



**northern health**  
the northern way of caring

# Pandemic Control Expectations

Understanding COVID-19 prevention and control in industry.

September 24, 2021

# Agenda

1	Welcome and Overview of the Session
2	Introduction to the Northern Health Authority
3	Northern Health Situation Update
4	Expectations for Communicable Disease Prevention and Control
5	Resources, and Additional Information

## Presenters



**Dr. Raina Fumerton**  
Medical Health Officer



**Denaige McDonnell**  
NH Regional  
Coordinator, Industry  
Immunization Program



**Ali Moore**  
NE Environmental  
Team Lead

# Introduction to Northern Health

## Service Delivery Area

Northern Health delivers health care across Northern British Columbia, serving about 300,000 people, many of whom are Indigenous. Our footprint is about the size of France! Our services include:

- Hospital care
- Mental health and addictions
- Public health
- Home and community care
- And more

More than 7,000 people work for Northern Health, in over two dozen hospitals, 14 long-term care facilities, two urgent and primary care centres, and many offices providing specialized services. Find out more at [www.northernhealth.ca](http://www.northernhealth.ca)



# Introduction to Northern Health

## Industry Support

Industrial projects have the ability to impact health, both positively and negatively, and there are many industrial projects within the Northern Health region. We work collaboratively with WorksafeBC and a number of other agencies to support industry in understanding, and complying with, applicable legislation, standards, guidelines, and best practices.

### Medical Health Officers

Empowered through Public Health Act

Monitoring and assessing health status and recommending or ordering actions

### Office of Health and Resource Development

Development of guidelines and best practices for industry health planning

Research, industry engagement, consultation, industry health programs.

### Environmental Health

Permitting, inspections and enforcing health legislation

Food and drinking water safety, communicable disease control, air quality, tobacco control, facility licensing

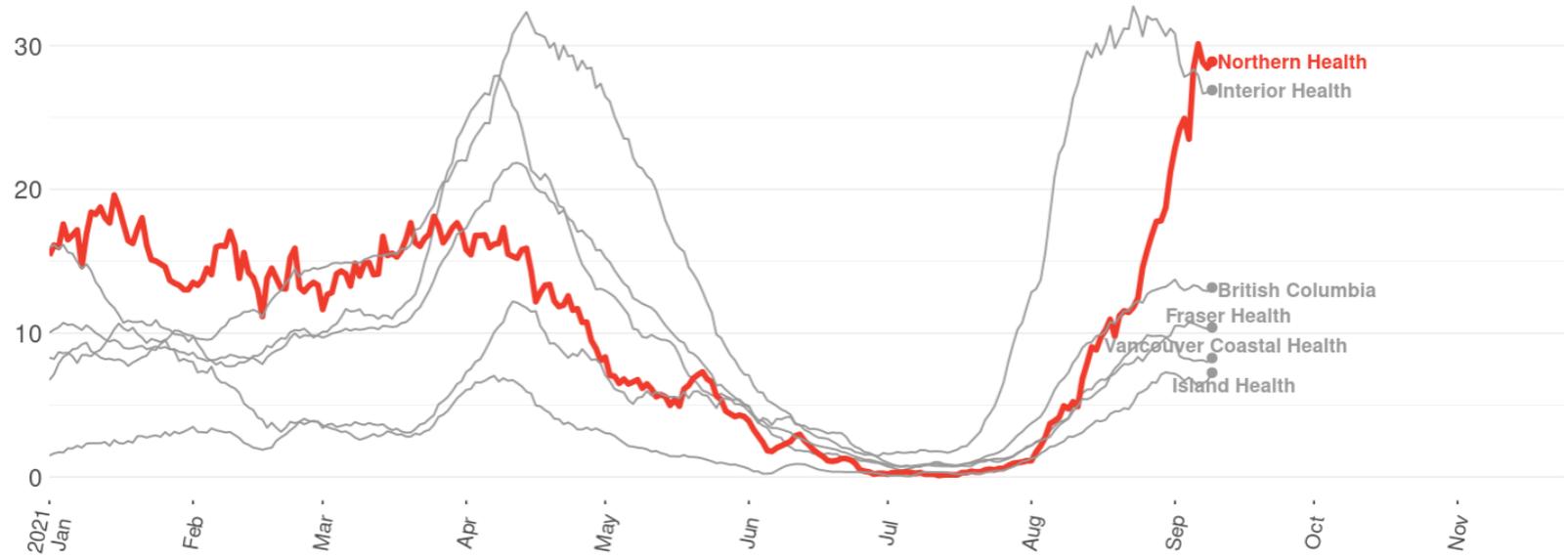
Dr. Raina Fumerton

# SITUATION UPDATE

# Northern Health Situation Update

## COVID-19 Cases

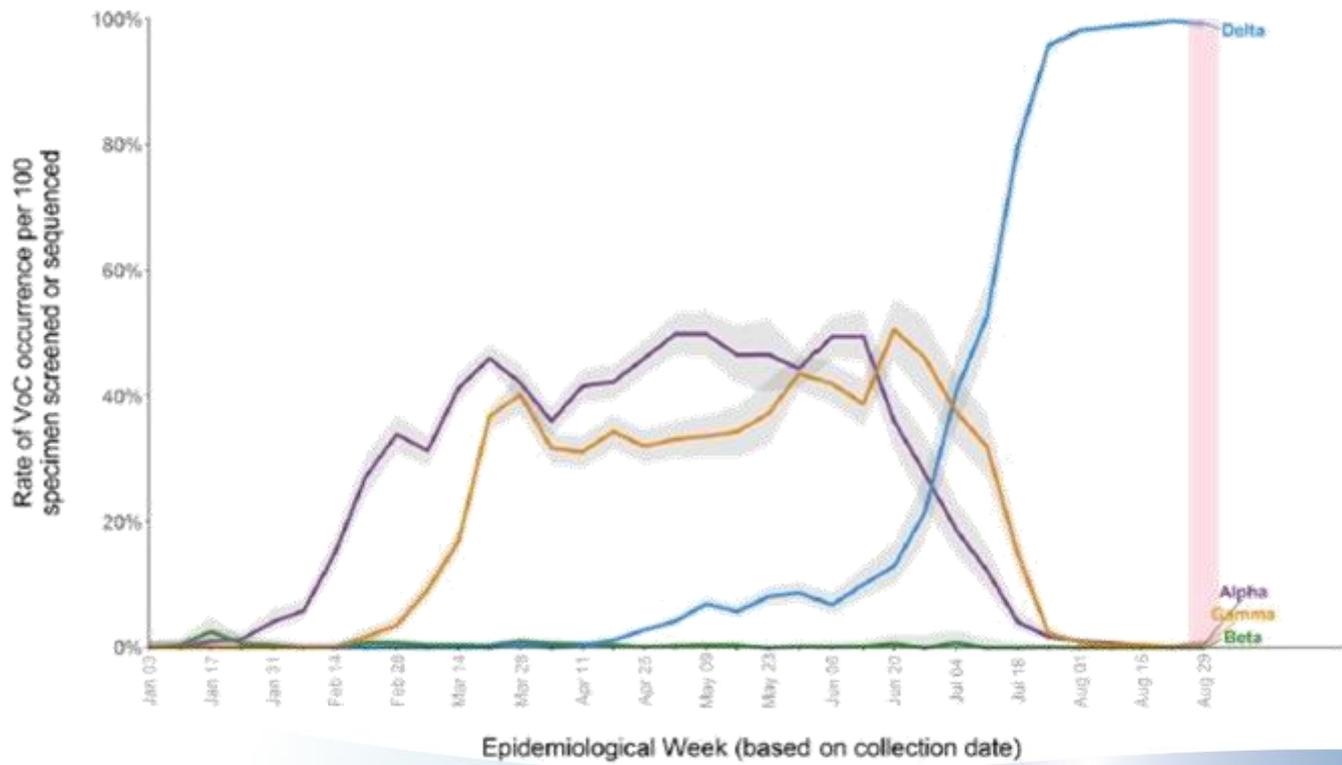
New daily cases per 100K population (7-day moving average)



Data up to 2021-09-09

# Northern Health Situation Update

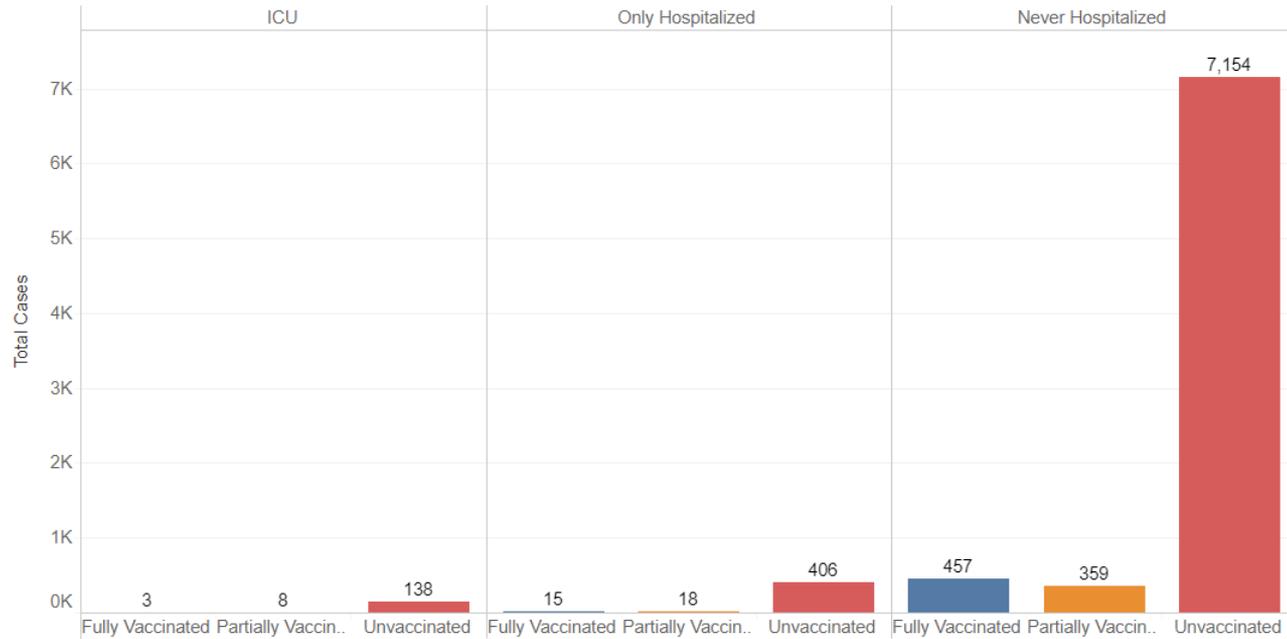
## Variants of Concern



# Northern Health Situation Update

## Immunization Status and Hospitalizations

Northern Health COVID19 Cases that were Hospitalized and in ICU by Immunization Status, All Age Group, All LHA(s)



# Northern Health Situation Update

## Message from MHO

As an industrial operator in the Northern Health region, you are likely already aware that we are entering another critical phase in the COVID-19 pandemic. Case numbers are increasing in the NH region at a rate faster than any other region in BC. We are working diligently to increase our capacity to keep pace with case and contact management, in addition to cluster and outbreak management, and continue to prioritize vaccination.

Within this fourth wave, the Delta variant is predominant and has proven to be twice as contagious; those infected with the Delta variant are more likely to require hospitalization than earlier forms of the virus. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues and case counts rise again, NH wanted to take a moment to remind Industrial Projects and Operations within the Northern Health Authority of our expectations of your COVID-19 management and summarize available industry resources.

**Your partnership in this work is critical to the overall success.**

Information sourced from: BCCDC. (2021. BC COVID-19 Data. [BC COVID-19 Data \(bccdc.ca\)](https://bccdc.ca) [and](#) Katella, K. (2021, September 7). 5 Things to know about the Delta variant. Yale Medicine. [5 Things To Know About the Delta Variant > News > Yale Medicine](#)

Denaige McDonnell and Ali Moore

# **EXPECTATIONS FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL**

# Communicable Disease Management

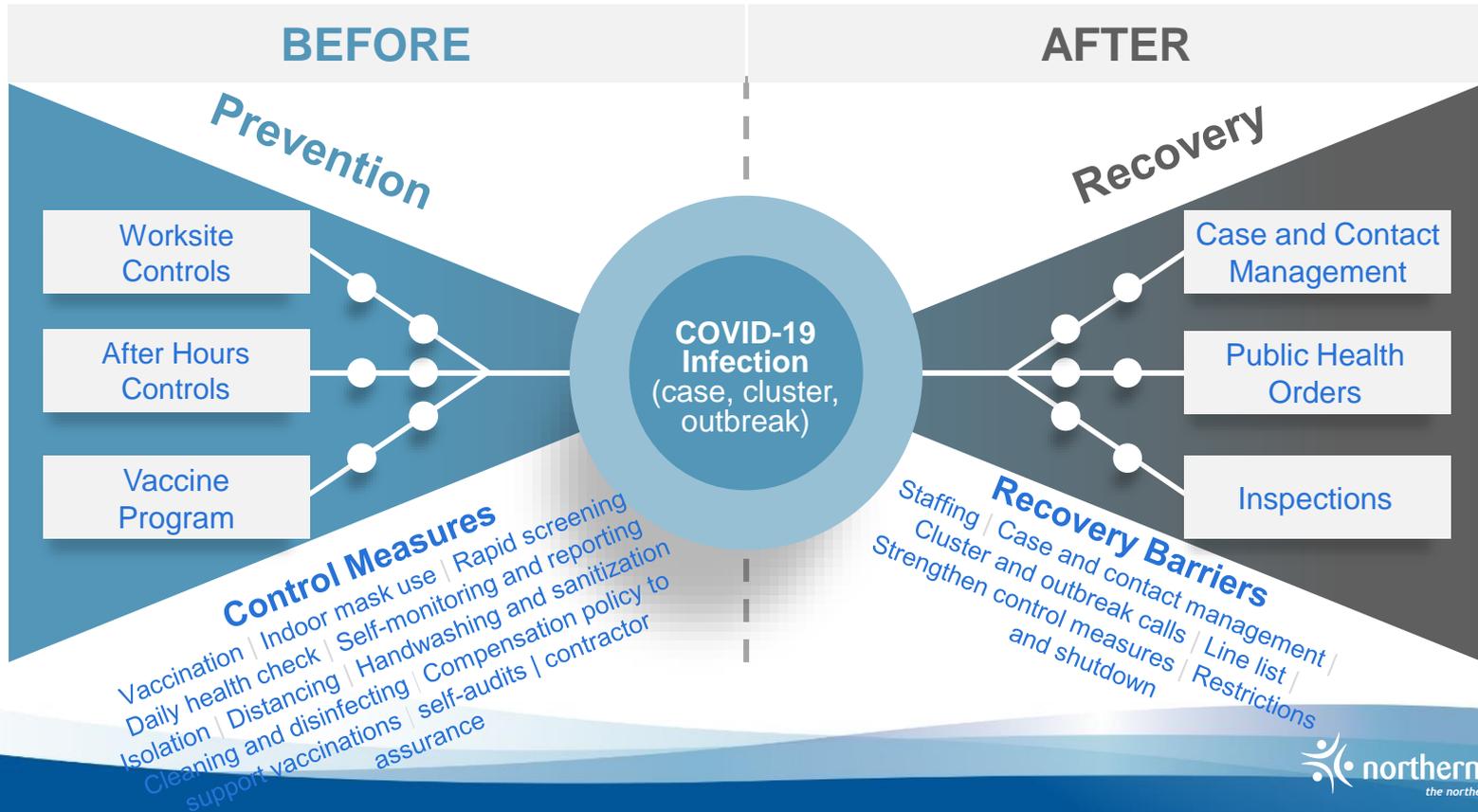
## Expectations: Minimizing Impact to Public Health

We've identified nine areas of expectation:

1. Accountability for compliance – every organization plays a role
2. Preparation of a written [communicable disease management plan](#) per [WSBC](#) and [PHO Order \(7-Jul-2021\)](#)
3. Identification of key contacts and prompt update of any changes
4. Excellent communication to support efficiency in understanding and addressing issues
5. Timely reporting of actual, suspected, or potential outbreaks (defined as two or more cases) to the [Medical Health Officer](#).
6. [Pre-planning to support public health management of cases, clusters, and outbreaks](#), per the [Industrial Camps Order](#)
7. Integration of medical service providers across the project or operation
8. Submission of required reporting such that it is full, complete, accurate, and on time
9. [Compliance with BC standards for rapid point of care testing](#), including [PHO Letter \(July 30, 2021\)](#) and [NH MHO Position Statement on Rapid Antigen Detection Testing in industrial settings](#).

# Communicable Disease Management

## Take a Risk Management Approach to Planning



# Prevention

## Vaccine Program

Vaccines continue to be one of the most effective preventative measures available to industry. Vaccines are expected to be made available to workers per the [PHO Order \(7-Jul-2021\)](#) and Northern Health has four options:

### Industry Immunization Program

- Industry locations with embedded medical service partners may be interested in participating in this program to offer vaccines as part of routine site medical services.
- Contact [HRD](#) for more information.

### NH Mobile Vaccine Clinic

- Mobile vaccine units are available to provide clinics at your site.
- Contact [HRD](#) for booking information.
- Bookings will be prioritized based on epidemiology.

### Pharmacy Vaccine Program

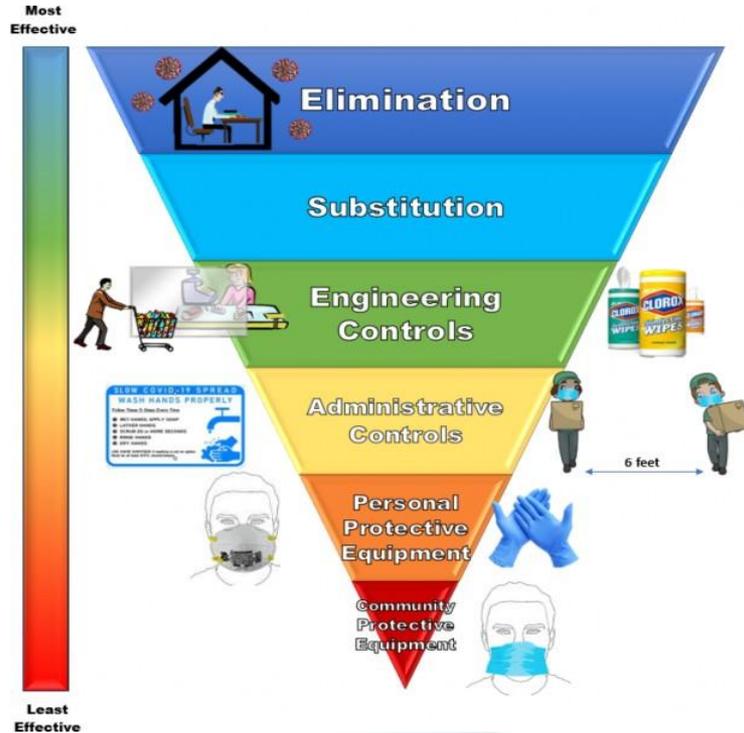
- Select pharmacies are offering Moderna vaccine in Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson, Fort St. John, and Tumbler Ridge
- Find a pharmacy on the [BC Pharmacy website](#)

### Community Clinics

- Look for walk in or appointment based clinics near you on the [NH website](#)
- To coordinate larger groups contact [resourcedevelopment@northernhealth.ca](mailto:resourcedevelopment@northernhealth.ca)

# Prevention

## Worksite Controls – Lessons Learned



### Common cluster themes:

- Indoor over outdoor
- Crowding for extended periods
- Masking
- Unvaccinated
- Social/after hours
- Busses

# Prevention

## Worksite Controls

### Distancing and Mask Use

- Indoor mask use and outdoor mask use where distance cannot be maintained
- Smoke pits reconfigured for space

### Screening and Testing

- Self-monitoring and reporting
- Daily health check
- Rapid screening program (Compliant with BCCDC)
- Onsite swabbing for PCR confirmation

### Isolation Protocol

- Communication
- Facilities and Services

### Sanitation

- Handwashing stations
- Hand sanitizer
- Cleaning and disinfecting

### Lunchrooms and Dining

- Spaced seating / barriers
- Cleaning procedures
- Windows open

### Policies and Procedures

- Don't work if sick, pay policies, vaccine incentives
- Cluster/outbreak response, including case and contact management
- Work arrangements, establishing pods
- Self-checks and audits
- Contractor requirements and assurance

Also refer to the [July 7, 2021 PHO Order regarding Industrial Camps](#)

# Prevention

## After Hours Controls

Implementation of controls to address the risks associated with workers' non-working time while on rotation is critical. Travel in/out of site or location, accommodations, fitness areas, entertainment spaces, pub facilities, and in-room socialization must all be addressed.

### Transportation

Reduced capacity, staggered seating, barriers

Screening protocols

Handwashing and/or sanitization at entry

Mask use

Cleaning and sanitization protocols

Windows opened / air flow

Record of use

### Accommodation

Reduced capacity in common areas

Barriers and partitions

Private washroom

Discontinue buffet style dining

Cleaning and sanitization protocols

Record of use

### Recreation

Reduced capacity

Spacing and distance

Handwashing stations and hand sanitizer

Cleaning and disinfecting

Windows open / air flow

Record of use

Vaccine privileges

# Recovery

## Inspections

- 
- Environmental Health Officers are mandated under the Public Health Act to inspect facilities that conduct Regulated Activities, including operation of an Industrial Camp.
  - Inspections are conducted on a routine basis or in response to a complaint or suspected health hazard.
  - An inspection may also be conducted to support effective implementation of infection control measures. This may be done pro-actively or in response to a cluster or outbreak.
  - Inspections may be done in collaboration with other agencies such as WorkSafe BC.

# Recovery

## Managing Cases, Clusters, and Outbreaks

Event	Definition	Requirements
Case	A case is a single case of COVID-19 infection	<p>Whether an individual is symptomatic or has tested positive using RAD testing, the steps are the same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolate</li> <li>• Conduct a confirmatory PCR testing</li> <li>• Report case to NH MHO</li> <li>• Perform contact tracing</li> <li>• Provide case management</li> </ul>
Cluster	A cluster is two or more cases with evidence of onsite transmission.	<p>NH must be notified if there is a cluster or suspicion of a cluster. The MHO will assess the risk and possibly declare an outbreak.</p> <p>When a cluster is identified, further investigation into the site and activities will be done to determine the risk and allow the MHO to make informed decisions about further controls and surveillance.</p>
Outbreak	An <b>outbreak</b> is declared at the discretion of an MHO; typically an escalated cluster that requires public health intervention to resolve as quickly as possible.	When an outbreak is declared additional Public Health support is provided to the site as a high priority for intervention.

# Recovery

## Screening, Testing, and Confirmatory Testing

### Testing Compliance

- All COVID-19 testing must be done in compliance with BC standards for rapid point of care testing, including [PHO Letter \(July 30, 2021\)](#) and [NH MHO Position Statement on Rapid Antigen Detection Testing in industrial settings](#).
- By law, all positive COVID-19 test results must be reported to the regional public health authority. If you are considering or planning for RAD or any other type of COVID-19 testing in your site, you must contact Northern Health's Office of [Health and Resource Development](#).

### Field Experience

- Sharing lessons learned – Dr. Allan Holmes – current approaches
  - Site based testing – both RAD and PCR testing performed by healthcare team
  - Hub testing – RAD entry testing done at various airport and muster stations
  - Public Health – PCR testing through the NH Virtual Clinic

# Recovery

## Public Health Orders

Current PHO Order affecting Industrial Camps:

*Industrial Camps – July 7, 2021*

*Industrial Projects within the Northern Health Region – April 13, 2021*

As PHO Orders are rescinded, we are recommending amendments to the Industrial Camp Regulation to enable the continuation of general infection prevention and control requirements within industrial camp settings. This may include but is not limited to:

- Continued requirement for Communicable Disease Plans
- Notification of Communicable Disease outbreaks
- Appointment of IPC Coordinator to oversee implementation of IPC Protocols and act as a liason between the employer and Northern Health

Denaige McDonnell

# RESOURCES, AND INFORMATION

# Resources & Information

## Helpful Links

Industrial projects have the ability to impact health, both positively and negatively, and there are many industrial projects within the Northern Health region. We work collaboratively with WorksafeBC and a number of other agencies to support industry in understanding, and complying with, applicable legislation, standards, guidelines, and best practices.

### Controls & Mitigations

- **Effective planning** with a communicable disease control plan (CDCP) per [WSBC](#) and [PHO Order \(7-Jul-2021\)](#)
- **Reporting suspected clusters** per [BCCDC Industrial Camp Guidance Document](#)
- **Compliance** with [BCCDC Public Health Management of Cases and Contacts Associated with Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Leadership advised by **knowledgeable** medical service provider and/or occupational health and safety consultant
  - High level of coordination/collaboration between medical service providers if more than one are contracted by the project (e.g., health and medical leadership/oversight, on-the-ground medics, testing providers, etc...)
- **Vaccine status reporting** and vaccine opportunities per [Industrial Camps Order](#)
- If **testing**, compliance with [BC standards for rapid point of care testing](#)

# Q&A



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