize new interactions. Out of province participants should not be considered.
9. Instructors and clubs should not be participating in trips or courses held outside of BC.
10. Travel should be limited, and groups need to take care to not to put any unnecessary pressure on communities they are travelling through. Unnecessary use of gas stations or convenience stores, etc. should not happen. Participants must come prepared with all their food and supplies for the day. Be respectful of communities, especially small ones with limited resources.
11. When possible, courses such as lake water courses and trips should be encouraged that do not require a vehicle shuttle which poses challenging conditions for physical distancing.
12. Choose locations and routes that minimize risk and the likelihood of needing to perform companion rescues: Stay close to shore, choose easier rivers, etc. Plan to use rescue techniques that do not require you to be "hands-on" with the swimmer: self rescues, towing, boat bumping, etc. Discuss these techniques before going out to make sure all participants understand any new procedures and are comfortable performing them.



- 13.** When shuttles must be completed for moving water trips and programs and physical distancing of 2 meters is not possible, then following measures should be taken:
- a. Minimize long shuttles by having participants drive their own vehicle to the area.
  - b. Consider using bicycles or walking for a shuttle if that is reasonable.
  - c. Shuttles should be less than 30 minutes. The shorter, the better.
  - d. Sanitize hands prior to entering/exiting a shuttle vehicle.
  - e. Cloth masks are to be worn while together in the shuttle vehicle.
  - f. Minimize talking, especially loud animated talking, laughing, shouting, etc. as this is more likely to produce droplets. (consider asking participants to read a book, listen to music, or other quiet activities instead of conversing on the ride.
  - g. Ensure there is no crowding or direct touching by leaving at least 1 empty space between each passenger.
  - h. Avoid coughing and sneezing! If you must, use your mask/ elbow pit to contain droplets.
  - i. The shuttle vehicle should be sanitized between uses.
- 14.** Following the course/ activity sanitize any shared or borrowed equipment. “Soft” equipment such as PFD’s and wetsuits should be sanitized using soapy water. Other “hard” equipment may use commercial sanitizer, bleach solution, etc. It is important that equipment then be allowed to dry for best results in terms of eliminating pathogens.
- 15.** All participants are to inform the trip or course organizer if they develop Covid-19 symptoms or are tested and confirmed positive within 2 weeks following the course so that other participants can be informed, self isolate, and potentially be tested.