

DATE: October 25, 2021

FILE: 4710-01

TO: Chair and Members
Comox Valley Recreation Commission

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Recreation Facilities Provincial Health Orders

Purpose

To provide the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Recreation Commission (Commission) with an update/information on CVRD Recreation Facilities mask and vaccine mandates and processes.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the Comox Valley Regional District Recreation Commission receive this report for information purposes.

Executive Summary

The current Provincial Health Officer (PHO) vaccine mandate does not apply to swimming pools unless the location of an event, or skating rinks, are not being used for adult sport. However, the current PHO order does apply to fitness and wellness centres.

Since the fall reopening of the Comox Valley Sports and Aquatic Centre pools, Recreation Services have received three written requests for recreation facilities to become vaccine check mandated and improve on mask and physical distancing enforcements.

- While the physical distancing order was rescinded in July 2021, the facilities will be returning to:
 - Physical distancing parameters/signage and traffic flow for the facility lobbies and hallways;
 - Signage reminders in the changerooms and pool areas; and
 - The addition of a COVID-19 education campaign in common areas to provide further detailed information to assist our patrons in having a safer swim.
- The CVRD is not the lead agency on COVID-19; we take direction from the Province and the Provincial Health Officer.
- Restrictions are made by the PHO under the Public Health Act. Regional restrictions may be in place for health authorities with lower vaccination rates.

The CVRD continues to monitor this situation and, will work with our provincial and regional partners to ensure safe facilities, programming and services to our community.

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

J. Zbinden

D. DeMarzo

Jennifer Zbinden
Senior Manager of Recreation
Services

Doug DeMarzo
General Manager of Community
Services

Background/Current Situation

On September 10, 2021, by order of the PHO, proof of vaccination is required to access some events, services and businesses. You must have at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and, by October 24, you must be fully vaccinated. This requirement is in place until January 31, 2022, and could be extended. This order does not apply to swimming pools unless the location of an event, or skating rinks, are not being used for adult sport. However, does apply to fitness and wellness centres.

On October 13, 2021, the PHO provided an update to masks in indoor settings. Masks are required in all public indoor settings for all people born in 2016 or earlier (age five plus). This includes common areas of sport and fitness centres when not engaged in physical activity. Once at the field of play or activity such as pool deck or ice arena, masks may be removed and stored in pool deck cubicles in a plastic baggie or ice arena lockers/clothing pockets.

The BC recreation sector leaders work directly with the PHO to provide support for recreation facilities during the implementation of PHO orders as they are announced.

CVRD Recreation Facilities have both a pool safety plan and a communicable disease plan. These plans capture work done within Recreation Services and, the CVRD organization as a whole, and are reviewed by Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) and the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee. As per PHO order *Workplace COVID-19 Safety Plan*, a copy of the completed COVID-19 Safety Plan is posted in the workplace so that it is readily available for review by workers, other persons who attend a workplace to provide services and members of the public.

As changes to the PHO orders are announced to the provincial government website, Recreation Services adjust their practices to ensure compliance with the newest orders and provide immediate notice to staff and patrons through various media outlets and facility posters.

Plexiglass protective barriers, increased cleaning measures, capacity adjustments, staff and patron physical distancing and other measures such as advisory and directional signage has been installed and/or adjusted in all public areas and at customer service counters as per the PHO order for the health and safety of staff and the public.

Recreation Services are essential for active, healthy and connected communities and citizens. They contribute enormously to the resilience of our province during these turbulent times. The ability to engage in recreation and physical activity protects and supports public physical and mental health. As such this is an operational matter that Recreation Services continue to strictly follow the PHO orders ensuring we are guided by the province's expertise, providing consistency across the CVRD organization and all facilities, including our local government's partners so that our services can continue to adjust to changing directives that are expected as the pandemic progresses.

Options

This report is for information only.

Financial Factors

There are no financial concerns generated by this report.

Legal Factors

The CVRD is not the lead agency on COVID-19; we take direction from the Province and the Provincial Health Officer.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

- Public Health and Safety: Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being.
 - Objective 7A-5: Support the promotion of healthy lifestyles and invigorating community spirit through physical activity.

Intergovernmental Factors

PHO orders affect all local municipal recreation departments, citizens and community contributors and stakeholders.

Interdepartmental Involvement

The Recreation Services Department has taken the lead but will work with the Communications Department to provide information and updates to the community and staff.

Citizen/Public Relations

It is important that the residents in the Comox Valley have access to recreational opportunities that are affordable and promote and maintain a healthy active lifestyle. The public will be notified through a communications plan, that may involve stakeholder input and notifications to the general public, of any changes and/or updates to the PHO orders and, how they affect CVRD Recreation Programs and Services to help assist with the comfort and safety of all during their facilities use.

We are implementing further outreach and communications to the public to inform them of the PHO orders. Furthermore, we are addressing some concerns of the public through the following measures

- Physical distancing parameters/signage and traffic flow for the facility lobbies and hallways;
- Signage reminders in the changerooms and pool areas; and
- The addition of a COVID-19 education campaign in common areas to provide further detailed information to assist our patrons in having a safer swim.

Attachments: Appendix A – Letter Dated October 8, 2021
Appendix B – Letter Dated October 13, 2021
Appendix C – Email Correspondence Dated October 12, 2021

Oct 8, 2021

Comox Valley Regional District

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File: 4900-01

OCT 12 2021

Russel Dyson
 Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
 Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD)
 770 Harmston Ave.
 Courtenay, BC
 V9N 0G8

To: RDyson
 JMartens
 cc: JWarren
 cc: LDennis
 DDeMarzo
 JZbinden
 EJackson

Dear Russel Dyson:

We, the undersigned, request that the CVRD Board of Directors immediately implement the use of a Covid-19 vaccine passport for all patrons eligible for a vaccine entering the CVRD pools.

It is unclear why there is no need for a vaccine passport to enter the CVRD pools. Since the Sep 7, 2021 re-opening of the Aquatic Centre, we have attended the Swim Fit program fourteen times (3x/week). We follow the PHO order and wear a mask into the change room, onto the pool deck, and keep it on until we enter the pool for our program. We are surprised with what we have observed so far:

- 1) Less than 50% of the patrons in the Men's Change Room are wearing masks,
- 2) Less than 50% of the patrons on the pool deck are wearing masks,
- 3) No-one is enforcing the wearing of masks in the Change Room and pool deck. The exception is the receptionist in the front foyer who will ask you to put a mask on, if you're not wearing one,
- 4) And, of course, no masks are worn in the men's shower. We are standing shoulder to shoulder in the showers, much less than 2 metres apart, and
- 5) With many swimmers sharing the lanes, it is not possible to remain 2 metres apart at all times – the lanes ropes are only 2 metres apart, so even when we are passing another swimmer, we are much closer than 2 metres, and at times we are breathing very hard.

It's uncertain if the PHO considered the close proximity of patrons when using the change rooms, showers, pool deck, hot tub, and swim lanes. By allowing unvaccinated people into your pool facilities, we run a greater risk of being exposed to the Covid-19 virus because of the lack of masks and the close proximity of pool patrons in the many locations as outlined.

Vaccinated pool patrons with added health risks run an even greater risk of catching the Covid-19 virus. No-one wants to get this virus from someone in either of the CVRD pools while trying to maintain

their health and fitness, so why not establish yourself as community leaders and implement the Covid-19 passport requirement for entry into your pool facilities.

It appears that at least one pool facility on Vancouver Island has implemented the Covid-19 vaccine passport requirement for entry into their pool. Please see below:

Crystal Pool & Fitness Centre, 2275 Quadra St., Victoria – the "Proof of Vaccination" statements (below) were taken from their website:

Proof of Vaccination

By Order of the Provincial Health Officer, proof of vaccination is required to enter the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre for adults 22 and older. Effective September 13, proof of partial vaccination is required. Effective October 24, proof of full vaccination is required. Learn more at gov.bc.ca/vaccinecard. Please have your proof of vaccination and government ID ready prior to entry. Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we implement this Public Health Order.

Would you please confirm (by email to, [redacted]) that our request will be placed on the agenda and discussed at your upcoming Oct 26, 2021 Board Meeting. If it is on the agenda, at least one of us will attend your meeting to observe the discussion of our topic. If our request is rejected, would you please tell us why?

Sincerely,

 Dave Semple	 Frank Blues	 Rob Higgs	 Barry Graham	 Max Fletcher
 Bill Kerr	 Querina Tulen	 Christine Helpard	 Margie Woodman	 Dave Woodman

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File:

OCT 13 2021

Dear Russel Dyson,

I am delighted to be back using our community swimming pool again, but ~~am~~ dismayed that there are no requirement to show proof of vaccine. In the pool you cannot wear a mask, nor can you social distance, by allowing the un vaccinated access to the public pool, ^{cc:} puts everyone in danger and increases the chance of spreading covid throughout the valley.

Fortunately, this unnecessary risk can be easily eliminated by implementing the covid 19 passport requirement for entry to our community pool facilities. Help stop the spread.

I request that this letter be read and discussed at the next board meeting on Oct. 26th.

Sincerely,

Bill Kerr



12/ oct / 2021

Submitted on Tuesday, October 12, 2021 - 10:07

Submitted by anonymous user: 70.67.136.223

Submitted values are:

Name Wayne D Temple

Email [REDACTED]

Message

Could you PLEASE require "proof of vaccination" for those using the pool facilities.

It is an activity environment that is either impossible or very difficult to either wear a mask and/or social distance.

Please convey my concerns to Council.

Thank you

Dr. Wayne D Temple

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/node/2949/submission/10706>