

Tourism Sector Restart Step 2 Toolkit

Quick guide for tourism operators on
communications, health and safety,
workforce, and marketing

Version 1 – June 15, 2021



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Introduction

Step 2 BC Restart Plan Toolkit

Everyone in British Columbia is excited to put the global pandemic behind us and start moving forward with the restart plan. A key part of this will be the return of business and pleasure travel – regional, national, and international.

But the shift is not going to happen overnight, and tourism operators of every type – hotels, attractions, transportation, restaurants, and beyond – are getting ready and will stay on top of the changing circumstances.

This toolkit is designed as a guide for the tourism sector for Step 2, of BC's Restart Plan starting June 15 and running until at least July 1, 2021. It summarizes the changing guidelines, what restrictions have been modified or lifted, where operators can go for more information, and what the provincial government and the hospitality and tourism sector are doing together to restart the visitor economy.

This toolkit will be updated as we move through each step of the BC Restart Plan and will be updated if there are notable changes or new information, as we continuously adapt in B.C. and the sector.

The situation is continuously changing, and while it is challenging, we will continue to get stronger, together.

Excerpts – Joint Statement with Minister Step 2 - Provincial Travel Returns

- “It’s an exciting time for British Columbians as we begin travelling again.”
- “People have been doing their part – getting vaccinated and following the rules – to keep each other safe and protect our communities.”
- “The hospitality and tourism sector have sacrificed so much in the fight against COVID-19. Now we’re encouraging British Columbians to say thank you by exploring B.C. this summer.”
- “Every dollar British Columbians spend at a local hotel, restaurant, attraction, experience or shop helps people and families, the tourism sector, our communities, and our province create jobs, restart and recover.”
- “Since the pandemic began, the tourism and hospitality industry has done an amazing job implementing rigorous health and safety plans to keep their staff and visitors safe, and they will keep doing what’s required to keep the public and their teams safe.”
- “As we emerge from the pandemic and start our slow return to normal, people and businesses in the hospitality and tourism sector are excited to welcome British Columbians back to their communities and show visitors all our province has to offer.”

From joint statement of Melanie Mark, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport; Brenda Baptiste, Chair, Indigenous Tourism BC; Walt Judas, CEO, Tourism Industry Association of BC; Ingrid Jarrett, President and CEO of the BC Hotel Association; Anthony Everett, Chair of the BC Regional Tourism Secretariat; and Richard Porges, Interim President and CEO of Destination BC. Entire statement is online at <https://news.gov.bc.ca/24696>



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Contents

Step 2 BC Restart Plan Toolkit

This toolkit has a number of sections designed to help tourism operators navigate forward as B.C. reopens and restrictions are changed and removed. It includes:

- **Communications** – Some high-level language to help you describe to local residents, visitors, business travellers, and employees the current step of the Restart Plan we are in, the state of travel, and where we are heading together.
- **Health and Safety Protocols** – Public health orders are evolving, and this outlines those in place for the current Restart Plan step, which restrictions can be removed if operators are comfortable, and links to key information.
- **Workforce** – As some workers in the tourism sector found new work during the pandemic, hiring will be critical and challenging. This section has information on rehiring, recruiting, and training staff.
- **Marketing** – This provides a snapshot of the major marketing efforts planned, to help the sector be aligned as we recover together.



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Communications - Key Messages

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- The tourism sector is excited to safely welcome the travelling public again, as well as business, government, and meetings and events.
- Restrictions, operations, and the nature of travel are evolving as we move through the Restart. All of us are ready to adapt, just like we were through the pandemic.
- Everyone in the tourism sector is working to get back to pre-pandemic service levels, but it will take time as operators tackle staffing shortages, training, and health and safety requirements. It's important we work together as things evolve and we work on the slow return to normal safely.
- Many people will still be cautious returning to travel. The good thing is that we're natural hosts, so kindness and patience is at the heart of everything we do.
- Each tourism operation in B.C. is a key part of its community, and it's important that the community's own standards be reflected in our actions. Community engagement is critical for reopening the travel economy. Respect if a community is not yet open.
- The B.C. government information on travel and business rules are online at www.gov.bc.ca/covidtravel.



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Communications – Key Tools I

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- Remember that as people start travelling again, they will need to feel reassured that safety plans are in place. Ensure your safety plan is on your website, and that your teams are also able to communicate key elements to guests.
- A key message for your website, guest email distributions, and on check-in displays could be: *“We are ready to welcome travellers from across British Columbia. Safety measures like masks and social distancing remain in place, and we are following or exceeding all provincial safety requirements. We’re slowly returning to pre-pandemic service levels and addressing capacity challenges as we move forward together.”*
- Ensure your operations are in synch with your community. If the community is concerned about the return of travel, be sure to reflect that in what you do.
- All people travelling in B.C. have to comply with the public health orders. You can help inform the public what is expected by linking to the orders at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restrictions>.



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Health & Safety - Key Tools I

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- Step 2 begins on June 15 and key changes include:
 - B.C. recreational travel – non-essential travel ban lifted. Out-of-province non-essential travel advisory continues
 - liquor service at restaurants, bars and pubs extended until midnight
 - maximum of 50 people for outdoor personal gatherings
 - maximum of 50 people for indoor seated organized gatherings (e.g., business meetings, movie theatres, live theatre, banquet halls) with safety plans
- All other capacity limits and guidelines listed in Step 1, like physical distancing, safety plans, masks, and barriers, remain in place.
- These guidelines can be found at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>
- Employers must continue to have a COVID-19 Safety Plan and daily health check in place
- We will be updating the toolkit as new restriction information is released.



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Health & Safety - Key Tools 2

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- Remember that the provincial health and safety requirements can be viewed as the minimum requirements to be met. You know your operation, customers, community, and your staff members better than anyone. If extra steps are required to help people feel safe, take them.
- Key steps for the safety of your staff includes washing hands or using sanitizer, wearing your mask, and physical distancing. WorkSafeBC has a number of posters and other resources online at <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19>
- People staying home when they are sick is critical. Make sure your staff know to stay home if they are feeling sick, and ensure they know what support is available to them. The province provides 3 paid days of sick leave for COVID-19. Employers have to register and information for employees and operators is at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/paid-sick-leave> or <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/covid-19/covid-19-paid-sick-leave-reimbursement-program>
- Your teams are on the front lines of keeping the travelling public safe. Make sure everyone has the knowledge they need about COVID-19 to ensure safety for communities, guests, coworkers and themselves. A new program called BSAFE offers this training online at <https://www.go2hr.ca/training-education/bsafe>.



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Health & Safety - Key Tools 3

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- Vaccinations are key to keeping people safe and to getting British Columbia back to normal. Information on how to get vaccinated is at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register>
- While you cannot require staff members to get vaccinated, you can encourage them to get their shot. You can provide incentives like extra time off (beyond the 3 hours paid leave per dose workers are entitled to in order to get vaccinated), bonus pay, or gift cards. Detailed information on workplaces and vaccinations are available at <https://www.go2hr.ca/covid-19-updates/covid-19-vaccinations-in-the-workplace>
- Customers may ask if your staff is fully vaccinated. You may want to tell them this: *“We are following all the health and safety protocols designed to keep people safe and we are supporting and encouraging all of our employees to get vaccinated. Because of privacy concerns, I cannot share personal health information of our staff.”*
- You may still face difficult questions from customers who don’t want to follow rules like mask guidelines. This guide can help you address different situations and de-escalate away from confrontation: <https://www.go2hr.ca/training-education/scripts-responding-to-difficult-guest-situations-during-a-pandemic>



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Workforce - Key Tools I

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- Operators will need to be flexible and creative hiring team members as the travelling public returns. We have included some resources to support your hiring needs and will continue to add resources and adapt as we move through restart.
- Be sure to let potential employees know the benefits you offer and the supports you have in place.
- The first place for help in hiring is the provincial governments WorkBC program and centres. You can post jobs, get hiring advice, and find out more about provincial supports at <https://www.workbc.ca/>
- Indigenous people are twice as likely to seek a job in tourism and hospitality than the rest of British Columbians. Consider reaching out to the local Indigenous community or connecting with Indigenous Tourism BC for advice on where you can go. <https://www.indigenoussc.com/contact-us/>
- go2HR, the tourism sector's HR resource, has guides for recruiting and training staff, and a place to post job openings. You can tap into these tools at <https://www.go2hr.ca/category/recruitment>
- Don't forget to post your job openings on other job sites, including places like www.indeed.ca, www.hcareers.com, and online classified sites.
- You can reach out directly to go2HR with questions:
 - HR inquires can be sent to hr@go2HR.ca
 - OHS inquiries can be sent to safety@go2HR.ca



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Workforce - Key Tools 2

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- Your hiring and onboarding needs to include training for job specific expertise, as well as safety standards.
- The BSAFE program offers COVID-19 safety and protocols training online at <https://www.go2hr.ca/training-education/bsafe>.
- go2HR also offers a range of free and paid training services. You can find them online at <https://train.go2hr.ca/>
- The FirstHost Workshop is a course in customer service especially for businesses in the Indigenous tourism sector. <https://www.indigenousbc.com/corporate/learning-material/firsthost-destination-ambassador-workshop/>
- The provincial government's Recovery Grant will be available until July 2. Details are online at <https://covid.smallbusinessbc.ca/hc/en-us/articles/360057398813>
- The B.C. Tourism Resiliency Network can help operators with one-on-one support. Links to each regions contacts are at www.tourismresiliency.ca/regions/



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Marketing - Key Tools I

Step 2 BC Restart Plan

- Communities and the Tourism & Hospitality sector need to be aligned with marketing messages and strategies.
- Include safety messages in marketing campaigns to grow confidence in safe travel.
- Limit your marketing for Step 2 to British Columbians and think about your plan for Canadian and international travel in Step 3 & 4 once they are confirmed.
- Make sure you are listing your offerings with Destination BC and your local community destination marketing organization (CDMO) and your regional destination management organization (RDMO) are up to date. They can all help promote travel deals, calls to action, listing opportunities on its site.
- Help spread the message and encourage travel in B.C. through your social media using #exploreBCnow.
- You can get lots of ideas on marketing and social media from DBC at <https://www.destinationbc.ca/learning-centre/>

Key contacts

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