

JOINT STATEMENT

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Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport
Indigenous Tourism BC
Tourism Industry Association of BC
BC Hotel Association
Destination BC

Joint statement asking people to stay local to bend the curve

VICTORIA – 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, BC Hotel Association; and Richard Porges, interim president and CEO, Destination BC; have released the following statement asking all British Columbians to stay local unless it's absolutely essential:

"As the number of people with COVID-19 in B.C. continues to rise, we are asking British Columbians to not travel outside their local communities in order to help stop further spread of the virus.

"People working at hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfasts, transportation services, attractions and adventure tourism operations, Indigenous travel providers, restaurants, bars, cafes and many other travel-related businesses throughout the province are struggling following a difficult year of border closures and non-essential travel restrictions. While the tourism and hospitality sector has done an amazing job implementing rigorous health and safety plans to keep their staff and visitors safe, COVID-19 takes every opportunity to spread. Unnecessary travel is too risky right now.

"We are asking British Columbians to listen to Dr. Henry and follow all provincial health and solicitor general orders.

"Each of us must make difficult decisions in our daily lives to do the right thing. We cannot gather indoors with people outside our immediate households and we must avoid travel for leisure so we can bend the curve down again. The many people and businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry in B.C. need each of us to follow the rules without exception. Their livelihood depends on us all doing our part now so some travel can safely resume this summer and set these businesses on the road to recovery.

"Let's support local businesses today by ordering take out, eating with our immediate household on a patio, picking up a coffee and enjoying it at a local park, visiting a local attraction or booking a staycation at a local hotel. Now is not the time to travel for leisure and risk spreading COVID-19.

"The list of essential travel activities, which are permitted between regional zones, is included under the emergency program order, available here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/24287>

"At this time, we must listen to local communities that do not wish to welcome visitors yet. We have heard from many communities that are worried about the virus, its impact on their residents and health-care services, and have asked people not to visit. We must respect the wishes of Indigenous communities and First Nations given the disproportionate impacts of

COVID-19. Know before you go is a great resource if you have any questions:

<https://www.hellobc.com/know-before-you-go>

“We are at a pivotal moment in our province and we must act now to protect the health-care system. We must stay local now so we can get back to travelling across our beautiful province and once again welcome visitors.”

Help us spread the message: #WeAreAllConnected; #StayLocalSupportLocal
#BCTourismCounts; #SaveOurSummer.

Contact:

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Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect