

November 10, 2020

Member Update: COVID-19 (coronavirus)

Dear Members,

We understand there has been some confusion over the interpretation of Dr. Bonnie Henry's "social and recreational travel" guidance announced on the weekend. Staying on top of the ever-changing landscape of COVID-19 protocols is challenging, especially when the orders and recommendations often leave room for interpretation. Rest assured, though, Tourism Whistler's interpretation of this latest news is aligned with the Provincial Health Authority, the Resort Municipality of Whistler and the Whistler Chamber of Commerce.

Our provincial health authorities are strongly recommending that all travel into and out of the Fraser Health and Vancouver Coastal Health regions, of which Whistler is a part, be limited to essential travel only until November 23. Movement between communities within these health regions is also strongly discouraged. But specifically on travel, the restriction states that "all recreational and social travel should be postponed".

While no official "order" has been announced regarding travel, our Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, has clearly stated that these are "very strong recommendations", and that stronger orders will be put in place if the recent surge in COVID-19 numbers is not controlled.

That said, because Dr. Henry's travel restriction is a "very strong recommendation" rather than an "order", and because businesses who are fulfilling appropriate protocols are allowed to remain open; Tourism Whistler's messaging to visitors has been the following:

- We have posted a notice regarding the "essential travel" advisory to whistler.com/covid
- If any guests contact whistler.com regarding their travel plans between now and November 23, we are advising them of the non-essential travel advisory, but leaving the decision as to whether to adjust or postpone their plans up to them – i.e. we are not proactively contacting guests or cancelling reservations
- Cornucopia programming in the Whistler Conference Centre has been postponed until after November 23, and Tourism Whistler has paused its Cornucopia marketing efforts for the same period. Programming for the last weekend in November still remains in place at this time, and we are hoping to move the postponed programming to early December. (Note: even though the Whistler Conference Centre safety protocols were exemplary, the promotion and holding of Cornucopia was still deemed as proactively attracting non-essential travel.)
- Our winter advertising campaigns remain in market as those efforts are focused on driving business during our peak winter season

Since day one of this pandemic, Tourism Whistler and our resort partners have been working hard to do the right thing for the health and safety of our community and visitors, and this continues to be our highest priority. With the endorsement of our health officials, though, Tourism Whistler will once again pivot to create and promote new tourism opportunities within this changing environment to support our business community.

This morning, the Resort Municipality of Whistler distributed a [press release](#) about the announcements that came out over the weekend and what they mean for Whistler, noting

that the RMOW's visitor messaging is consistent with Tourism Whistler's.

These continue to be very challenging times. If we all do our part now, though, we hope that these new regional COVID-19 restrictions and recommendations will only be in place for two weeks - as protecting and preserving our winter season ahead is of upmost importance to us all.

Sincerely,



Barrett Fisher
President & CEO, Tourism Whistler