

---

## STATEMENTS

For Immediate Release  
2025PREM0011-000179  
March 11, 2025

Office of the Premier  
Ministry of Health  
Office of the Provincial Health Officer

### **Premier's, minister's, provincial health officer's statements on COVID-19 National Day of Observance**

VICTORIA – Premier David Eby has issued the following statement acknowledging the National Day of Observance for COVID-19:

“On this National Day of Observance for COVID-19 marking the five-year mark since the start of the pandemic, we remember more than 6,600 people in British Columbia and more than 58,000 Canadians who died due to the virus. We also recognize those who got sick, and those who continue to suffer from the lasting effects of post-COVID condition, also known as long COVID. We also acknowledge the devastating health, social and economic impact of this disease.

“On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization officially declared a global pandemic. Ordinary life was turned upside down as we confronted this dangerous new disease. In British Columbia, people stepped up to the challenge, taking precautions to avoid the spread of the disease. People in British Columbia responded to the largest mass-vaccination program in provincial history once a COVID-19 vaccine became available. By doing so, they made themselves, their families and their communities safer and healthier. We thank everyone who did so.

“We honour and are especially grateful for the health-care professionals who worked tirelessly to keep people safe. We are continuing to strengthen our health-care system by hiring more doctors and nurses, by building and expanding more hospitals and clinics, and by continuing to grow the health-care workforce.

“We have learned from our shared response to the pandemic that we are stronger together. By working together, we will continue to build a safer, healthier British Columbia.”

#### **Josie Osborne, Minister of Health, said:**

“Five years ago today, our worlds were impacted in profound ways when the global pandemic was declared. People throughout B.C. came together to keep our communities safe, with special attention on our seniors and those who are most vulnerable. We will never forget the loved ones we lost, and today, we honour them.

“We are so grateful to the thousands of front-line workers and health-care professionals who did everything possible to help people navigate one of the most challenging crises in modern history; their dedication and determination saved lives.

“As we reflect on our experiences during and after the pandemic and the tremendous efforts of

our health-care workers, we recognize the continued need to strengthen B.C.'s health-care system. We will continue taking action so people in B.C. can depend on quality health care that's there for them when and where they need it."

**Dr. Bonnie Henry, provincial health officer, said:**

"Five years ago, we were thrown into an extraordinarily challenging journey together, one that touched all of us and transformed the lives of so many across our province and the globe. Today, we take a moment to reflect on the tremendous impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on people in B.C., but also to recognize the resilience, kindness and caring of so many that got us all through. This, of course, includes our extraordinary health-care workers, who went above and beyond the call of duty to help keep people safe and healthy, often at personal sacrifice.

"We have learned so much about the SARS CoV-2 virus in these past five years and how to best protect ourselves and our communities. We have also learned the importance of caring for our communities and our families, and what we can do to protect the more vulnerable people in our lives. Now, more than ever, we must continue to take those important measures we all learned, from making sure immunizations are up to date to cleaning our hands regularly and staying away from others if we are sick. These are the healthy habits that will protect us through every respiratory illness season and ensure we are prepared for the next global crisis whenever it arises."

**Contacts:**

Office of the Premier  
Media Relations  
premier.media@gov.bc.ca

Ministry of Health  
Media Relations  
250 952-1887

Andy Watson  
Director of Communications  
Office of the Provincial Health Officer  
236 475-3094

---

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [news.gov.bc.ca/connect](https://news.gov.bc.ca/connect)