

COVID-19 Cases in Whistler

Fact Sheet

February 12, 2021

The latest COVID-19 cases for Whistler can be found at: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data#maps>. Whistler is part of the Howe Sound health area.

- Occupancy in Whistler significantly down due to COVID-19, with room nights down more than 60 percent this season.
- Inter-provincial travel to Whistler is significantly down, and 86 percent of overnight visitors to Whistler this season have been from the BC market.
- Mobility data provided by Destination BC indicates the Vancouver Coast & Mountain Region has been experiencing a continued decline in interprovincial visitors throughout the pandemic, with December visits down -66 percent in December, *the lowest numbers our region has seen since recreational travel resumed in late June.*
- The number of skiers on Whistler Blackcomb is managed by an online reservation system that significantly reduces the number of skiers that can access the mountain each day. The daily number of reservations is set well below what would be seen on the mountain in previous years, particularly during peak periods.

Coordinated efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Whistler this season have included the following:

- **Whistler Blackcomb** has worked with Vancouver Coastal Health on lift loading and gondola protocols which include mandatory mask-wearing in lift and gondola lines and on the mountain in addition to limiting upload capacity by enforcing physical distancing in lines and allowing household cohorts only on each gondola or chairlift. There is also a reservation system for on-mountain dining which significantly limits capacity in restaurants. Lift lineups are directly related to physical distancing requirements, limited upload capacity due to household cohorts and snow conditions such as powder days, they are not indicative of higher visitor numbers or overnight stays in Whistler.
- **Tourism Whistler** call centre staff are informing all potential visitors that there is currently an advisory in place against non-essential travel into and throughout B.C.
- **The Whistler Chamber** has provided online resources for businesses to update their COVID-19 safety plans and shared in direct member emails the importance of communicating to their employees the necessity of adhering to COVID-19 public health orders.
- **The Resort Municipality of Whistler** has been hosting weekly meetings with local family doctors who conduct COVID-19 testing in Whistler, local ER doctors and Vancouver Coastal Health to understand trends in local COVID-19 testing.
- **Whistler Community Services Society and the Resort Municipality of Whistler** worked collaboratively to secure BC Housing funding for self-isolation units for individuals who live in high density housing and are required to self-isolate or quarantine. Referrals are managed by the local family and ER doctors. Whistler Blackcomb has set aside its own self-isolation units for their staff within Whistler Blackcomb staff housing.
- **The Resort Municipality of Whistler** meets weekly with the leadership and communications staff of Whistler Blackcomb, Tourism Whistler, the Whistler Chamber and RCMP to manage issues and coordinate resort-wide communications.

- **The Resort Municipality of Whistler** implemented a mandatory mask policy in all of its facilities last fall and has restricted access to the Meadow Park Sports Centre fitness centre, ice rink and pool to passholders only.
- **The Resort Municipality of Whistler** shares a weekly communications bulletin with the latest positive COVID-19 case numbers, current public health order information, COVID-19 information from resort partners and testing and social services support information to over 2,000 subscribers on our email distribution list. The bulletin is also shared on our website and social media channels.
- **The Resort Municipality of Whistler** held a community information session on Zoom on January 21 that to date has had 2,000 views in addition to more than 500 people attending the session. The session brought together VCH's Medical Health Officer, local doctors, School District 48 superintendent and local leaders to provide information and answer community members' questions about COVID-19 in Whistler.
- **The Resort Municipality of Whistler** has executed a comprehensive COVID-19 communications plan aimed at the 20 to 30-something age group. This includes radio PSAs, local newspaper ads, a flat sheet with COVID-19 prevention and self-isolation information and a customized Whistler self-isolation guide which links to local social services resources and the municipality's webpage for COVID-19 resources information at www.whistler.ca/covid19. This information has been provided to Whistler businesses to share with their staff.