

December 17, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE
UPDATE: NEW COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS FOR HOLIDAY SEASON

(Thank you to ABLE BC for this summary)

This afternoon, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry [announced new COVID-19 restrictions](#) for the holiday season.

The measures, which take effect on Monday, December 20, 2021 will extend to January 31, 2022 at 11:59 PM, and include the following restrictions:

- The BC Vaccine Card / QR Code Scan is now required for organized events of **all sizes** (previously, you were required to check for proof of vaccination for events over 50 people).
- Seating requirements and restricting movement between tables (i.e. no mingling) is once again required at food and liquor-serving premises. Businesses are asked to reinforce the need to wear masks when not seated.
- All New Year's Eve parties and events are effectively cancelled, but restaurants and bars offering seated service can still operate. There will not be any restrictions on alcohol sales or capacity.
- All New Year's Eve organized gatherings and events will be restricted to being seated-only events, with no mingling or dancing allowed.
- Limit indoor, personal gatherings, including rental and vacation properties to the household/residents plus 10 individuals, or one additional household maximum.

In addition to the provincial health officer orders, British Columbians are advised to limit indoor gatherings to those who are fully vaccinated, to ensure proper ventilation indoors, to avoid all travel if not fully vaccinated, and to follow the travel advisory issued by the federal government to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada.

The updated public health orders are not yet available, but will be posted [here](#).

UPDATE: FEDERAL EXCISE TAX REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

With the pending loss of the excise duty exemption scheduled for July 1, 2022, Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC), in support of Wine Growers Canada (WGC), and in collaboration with other regional wine, cider and grape associations from across Canada continue to work with senior federal officials on the details of an acceptable excise replacement program as announced in the 2021 federal budget.

Following the recent federal election, WGC continues to meet with senior officials, has issued letters to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Agriculture, and lobbied Members of Parliament to build support for the Wine Growers Quality Enhancement Program (WGQEP).

WGQEP continues to be viewed as a blueprint for the proposed wine support program, while no decisions have yet been made on final program elements.

WGQEP is administratively simple as it is based on an existing reporting infrastructure used by wineries across Canada. Each winery will continue to submit the B265 form to report bulk wine produced in Canada. The B265 is reported monthly, but most wineries will typically only report in November/December once grapes are fermented into wine. Under WGQEP, licensed wineries will receive their payment a month after reporting wine produced (payment = wine volume produced in Canada X excise duty rate per litre) and excise duty is paid when the wine is bottled or taken out of the excise warehouse. In some cases, wineries will receive WGQEP payments months or years before paying excise, thus providing the winery with new cash flow. Ultimately, the program is revenue neutral to the federal government as the WGQEP payment is returned when excise duty is paid.

Key issues under discussion with federal officials include:

- WGQEP payments are no less than the value of the current excise duty on wine produced in Canada;
- Government implement grandfather provisions to exempt all 100% Canadian wines from paying excise duty if produced prior to July 1, 2022;
- WGQEP is indexed to inflation to align with legislated excise duty indexation introduced in 2017.

December 15, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY AUTHORITY FOR DELIVERY FROM A REGISTERED OFF-SITE STORAGE LOCATION

As a result of Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) and the Business Technical Advisory Panel (BTAP) industry partners' advocacy, the BC LCRB released [Policy Directive 21-24](#): Extension of temporary authority for BC liquor manufacturers to direct deliver liquor to retail customers from registered off-site storage locations.

While the policy, originally set to expire on December 31, has been **extended to March 31, 2022**, WGBC continues to advocate on behalf of the industry for the policy to be made permanent.

UPDATE: ONGOING TRANSPORTATION DISRUPTIONS

In a [December 9 Memo](#), BC LDB reported their distribution centres having regular inventory levels to supply customers in their regions. However, customers may soon experience limited product availability due to ongoing disruptions to transportation routes. With businesses like

ContainerWorld also advising clients of transportation delays and "temporary freight cost recovery surcharges".

WGBC has followed up with BCLS senior management to suggest possible mitigation strategies including listed wineries shipping directly to individual BCLS stores. WGBC has also shared industry concerns over these disruptions and resulting cost implications with the BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries as well as the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Officials are working on advanced (recovery) planning for the sector, including addressing increased freight fees as an immediate priority.

UPDATE: WGBC BC WINE STORES - SWIRL WINE STORE - YALETOWN

In advance of Swirl Wine Store - Yaletown's third-party operating agreement expiring December 31, 2021, WGBC has approved a business plan for Save On Foods to operate the WGBC licence moving forward.

Details of the new location, inventory transfer, etc. is pending BC LCRB approval though both SOF and WGBC are already coordinating to minimize any retail disruption in the transfer.

November 18, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

Our hearts go out to the areas and communities of British Columbia reeling from the devastating impacts of flooding, landslides, and evacuations.

WGBC has been in contact with the LDB, BCLS, government, and distribution partners. We are working to get clarity on how to protect the integrity of the supply chain in the coming weeks amid this serious disruption in transportation between the Interior and Lower Mainland.

The current situation highlights the fragility of market access for the BC wine industry, specifically the need to make permanent the current temporary allowance to fulfill a winery-direct purchase from a registered warehouse closer to BC customers.

In the meantime, similar to our successful strategy in the early days of the COVID pandemic, WGBC is advocating that as a BC agriculture product, BC wineries and product again be deemed essential.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AMIDST BC FLOODING

BC wine lovers who were planning to visit wine country or order wine online in the coming days and weeks will be paying close attention to winery communications channels such as social media, Google business profiles, websites and the Wines of BC Explorer App. Wine Growers British Columbia encourages you to communicate across all channels whether or not your

business hours or services will be temporarily affected by the flooding/road closures.
SUGGESTED ACTION ITEMS:

Communicate about expected shipping delays - Encourage gift card sales!

Contact your shipping provider to determine the delivery of outstanding orders and communicate to those customers. Add to all communications channels a message detailing expected delays on any new orders placed. Encourage the sale of gift cards and wine club subscriptions leading up to the holidays.

Connect with guests who have upcoming bookings

Touch base with any guests who have booked reservations with you either to ensure them that you are able to and looking forward to hosting them, or to let them know any impacts the BC flooding will have on their visit.

Invite consumers to discover your wine at their local stores and restaurants

For customers on the other side of closed routes, provide details on wine stores and restaurants where they can continue to enjoy your wine.

Reach out to restaurants near you to fulfill any issues they are having stocking their cellars

Restaurants within the road closure area may be experiencing supply challenges affecting their wine stock. Building on the strength of the buy local movement, it could not hurt to reach out to your existing and new hospitality accounts to fulfill their wine needs in the coming weeks.

Wineries looking to connect with retailers or hospitality businesses should visit:

[ABLE BC](#) · [BC Restaurant and Foodservices](#) · [Association Restaurants Canada](#)

BEST PRACTICES

- Update and pin to the top of your social media channels the latest information on the status of your business operations.
- Tag us on social media and use #BCWine #BCFlood #RealTime so we can amplify your message.

RESOURCES

- Monitor [@DriveBC](#) and [@EmergencyInfoBC](#)
- Review the [Ministry webpage on flooding](#) which includes key information areas:
[Flood Management for Water Wells](#)
[Flood Forecasting](#)
[Flood Preparedness](#)
[Flood Mitigation](#)
- [The latest update from the LDB](#)

November 17, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

Wine Growers Canada “The Right Amount” Campaign

The Right Amount is an initiative for Canadian wineries to promote responsible consumption of alcohol, providing Canadians with tools and information to make informed and responsible decisions about alcohol, and promote drinking wine in moderation. [Click here to watch](#) a short video introducing the campaign.

The campaign navigates the audience to [The Right Amount website](#) which contains public low risk drinking guidelines and resources, the definition of a standard drink, and an innovative drink calculator that will determine the number of standard drinks in a glass or bottle based on volume and alcohol percentage.

Wineries are encouraged to participate through the free online industry resource hub which offers voluntary promotional materials, website wordmark for use on labels or neck tags, standard drink logos designed for voluntary use on-label; digital and print-ready assets for use in tasting rooms, etc., highlighting the importance of drinking in moderation.

[EXPLORE THE INDUSTRY RESOURCE HUB](#)

The Right Amount Campaign will launch November 17, 2021 with an online advertising campaign and media promotion to well position the industry in the lead up to the holiday season. This is not a short campaign, it is designed to grow organically over time, strengthened by participation of all wineries across Canada to become an industry standard practice.

Industry-wide participation is required for The Right Amount to be truly effective in engaging Canadian consumers and promoting the responsible consumption of Canadian wines. Wine Growers British Columbia encourages all member wineries to participate.

Please contact info@wgcanada.ca if you have questions, comments, and to confirm your participation in the campaign.

November 3, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

BC Hospitality can now sell wine-by-glass drinks with takeout or delivery meals

[Effective October 29, 2021](#), BC liquor and food primary licensees (i.e. restaurants, pubs, etc.) are permitted to package and sell wine by the glass through takeout and delivery with the purchase of a meal. This policy includes cider, draft beer, or an unmixed ounce of a spirit.

The change responds to direct Wine Growers British Columbia feedback and Business Technical Advisory Panel support following extensive consultation.

The ability to provide this option for consumers is in addition to other measures the government has approved in recent months to benefit the BC wine industry and our hospitality partners. Earlier this year, hospitality businesses were permanently allowed to sell full bottles of wine for takeout and delivery with the purchase of a meal.

For more information, please read [Policy Directive 21-21](#).

Federal Post-Election Strategy for Acceptable Excise Replacement Program

With the pending loss of the excise duty exemption scheduled for July 1, 2022, Wine Growers Canada alongside WGBC and other regional wine, cider and grape associations from across Canada continue to work with senior federal officials on the details of an acceptable excise replacement program as announced in the 2021 federal budget.

The federal election created a pause in our lobby efforts as the government was in legislated “caretaker mode” from the launch of the election in August until October 26, 2021. Wine, cider and grower associations from across Canada have worked closely with senior federal officials and recommended the Wine Grower Quality Enhancement Program (WGQEP) as the preferred winery support program in place of the excise duty exemption. This proposal is not only trade legal, and simple to administer, but it will also ensure that every winery in Canada continues to receive no less than the excise benefits currently collected.

WGQEP is administratively simple as it is based on an existing reporting infrastructure used by wineries across Canada. Each winery will continue to submit the B265 form to report bulk wine produced in Canada. The B265 is reported monthly, but most wineries will typically only report in November/December once grapes are fermented into wine.

Under WGQEP, licensed wineries will receive their payment a month after reporting wine produced (payment = wine volume produced in Canada x excise duty rate per litre). Excise duty is paid when the wine is bottled or taken out of the excise warehouse. In some cases, wineries will receive WGQEP payments months or years before paying excise, thus providing the winery with new cash flow. Ultimately, the program is revenue neutral to the federal government as the WGQEP payment is returned when excise duty is paid.

Key issues under discussion with federal officials include:

- WGQEP payments are no less than the value of the current excise duty on wine produced in Canada;
- Government implement grandfather provisions to exempt all 100% Canadian wines from paying excise duty if produced prior to July 1, 2022;
- WGQEP is indexed to inflation to align with legislated excise duty indexation introduced in 2017.

With the election behind us, it is time to remove the uncertainty and continue discussions with senior decision makers to move forward with WGQEP as the only replacement program based on the volume of wine produced in Canada.

October 14, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

BC Private Licensee Retail Store (LRS) Moratorium Extended until July 2032

On October 4, 2021, Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, announced the moratorium on new LRS will be extended until 2032. That includes a government commitment not to increase the number of BC Liquor Stores while the moratorium is in place.

Since 1988, the Government of British Columbia has allowed private retail liquor stores, with various restrictions limiting the number of new private retail licenses issued. In 2007 a full moratorium was put in place. In 2012 the moratorium was given a ten-year term that the recent announcement has extended to 2032.

While the moratorium on issuing new LRS licenses is important for the protection for British Columbia's private liquor retailers – a critical retail channel for BC wine, the number of retail opportunities for BC wineries has not kept pace with industry growth with the number of wineries up 110%, and acreage 22% since the moratorium was first introduced.

Wine Growers British Columbia

continues to advocate for key BC wine [industry priorities](#) through: Support for expanded and new direct-to-consumer channels including: winery off-site tasting and retail licenses, order co-packing and fulfillment from registered off-site storage facilities, and inter-provincial shipments.

The modernization of BC winery license endorsements to a single “whole-site” authorization; and Equal treatment for ALL certified for origin 100% BC wine (as per [BCWA 2016 Plebiscite](#)).

Groundwater Users Registration Deadline (March 1, 2022)

A [reminder](#) of the deadline for select groundwater users is less than six months away. If you divert and use groundwater for non-domestic purposes, you must now obtain a water license and pay water fees and rentals. This change came into force with the Water Sustainability Act on February 29, 2016.

As a groundwater user, licensing clarifies how much water you can legally use, and increases the security of your access to that water. Licensing establishes rights to groundwater based on the same priority scheme that currently exists for surface water, and will help to reduce conflicts between water users in times of scarcity.

If you apply for a license as an existing non-domestic groundwater user on or before March 1, 2022, your water license application fees will be waived. [Learn More.](#)

Proof of Vaccination: Scripts & Scenarios

On October 24 access to some events, services and businesses will be granted exclusively to

those who can provide proof of receiving two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. Ahead of that deadline, there are some great messaging toolkits that you can download and use:

[Destination BC Messaging Guide](#)

[Tourism and Hospitality Industry Associations Toolkit](#)

[go2HR Script Page for Frontline Staff](#)

For more scenarios around frontline staff dealing with tough situations [click here](#).

PST Refund Extended Another Six Months

The provincial program that offers [PST rebates](#) on select machinery and equipment will be extended for an additional six months, allowing businesses to further reduce costs and make new investments to adapt to operational changes necessitated by the global pandemic. Businesses will have until March 31, 2022 to purchase qualifying items, including tools, furniture, computers, software, and zero-emission vehicles and charging equipment.

Reminder: Public Health Orders Currently in Place

Province Wide:

[Face Coverings: expires October 31, 2021](#)

[Gatherings & Events: expires January 31, 2022](#)

[Food & Liquor Serving Premises: expires January 31, 2022](#)

Regional:

[Interior Health: Gatherings and Events](#)

[Northern Health: Gatherings and Events](#)

[Fraser Health: Gatherings and Events](#)

(no expiry dates for the above)

For more information about current restrictions, you can also visit these government websites:

[Proof of vaccination and the BC Vaccine Card](#)

[Proof of vaccination information for businesses](#)

[Province-wide restrictions](#)

[BC's Restart Plan](#): Currently in Step 3

September 14, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: PUBLIC ORDERS FOR INTERIOR HEALTH AND FAQ

(Thanks to ABLE BC and BCRFA for helping provide the following detail)

The provincial government has announced the Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order for the Central Okanagan has been repealed. Establishments in the Central Okanagan must now follow the province-wide public health order (PHO) for [Food and Liquor Serving Premises Public](#) – updated September 10th.

Specifically, for food and liquor serving premises, including licensed manufactures (i.e. wineries) in the Central Okanagan:

- You are no longer limited to 6 patrons per table
- Physical distancing between patrons is no longer required
- Patrons can sing and engage in karaoke, but no dancing is allowed
- Restrictions on hours of liquor service have been removed; you must follow what is on your license

As a reminder, ALL food and liquor serving premises in British Columbia must continue to abide by the public order. The province-wide mask mandate also remains in place, including:

- Patrons must be seated while on the premises
- Patrons must be assigned a table, booth, or counter, and shown to their seats. Patrons must stay in the seat to which they are assigned.
- Patrons can stand to use a juke box, self-serve lottery ticket dispenser, pay at a pay station, and play pool or darts
- Dance floors must be closed with physical barriers or occupied with tables, unless they are being used for a dance performance

For a full list of conditions, please read the [public order](#).

NOTE: The [Face Covering \(Mask\) PHO](#) also remains in place.

UPDATE: Licensed Manufacturers & Wineries

The September 10th [Food and Liquor Serving Premises](#) PHO confirmed:

- Designated onsite liquor retail and dedicated sampling room areas without seating attached to a liquor manufacturing facility will NOT require the BC Vaccine Card
- Any seated tasting/sampling WILL require the BC Vaccine Card
- Lounge, restaurant, picnic, guided public and all seating areas: both indoor and outdoor WILL require the BC Vaccine Card

What does this mean for BC Wineries?

- Standing wine sampling/tasting is regarded as a shorter time window experience with the purpose of “taste, then buy” for the guest. Standing sampling experiences do not have a BC Vaccine Card requirement.
- Seated tastings are regarded as a longer time window experience with the purpose of “stay, experience” for the guest. Hosts are required to verify that each seated guest has a

BC Vaccine Card with 1 dose (effective immediately) then 2 dose status (October 24, 2021).

Wineries have the discretion to implement the BC Vaccine Card requirement beyond the PHO and make public their policy through [signage](#), social media, etc. Enable your guests to know before they go for the best experience possible.

A reminder of the WGBC's [Winery and Hospitality Best Practices](#) resource guide that includes details on the WorkSafeBC requirement for employers to have a COVID-19 Safety Plan.

Updated: Interior Health Event Restrictions

Yesterday, the provincial government also announced Interior Health [updating COVID-19 regional medical health officer orders](#) allowing;

- Indoor events may be held for up to 50 people, outdoor events for up to 100 people. For these **organized small events**, participants will be required to show proof of vaccination (minimum one dose) until October 24, 2021. By October 24, full vaccination (two doses) will be required.
- Indoor events may be held for up to 50 people OR 50% of the venue's capacity (whichever is greater), outdoor events may include 5,000 people or 50 per cent of a venue's capacity (whichever is greater). For these **organized large events**, participants will be required to show proof of full vaccination (two doses) effective immediately.

Note: Outside the Interior Health region, proof of vaccination is only required at indoor events (see [Gatherings and Events PHO](#)).

BC Vaccine Card FAQ

For the most part it appears British Columbians are supporting the [BC Vaccine Card program](#) and along with our industry colleagues, we're monitoring this situation closely and are in regular contact with government about the impact of this order and the need for additional industry support.

ABLE BC's Executive Director Jeff Guignard has provided some answers to frequently asked questions below:

Q: What does another province's vaccination card look like?

A: You may have people who aren't from BC accessing your events, services and businesses. They must follow the same requirements and provide proof of vaccination and ID.

Follow the [2 steps](#), verify proof of vaccination and review ID for a name match.

People from other Canadian provinces or territories must show:

- Provincially/territorially officially recognized vaccine record
- Valid government photo ID

[Download examples of Canadian immunization records.](#)

Q: How should you respond to customers who take issue with the vaccine card and do not want to comply?

A: A business has the right to refuse service to people who are not abiding by the provincial health order. If any employee feels threatened, they should avoid confrontation and call 911. Abuse toward people trying to enforce this order will not be tolerated.

go2HR has created [new scripts](#) to support staff in responding to difficult situations, including guests wanting to know if their server is vaccinated or refuses to comply with the policy.

Download the BC Vaccine Card Verifier App

[Download the app](#) on iOS devices (iPhone and iPad)

[Download the app](#) on Android devices

The app is free to download and works on smartphones and tablets.

How to use the app

1. With an internet connection, download the app to your device. You can download the app on multiple devices. You must allow the app to access your device camera.
2. After you've finished downloading, you can continue to use the app offline. No internet connection is required to scan QR codes.
3. Scan a digital card or scan a paper card and the app will indicate if the person is partially vaccinated, fully vaccinated, or not vaccinated.

NOTE: You are not required to confirm vaccine cards using the BC Vaccine Card Verifier App. Business have the option to use the app, or to simply check a customer's vaccine card visually.

Visually confirming a customer's vaccine card and checking their ID is sufficient to meet the requirements of the public health order.

Covid-19 Vaccinations in the Workplace

Government has not announced anything about requiring retail/hospitality staff to be vaccinated, the creation of a vaccination policy in the workplace is the discretion of the business. ABLE BC has published an [article](#) considering the implementation of such a policy from multiple angles, with helpful tips for hospitality businesses.

For more information, we also encourage you to use these go2HR resources:

- [COVID-19 Vaccinations in the Workplace](#)
- [Employer Toolkit - COVID-19 Vaccinations in the Workplace](#)

If all of your staff have been vaccinated, download and post this [free sign](#) to let your customers know.

Signage and Resources

Provincial Government Resources

- [Proof of vaccination required poster](#)
- [Accepted forms of proof poster](#)
- [How to check a BC Vaccine Card poster](#)
- [BC Vaccine Card Verifier Results](#)
- [BC Vaccine Card guide for businesses](#)

Wine Growers BC Resources

- [Winery and Hospitality Best Practices](#)

Other Resources

- go2HR: [Responding to difficult guest situations during a pandemic](#)
- BCRFA: [Guide to implementing BC's COVID-19 Vaccine Card](#)

Destination BC: [Messaging guidance for BC's tourism industry](#)

September 10, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: BC Vaccine Card Program

On September 7, Premier John Horgan, Health Minister Adrian Dix and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry announced new details about British Columbia's vaccine card. See the [government presentation](#).

The BC Vaccine Card will allow vaccinated people to conveniently and securely show their proof of vaccination when new COVID-19 vaccine requirement rules take effect on Sept. 13, 2021 in order to enter restaurants, bars, lounges, movies, and many other non-essential venues.

As of October 24, those aged 12 and up will need to be fully vaccinated to access those same services and venues. Failure to follow the PHO order may result in a fine. The requirement is in place until January 31, 2022 and could be extended.

UPDATE: Licensed Manufacturers & Wineries

Government's goal for the BC Vaccine Card Program is to protect staff and the public in group settings where vaccination status is unverified. Specifically for BC wineries, WGBC has confirmed with PHO and BC LCRB:

- Retail: consumers coming in strictly to purchase off sales package products will NOT require the Passport
- Tasting/Sampling: consumers will be permitted to taste /sample product prior to purchase (i.e. 1 oz wine) will NOT require the Passport
- Seated tasting/sampling WILL require the Passport. We recommend removing the chairs from your designated tasting area
- Lounge, restaurant, picnic and all seating areas: both indoor and outdoor WILL require the Passport

Government realizes there may be instances where a winery may have overlapping situations to the categories above. In those instances, it will be at the discretion of the individual business to determine how best to apply, within the spirit of protect staff and the public in group settings where vaccination status is unverified.

RECAP: BC Vaccine Card Program Details

List of Settings

Following is a partial list of settings where proof of vaccination will be required:

- licensed lounges, bars, restaurants and those offering table service (indoor and outdoor dining)
- night clubs, casinos, movie theatres
- fitness centres/gyms/adult sports (indoor)
- indoor group exercise activities
- organized indoor events with 50 or more people (e.g., wedding receptions, organized parties, conferences, workshops)

Examples of place that do not require proof of vaccination:

- Grocery stores, liquor manufactures and retail stores, and pharmacies
- Unlicensed restaurants that do not offer table service, like fast food, coffee shops, and takeout

You do not have to check proof of vaccination at indoor organized events with less than 50 people, except adult sports.

Verifying BC Proof of Vaccination

1. You have 2 options to verify proof of vaccination either upon entry OR once seated. The most secure option is using the BC Vaccine Card Verifier app (see link to [Apple Store](#); Android coming soon) to scan customer's QR code. You can also verify proof visually.

2. After verifying proof of vaccination, you must also review ID. By reviewing ID, you match the name listed on the BC Vaccine Card or other form of proof of vaccination with the person you're verifying. You don't need to check ID for youth aged 12 to 18.

From September 13-26, 2021, people will also be able to use the vaccination records they received at BC vaccine clinics or pharmacies as valid proof of vaccination. Starting September 27, 2021, only the BC Vaccine Card will be accepted for people vaccinated in BC.

For more information, please [click here](#).

Resources for Businesses

[Visit the webpage](#) for:

- Steps for verifying BC proof of vaccination
- Verifying out-of-province proof of vaccination
- How to download the BC Vaccine Card Verifier app
- Print-ready posters
- Guidance documents: [BC Vaccine Card Verifier Results](#) and [BC Vaccine Card Guide for Business](#)

Update: Public Health Orders

Full details of the BC Vaccine Card Program will be included in updated Public Health Orders currently in effect and expected to be published later today or tomorrow.

Province-wide orders:

- Public order for [Food and Liquor Serving Premise](#)
- Public order [Gatherings and Events](#)
- Public order for [Face Coverings](#)
- [Guidance for Food and Liquor Serving Premises](#)

Regional public orders:

- Northern Health: [Gatherings and Events COVID-19 Order](#)
- Interior Health: [Gatherings and Events COVID-19 Order](#)
- Central Okanagan: [Food and Liquor Serving Premises Order](#)

You can find all public orders [here](#).

September 7, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: BC Vaccine Card Details Announced

Premier John Horgan, Health Minister Adrian Dix and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry have [announced new details](#) about British Columbia's vaccine card. The vaccine card program begins on Monday, September 13 requiring proof of at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine in order to enter licensed restaurants, movies, ticketed sporting events and many other non-essential venues.

As of October 24, those aged 12 and up will need to be fully vaccinated to access those same services and venues.

Following is the partial list of settings where proof of vaccination will be required:

- indoor concerts, theatre, dance and symphony events
- licensed restaurants and those offering table service (indoor and outdoor dining)
- pubs, bars and lounges (indoor and outdoor dining)
- organized indoor events with 50 or more people (e.g., wedding receptions, organized parties, conferences, workshops)

Please note customers picking up takeout and delivery meals are not required to provide proof of vaccination. Wineries and other liquor retailers are also not included in this list.

Winery Tasting and Sampling

With respect to winery tastings/samplings, WGBC has confirmed with Provincial Health that if seating is available and separate from the retail shop, the passport would be required. However, if not seated and within the retail shop, passports are not required.

Resources for Businesses

The provincial government has set up a [new webpage](#) with resources for businesses on the BC Vaccine Card that includes:

- Steps for verifying BC proof of vaccination
- Verifying out-of-province proof of vaccination
- How to download the BC Vaccine Card Verifier app
- Print-ready posters
- Guidance documents: BC Vaccine Card Verifier Results and BC Vaccine Card Guide for Businesses

Enforcement

Businesses and organizations that do not comply with the PHO order may be issued a violation ticket.

Depending on the violation, individuals could be subject to a \$230 or \$575 violation ticket. Owners, operators and event organizers could be subject to a \$2300 violation ticket.

Enforcement is at the discretion of enforcement officers, including police, liquor and cannabis inspectors, gambling investigators and conservation officers.

Employee Proof of Vaccination

While the government's vaccine passport announcement doesn't specifically identify employees as being covered by the new rules, it does refer to "people" attending at the settings listed above that presumably includes employees.

However, as per the [Robert Smithson Bulletin](#), notwithstanding the vaccine passport announcement, the risk remains of claims for wrongful dismissal, discrimination, etc. if employees are prevented from working as a result of refusing to obtain the COVID vaccination.

WGBC will continue to monitor the roll-out and advocate on behalf of our members and the BC wine industry and appreciate hearing your perspective, which we routinely convey to government decision makers and will provide updates as soon as they are made available.

August 24, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: BC PROOF OF VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

Yesterday government announced that beginning September 13th, British Columbians will be required to demonstrate a **BC Vaccine Card** to access certain settings and businesses.

As of September 13, one dose of vaccine will be required for entry to these settings. By October 24, entry to these settings will require people to be fully vaccinated at least seven days after receiving both doses. To enter certain spaces, including indoor ticketed sporting events, indoor and patio dining in restaurants, casinos and indoor organized events, like conferences and weddings, people aged 12 and older will be required to show their proof of vaccination.

In the interim, in areas where community transmission is increased significantly or where there are outbreaks, the requirements to be fully vaccinated to access these events and activities may be required at the direction of the local medical health officer.

How it will work

While roll out details are to be determined, here's what we know so far:

- As of September 13, people in British Columbia will be required to be partially vaccinated with at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine to access certain businesses and events.
- As of October 24, people in British Columbia will be required to be fully immunized, at least seven days after receiving two doses of COVID-19 vaccine, to access the same list of businesses and events.
- In the interim, in areas where community transmission is increased significantly or where there are outbreaks, the requirements to be fully vaccinated to access these events and activities may be required at the direction of the local medical health officer.

Here are some of the relevant settings where proof of vaccination will be required:

- restaurants, pubs, and bars (indoor and patio dining)
- indoor concerts
- indoor theatre/dance/symphony events
- organized indoor events (eg. weddings, parties, conferences, meetings, workshops)

NOTE: this list DOES NOT include retail stores such as winery, liquor or grocery.

You can read government's [full press release here](#).

We are anticipating vaccination proof WILL be required for winery tastings as they often occur within the same retail space of a winery and will have an impact on customers.

Accordingly, the WGBC board is contemplating a position that encourages wineries to voluntarily ask for the BC Vaccine Card to access the winery, whether staff or customers for a tour, tasting, picnic, sale, by-the-glass, meal, etc.

Appreciate such position has the potential of being a diverse issue with challenging conversations with customers, but believe it is consistent with PHO & government intentions along with the majority of BC residents.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments please contact mprodan@winebc.com

August 10, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

ACTION: Temporary Expanded Service Area (TESA) Authorization

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Province's March 2020 declaration of a state of emergency and public health emergency and supported by WGBC/BTAP advocacy, the BC LCRB put in place time-limited measures to permit a licensee (manufactures/wineries, liquor and food primary) to **temporarily expand their service areas (TESA) until October 31, 2020.**

The increased service area is to allow licensees to serve patrons while complying with the public health guidelines regarding physical distancing, etc.

June 2021, BC LCRB announced offering TESA authorizations to apply to be permanent and to ensure enough time, **extended all current TESA authorizations to June 1, 2022.**

Wineries who would like to make their **current TESA authorization permanent must apply** for new outdoor patio permanent structural change (if their TESA is located outdoors) or a new interior service area permanent structural change (if their TESA is located indoors). See link: <https://bit.ly/3f9OoYJ>

It's important to note that the approval process for a permanent structural change can take up to 10 months. Although the LCRB has amended its policies and processes to help improve application timelines, BC wineries are encouraged to submit their permanent structural change applications **as soon as possible** to help avoid disruptions in business. If you have any questions about the process for applying for a permanent structural change, please email LCRBStructural@gov.bc.ca.

In addition to the above, **as of October 31, 2021, the LCRB will stop accepting new applications for TESA authorizations.** Licensees who have not yet submitted a TESA authorization application, can do so by visiting the [liquor and cannabis licensing portal](#) **until October 31, 2021.** If you have any questions about the TESA policy, please email LCRBLiquorPolicy@gov.bc.ca.

July 14, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: Increasing housing flexibility in the ALR

Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries announced new rules will allow property owners in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) increased housing flexibility, helping farmers and non-farmers support their families and businesses in their communities.

Options for an additional small secondary home have been added to regulations, allowing farmers and ALR landowners to have both a principal residence and small secondary residence on their property with a streamlined approval process. Only permissions from local government or First Nations government will be required, and there will be no application to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

Examples of flexible housing options permitted under the regulation include, but are not limited to:

- garden suites, guest houses or carriage suites;
- accommodation above an existing building;
- manufactured homes; and

- permitting a principal residence to be constructed in addition to a manufactured home that was formerly a principal residence

For more information about the ALR, [click here](#).

UPDATE: WGBC Wine Stores Included in Sales to Special Event Permit (SEP) Holders

BC Solicitor General Mike Farnworth announced an additional revenue source for liquor retailers and BC manufactures in allowing retailers to sell liquor to SEP holders and is a direct result of ongoing advocacy efforts by Wine Growers BC and the Business Technical Advisory Panel (BTAP).

The inclusion of LRS, Specialty Wine, Rural Licensee Retail and [WGBC BC wine stores](#) will provide additional support to liquor retailers and BC manufactures in providing SEP holders with more choice in liquor selection and where they can purchase their liquor.

For more information, please read the [government news release](#) and [Policy Directive 21-15](#)

July 13, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

ACTION: Economic Impact of the Wine & Grape Industry in Canada Update

Unfortunately, we have had unprecedented poor industry participation in the update of the *2015 Economic Impact of the Wine & Grape Industry in Canada*.

As this information is critical to our national and provincial lobbying and advocacy efforts, it is imperative we capture a full and accurate understanding of the impact of the wine industry on Canada's regional and national economies.

Accordingly, if you haven't already done so, we request you to provide your winery's data directly via the confidential [online survey](#).

Alternatively, at a minimum, please download and forward the completed [short survey](#) confidentially and directly to: Robert Eyler (Economic Forensics & Analytics) eyler@econforensics.com or call 707-318-0348 with any questions.

Deadline is this Friday, July 16th though we may need to extend to ensure we have the minimum required for a representative survey.

Thanks in advance for assisting with WBCG advocacy efforts and the future of our industry.

June 29, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

DEADLINE: Agriculture Income Protection (AgriStability)

AgriStability protects agricultural producers against declines in their net farming income due to market conditions, production loss or increased costs of production including weather-related natural disasters. Payments are made if a producer's current year margin falls more than 30% below their reference margin.

Originally extended due to COVID, new participants enrolment deadline is (tomorrow) June 30, 2021.

For more information [visit](#), call 1-877-343-2767 or [email](#).

June 15, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: New Provincial Health Officer Orders

Yesterday Premier Horgan and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Henry announced moving from Step 1 to Step 2 of [BC's Restart Plan](#). Effective today:

- Outdoor personal gatherings up to 50 people and indoor personal gatherings up to five people or one other household.
- Indoor seated organized gatherings and outdoor seated organized gatherings up to 50 people with a COVID-19 Safety Plan.
- Recreational travel permitted within British Columbia.
- Indoor and outdoor dining for groups up to six people.
- Liquor served until midnight.
- Small in-person meetings at offices and workplaces.
- Employers must continue to have COVID-19 Safety Plan and daily health checks in place.

Specific public orders for Food and Liquor Serving Premises have been [updated](#) and include:

- Patrons must remain seated but can stand to play pool, billiards, snooker, or darts, or bowl with a maximum of five other people who are in the same party.
- Collection of personal information is no longer required.
- There must be no more than six patrons seated at a table or booth, even if they belong to the same party.

Reminder: physical distancing and masks continue to be required in public indoor settings. Customers must wear a mask when not at their table.

UPDATED: Provincial Health Officer Order: Gatherings and Events

Events in food and liquor serving premises are regulated under the updated June 15th Gathering and Events order (weddings, concerts, etc.) including:

- 50 people can attend inside, seated events and follow other COVID-19 safety rules, but singing, dancing or karaoke are not permitted.
- 50 people can attend inside, seated events at banquet halls, and in addition to the rule for other inside events, there is no self-serve food or liquor allowed.
- 50 people can attend outside gatherings.
- No person may sell or serve liquor at an event after midnight. An event at which liquor is consumed must end by 1:00 a.m. and all participants must vacate the place at which the event is held.
- For full conditions, please read the [public order](#).

UPDATE: Temporary Expanded Service Area (TESA)

Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, Mike Farnworth announced amendments to make temporarily expanded service areas permanent in support of BC's hospitality industry's economic recovery through the pandemic.

Currently, all existing TESA authorizations are set to expire on Oct. 31, 2021. However, to ensure licensees have enough time to apply to make their current TESA authorizations permanent, the new amendments will enable the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) to extend all current TESA authorizations to Jun. 1, 2022. Licensees do not need to apply for this extension, and there are no associated costs for licensees.

Licensees who would like to make their current TESA authorization permanent must apply for new outdoor patio permanent structural change (if their TESA is located outdoors) or a new interior service area permanent structural change (if their TESA is located indoors). It's important to note that the approval process for a permanent structural change can take up to 10 months. Licensees who have not yet submitted a TESA authorization application, can do so by visiting the [liquor and cannabis licensing portal](#) until October 31, 2021.

LCRB will work with local governments, Indigenous Nations and licensees to resolve any concerns raised with existing TESA authorizations. Licensees with current TESA authorizations, whose local governments have not raised concerns will be reissued authorization letters automatically extending the expiry date of their temporary authorizations through to Jun. 1, 2022. All approved and extended TESA authorizations must remain in compliance with local bylaws and requirements. All other requirements relating to TESA authorizations remain the same. If you are not issued a new authorization letter, your existing TESA will expire on October 31, 2021.

Additionally, as of Oct. 31, 2021, the LCRB will stop accepting new applications for TESA authorizations. This is to ensure regulatory authorities – including the LCRB, local governments and Indigenous Nations – have time to review eligible applications for permanent structural changes (e.g. permanent patios) before TESA authorizations expire and to consider the implications of permanent approval on their communities.

Wine Growers British Columbia worked closely with the ministry and Business Technical Advisory Panel colleagues on behalf of the hospitality industry and thanks government for their ongoing support and assistance under the COVID-19 restrictions.

If you have any questions about the TESA policy, please email LCRBLiquorPolicy@gov.bc.ca.

WGBC Ready to Reopen Toolkit

Wine Growers British Columbia is updating our Ready to Reopen toolkit for distribution later this week. The updated Ready to Reopen 2.0 toolkit will reflect BC's Restart: A 4-step plan to bring us back together.

June 11, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: Federal Winery Support Program

The federal Budget 2021 (April 19, 2021), included the creation of a two-year Wine Grower Quality Enhancement Program. Less than what industry had proposed, totalling \$101 million with \$35 million (2022-23) and \$66 million (2023-24) the program will take effect on August 1, 2022, aligning with the repeal of the excise duty exemption which must occur no later than July 31, 2022.

The program is trade legal by being allocated to all wine made in Canada from fresh fruit (e.g., grape and other fruit wine, cider, sake, mead), using the definition of "wine" in the Food and Drugs Act.

Following the initial announcement, Wine Growers Canada (WGC) has been following up on the specifics including:

- With funding allocated for year one at \$35 million, at the current 67.2 cents per litre excise duty rate, the program is insufficient to fully support Canadian grape wine production (\$48 million) let alone all other fermented products included for trade compliance. The second year of funding announced in the Budget better aligns with total national wine production.
- Federal excise duty is indexed annually to the rate of inflation, and the per litre winery support program must also be indexed to inflation to ensure federal support is no less than the rate of excise duty paid.
- Wine produced but not sold prior to the repeal of the excise duty exemption on July 31, 2022, must remain excise exempt. Precedent exists, as similar grandfathering provisions were implemented following the introduction of the excise duty exemption on July 1, 2006.
- With only one vintage per year, and wineries currently making business decisions for the 2022 vintage, the details for the winery support program must be finalized and announced as quickly as possible to remove industry uncertainty and support investment and recovery.

- The winery support program must be extended beyond the 20-month budget implementation schedule (August 1, 2022, until March 31, 2024). Without a program extension, 2,400 jobs, more than 330 winery closures, and the removal of \$791 million from the national economy will be at risk when the winery support program ends in 2024.

Accordingly, WGC has been meeting with MPs, senior officials and political staff at Agriculture, Trade and Finance to seek clarification, engage in the program development process, and have immediately issued a letter to the Ministers of Finance (Freeland) and Agriculture (Bibeau) to ensure that federal decision makers are aware of industry concerns.

Canadian Wine Industry Economic Impact Survey 2021

Since the launch of our National Economic Impact Survey on May 26th, **less than 10 percent** of Canadian wineries have completed the survey to date. The data collected will help us better inform federal and provincial governments, and the results will provide significant benefits to the entire industry as we capture a full and accurate understanding of the impact of the wine industry on Canada's regional and national economies. To ensure robust results, it is vital that every small, medium and large winery across Canada take the time to [complete the survey](#). Please take the time to fill out this important survey by **July 15th**, and encourage all wineries to do the same.

2019 BC Wine Grape Acreage Report

In collaboration with the BC Wine Grape Council, BC Grapegrowers' Association and the BC Wine Authority, Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) is pleased to share the release of the [2019 BC Wine Grape Acreage Report](#). In support of [Wine BC 2030's](#) strategic pillar, to achieve "Executional Excellence" and WGBC's annual operational plan objective to "streamline industry reporting and data access", the 2019 BC Wine Grape Acreage Report provides new vineyard acreage, and data by region and variety for the entire BC wine industry.

May 26, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

Updated Provincial Health Officer Public Order

Indoor and outdoor dining is allowed with capacity limits based on physical distancing requirements and other rules, including a maximum of **six** people at a table (not restricted to your household or bubble).

Customers must continue to wear a mask when not at a table and events are still prohibited.

Wineries, pubs, bars and restaurants must have a [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) and employee protocols in place. WorkSafeBC will be conducting inspections to verify that COVID-19 Safety Plans remain effective.

An [updated public order](#) for Food and Liquor Serving Premises was released on May 24, 2021.

Essentially, food and liquor serving premises are returning to the restrictions that were in place **prior to** the Circuit Breaker restrictions.

For more information, please read the [updated public order](#) and review the [guidance for outside dining spaces](#).

For more information:

- [BC's Restart: A Plan to Bring Us Back Together](#)
- [BC Government News Release](#): BC launches restart plan to safely bring people back together
- [May 25th press conference presentation](#): BC's Restart - A Plan to Bring Us Back Together

[COVID-19 Travel Restrictions](#)

May 19, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE UPDATE: Indoor Dining Ban Restrictions

In recent conversations with industry, senior officials from Public Health were unable to advise whether the current ban on indoor dining - set to expire at midnight on May 24 - will be lifted, extended or modified.

Dr. Henry will be addressing British Columbians at a press conference this coming Thursday which will hopefully offer some clarity on when she will be announcing her decision about the current ["Circuit Breaker" Public Health Order](#).

To be clear: at this point it seems likely we may not know until after the long weekend when indoor dining will be allowed to resume. It is also possible the orders may be extended for a few more weeks.

Until notified otherwise from Dr. Henry, the BC hospitality sector strongly recommends HOLDING OFF on ordering extra inventory or scheduling additional staff in anticipation of resuming indoor dining.

May 14, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE WorkSafeBC Visiting B.C. Wineries to Help Employers Prepare for Seasonal Re-Opening

WorkSafeBC announced today it has launched an inspectional and consultative initiative at wineries, cideries and craft breweries in B.C.'s interior, in advance of the upcoming tourist season.

The initiative will be primarily completed in B.C.'s interior and will focus on establishments with tasting rooms that may see an increase in customers in the workplaces.

The inspections and consultations will confirm that up-to-date COVID-19 Safety Plans are in place and implemented effectively, and controls are in place to protect workers from COVID-19 transmission. All employers in B.C. are required to have a COVID-19 Safety Plan in place that assesses the risks to workers and implements measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace. The plan must be reviewed and updated as conditions change with WorkSafeBC resource to assist: [Reviewing and updating your COVID-19 safety plan: A guide for employers](#).

A reminder to visit [WineBC.com](#) for WGBC COVID-19 UPDATE resources.

April 27, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

Expanded relief grant for hospitality businesses

Yesterday BC Minister Kahlon [announced](#) the addition of \$75 million to the Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant, bringing the total amount available to \$125 million. The additional money is now open to hotels, motels and other short-term accommodations impacted by the [April 23, 2021 emergency order](#) to restrict travel between BC's regional zones.

The grant remains open to wineries, restaurants and other hospitality and fitness facilities impacted by the March 31, 2021 [provincial health officer's](#) orders that remain in place until May 25.

With the increased funding, eligible businesses will receive up to \$20,000 (double the original grant amount) to help with expenses including employee wages, rent, maintenance and utilities. The individual amount a business received will be based on the number of employees. Businesses that already applied or have received the Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant that opened on April 12, 2021 **do not need to apply again**. They will automatically receive the additional funding.

Applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis, and applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications will be accepted until June 4, 2021, or when the funds are disbursed. If you haven't already, you are encouraged to [apply now](#).

On behalf of the BC wine industry, Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) thanks Minister Kahlon and his ministry for the additions to the grant as it impacts the bottom line of businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SURVEY: Impact of extending indoor dining restrictions

WGBC and our industry partners success in advocating for winery indoor tastings and the Circuit Breaker Relief Grant is a direct result of survey results quantifying the impacts of banning indoor dining.

We are asking for your urgent feedback again. Please take 3-5 minutes to [complete our new survey](#) for BC's manufacturing and hospitality industries.

WGBC FISCAL 2021: Fourth Quarter Review

Celebrate the Wines of British Columbia provides a quarterly review of WGBC activities, including marketing, communications, advocacy and more. The FY21 Q4 review covers activities that occurred during January, February and March 2021. Watch the short Q4 highlights video and read the full report [here](#).

WGBC: Fiscal 2022 Advocacy, Communications and Marketing Operational Plan

The [Fiscal 2022 WGBC Advocacy, Communications and Marketing Operational Plan](#) is now available. Based on annual direction from the WGBC board, and with input from the advocacy and marketing committees, the purpose of this document is to deliver on the WGBC vision, mission, core values, visionary goals and strategic business objectives for the year. This is the second year of operations under our [Wine BC 2030 Long-Term Strategic Plan](#).

The Annual Operational Plan has been developed to address the current dynamic environment and retain the flexibility to help industry and member wineries meet new and emerging challenges. WGBC will lead the execution of the plan and work in collaboration with other industry partners and leading organizations in both the wine and tourism industries. Many of the strategies will require a cross-functional approach to succeed with heavy involvement from across the wine industry including winery and grower participation and resource allocation.

WGBC: Associate Membership

WGBC board recently approved policy for a standard 5% WGBC's Wines of British Columbia (WOBC) Store fee (e.g. eliminating 20% non-member fee). The fee will remain based on the BC Liquor Distribution Branch Wholesale Price (less CRF) for ANY BC VQA, 100% BC non-BC VQA grape and 100% BC non-grape wine that is collected and remit directly to the WGBC by the store from the winery payment.

The WGBC board also implemented policy that in order to have wines considered for a WGBC WOBC store listing, the winery must be a [member in-good-standing](#) of the WGBC, effective May 2, 2021 and established a non-voting associate member category for non-grape wineries and/or those not interested in the benefits of a full voting membership.

UPDATE: Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) Inducement Policy

In early March, the AGLC informed industry of the Government of Alberta's intention to remove all beverage alcohol inducement policies and prohibited practices in the province, with absolutely no restrictions in place. Following a strong lobbying effort from WGBC members, other regional associations and Wine Growers Canada, the AGLC has reversed its proposed inducement plans and will no longer repeal the related sections. AGLC will be reaching out to

stakeholder associations who provided feedback with a view of developing solutions and improving the current system. This is a great win for the industry and another strong example of successful lobbying efforts.

April 20, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

URGENT PROVINCIAL HEALTH OFFICER UPDATE: Indoor Dining & Travel Restrictions

Yesterday Dr. Bonnie Henry publicly confirmed ALL current guidelines and orders, including the [ban on indoor dining](#) will remain in place through to the end of the May long weekend.

While the restriction extension and new measures announced will impact the BC wine industry, Wine Growers BC remains supportive of government as they make progress with the COVID-19 pandemic and looks forward to when we can return to normal and welcome visitors back to our vineyards, wineries and restaurants with the world-renowned hospitality we are known for providing.

COVID-19 Safety Plans

In extending the restrictions, Dr. Henry called on all businesses to redouble efforts to implement COVID-19 safety plans to ensure:

- Continued focus on the basics to reduce transmission
- Especially focus on in-person social interactions. Be very purposeful about who you are seeing and where you are going, stick with the same few contacts.
- Stay within your health region and as much as possible your local community. Strictly follow the travel guidelines.

As employers, wineries are reminded to have an updated [COVID-19 safety plan](#). You can also review [WGBC Winery and Hospitality Best Practices](#) for more information.

New Travel Restrictions

In addition to the 'circuit breaker' restriction extension, Premier Horgan [announced](#) new travel restrictions are coming to reduce the movement of people and prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The Premier said the province has been working with the tourism industry to reject bookings from people travelling outside their local areas. WGBC suggests that inquiries or bookings from visitors outside the wineries local area politely be told they are asked to reconsider a visit until after the May long weekend.

Travel restrictions will include random audits of travellers to ensure people are complying with rules. Signs will also be placed along the BC-Alberta border to remind travellers that they shouldn't be coming to BC unless it is for essential reasons.

NOW OPEN: Applications for Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant

A reminder that eligible bars, pubs, restaurants, breweries and wineries can apply for the [Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant](#) to provide affected businesses with one-time funding to help with expenses like rent, insurance, employee wages, maintenance and utilities. It can also help cover unexpected costs, such as the purchase of perishable goods, that resulted from COVID-19 restrictions.

The Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant is open to eligible businesses of any size that have been in operation since February 1, 2021 and have been affected by the March 30, 2021 provincial health orders. These businesses will be eligible to receive between \$1,000 and \$10,000 in grant funding.

UPDATE: Excise Duty Exemption Replacement Program

Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) welcomes winery support announced in the 2021 Federal Budget and will continue to work with Wine Growers Canada (WGC) on the implementation and extension of the support program.

Budget 2021 proposes to provide \$101 million over two years, starting in 2022-23, to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, to implement a program for the wine sector that will support wineries in adapting to ongoing and emerging challenges, in line with Canada's trade obligations.

WGBC supported WGC's collaboration with partners across the country; together with senior federal officials in developing this trade legal program to support efficiency, productivity and competitiveness. This will support wine growers across Canada as they deal with the impacts of the pandemic and the pending repeal of the excise duty exemption program, which was successful in supporting investment in more than 400 grape wineries, stimulating 40 million litres of new wine production, and contributing almost \$5 billion annually to the national economy. See WGBC [media release](#).

April 8, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant

Earlier today, Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation Ravi Kahlon [announced](#) a new \$50 million fund with grants of up to \$10,000 for businesses impacted by the 'circuit breaker' [public order](#) announced last week.

In response to input from Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) and our hospitality partners, the Circuit Breaker Business Relief Grant will provide affected businesses with up to \$10,000 in

one-time funding to help with expenses like rent, insurance, employee wages, maintenance and utilities. The grant can also help cover unexpected costs that resulted from the restrictions, such as the purchase of perishable goods.

Applications are expected to open the week of April 12, 2021. To register to receive an email notification when applications open, businesses can visit the Government of British Columbia [website](#).

WGBC thanks those who responded to the impact survey last week as the results contributed to this urgent financial support for BC's manufacturing and hospitality industries. Particular acknowledgement and thanks to Minister Kahlon and his team for their quick action in support to our industry and recognition of the direct financial costs of this ongoing crisis.

April 1, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: Provincial Health Officer (PHO) Order – Food and Liquor Serving Premises

Following her announcement earlier this week, Dr. Henry released updated [Provincial restrictions](#) to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and includes: (*see full order [here](#)*)

- All food serving premises are to move to delivery and take out, unless they have a patio for outdoor service.
- Premises licensed to serve liquor, and which do not have full-meal service, must be closed if they do not have a patio or other outside area in which to serve patrons.
- Rules for (outdoor) patio service are the same as in the previous order regarding capacity, physical distancing, staffing, preventing congregating, hours of liquor service, etc. (see [WGBC Winery and Hospitality Best Practices](#)).

This means all food service must be outdoors and wineries with a lounge endorsement must also serve outdoors with a similar food offering as they do currently (i.e. no ‘full food’ requirement).

Manufacturer tasting rooms to sample product inside a manufacturing facility for the purpose of a purchase ([Section 32](#)) are permitted, but “no indoor seating is permitted, except on the request of, or for, a patron who is unable to stand while tasting”. Wine Growers BC (WGBC) recommends removing existing tables/chairs from the indoor tasting area to discourage seating.

WGBC recognizes these new rules are intended to reduce social interactions and limit all indoor group activities, while government ramps up the vaccination program and thanks the PHO for considering the impact on BC’s manufacturing and hospitality industries.

March 30, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

URGENT Update: Provincial Health Orders

Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) confirmed today with Dr. Emerson, Deputy Provincial Health Officer that licensed BC wineries can continue to offer '[sampling](#)' (e.g. "demonstrate what the product tastes like") indoors provided they follow existing COVID-19 protocols (see [WGBC Winery and Hospitality Best Practices](#)).

Wineries with a lounge endorsement permitting the sale and service of wine for onsite consumption must now provide this service on a patio outdoors with food available for patrons and subject to [yesterday's announced restrictions](#). We are waiting on Provincial Health Officer (PHO) clarification of 'food' under the new restrictions.

WGBC wishes to thank the PHO and government for their continued leadership during these difficult times and taking the time to listen and respond to our concerns.

March 29, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

URGENT Update: Provincial Health Orders

Effective midnight tonight, Dr. Henry announced [new COVID-19 restrictions](#) that limit liquor and food primaries to takeout, delivery and outdoor patio service **only**. Wineries with a licence to serve alcohol and full meal service will be allowed to operate their outdoor patio provided the area is licensed and they follow [existing PHO orders for restaurants, pubs and bars](#) (e.g. immediate household or core bubble).

These new restrictions will remain in place until at least **April 19, 2021**.

Wine Growers BC has asked for clarification regarding winery retail sales and tasting protocols under the new restrictions and will send out an update ASAP.

March 22, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

B.C. Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccination Plans

B.C. Ministry of Health [announced](#) last week that COVID-19 vaccination plans will prioritize front-line workers to protect people in workplaces identified as having the highest risk of COVID-19 transmission, including "agricultural operations". While B.C. wineries were not specifically included, we are checking in with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries frequently on the status and have been advised, "What is important to note is that there will be inconsistent administration of vaccines initially because of the above criteria, but the wine sector will eventually receive vaccines, as a large supply is starting to become available which means that even the age-based strategy will be moving faster than anticipated."

What we know as of right now is that public health will be identifying the work sites that have had and will continue to have the greatest transmission risk in the food processing category. These are those facilities with a large number of employees that have a difficult time maintaining public health measures because of the nature of work, and have had known transmissions or outbreaks in other areas of the province.

UPDATE: Public Health Order Clarifications

Dr. Henry recently announced that outdoor gathering for up to 10 people will be permitted. The amendment to the [Gatherings and Events order](#) (permitting 10 people to gather outdoors) does not supersede the restrictions that remain in place at restaurants, bars or manufacturer's tasting rooms/areas which continue to have a limit of no more than six people at a table – indoors or out. This clarification is now included on the [B.C. province-wide restrictions website](#) and was announced at Dr. Henry's [press conference](#).

While Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC) has confirmed patios and outdoor areas at winery tasting rooms, patios, picnic areas, etc. are **NOT** included as places to gather with 10 people together, it is important to note that this is hopefully the start of loosened restrictions that will allow wineries to expand hosting guests during the expected busy tourism season.

WGBC is also working with industry and government to have made permanent current provincial health orders that extend winery tasting opportunities including sit-down, vineyard and patio tastings.

B.C. Hospitality Permanently Allowed to Sell Liquor with Takeout

Recently, government announced Liquor and Food Primaries are [permanently authorized](#) to sell packaged liquor of all types for off-site consumption with the purchase of a meal for takeout or delivery. Licensees should be fully aware of these requirements before they commence the sale and delivery of packaged liquor (see [Policy Directive 21-04](#)).

WGBC supports the continued government policy to provide direct long-term financial support to the hospitality industry and will work to implement co-operative programming to aid both industries in recovering from the catastrophic impact to this critical channel during the pandemic.

B.C. PST Rebate on Machinery and Equipment

The [B.C. PST Rebate on Select Machinery and Equipment](#) is a temporary provincial sales tax (PST) program to help corporations recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19. The program acts like a refund but is separate from the existing PST Refund process. Under this temporary program, corporations can apply to receive an amount equal to the PST they paid between September 17, 2020 and September 30, 2021 on qualifying machinery and equipment.

B.C. Online Grant Program Expands

In response to a high number of applications, the B.C. government is investing an additional \$30 million in the [Launch Online Grant program](#). The program provides up to \$7,500 to businesses to help build or expand an e-commerce site to reach more customers and to sustain and grow their business.

Small and Medium Sized Business Recovery Grant Program

Grants of \$10,000 to \$30,000 are available to [small and medium sized B.C. businesses](#) impacted by COVID-19. An additional \$5,000 to \$15,000 grant is available to eligible tourism-related businesses. The program runs until August 31, 2021 or until the funds are fully expended, whichever comes first.

March 1, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

URGENT ACTION REQUESTED: Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) Inducement Policy

Last week, Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) informed Wine Growers Canada of the Government of Alberta's intention to remove all beverage alcohol inducement policies and prohibited practices in the province, with absolutely no restrictions in place. This is extremely concerning to our industry with Wine Growers BC supporting national and provincial beverage alcohol industry associations to oppose this change.

Due to the considerable risk to Canadian and British Columbia wine industries, we ask you to join Wine Growers BC and voice your concerns with the AGLC. Accordingly, content for an email for you to send can be found [here](#). Please feel free to customize the details as to the direct impact on your business and we ask that you also BCC (blind copy) Wine Growers Canada's Dan Paszkowski dan@wgcanada.ca in your email to the AGLC.

Emails must be received by the AGLC by this **Friday, March 5, 2021**, to be considered. We encourage you to take this opportunity support our peers and colleagues across Canada in having the AGLC reconsider.

February 24, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

UPDATE: Wine Growers BC (WGBC) Fiscal 2021 Q4 Member Dues

WGBC Fiscal 2021 Q4 member dues invoices will again include a COVID-19 Relief Adjustment.

The adjustment reflects ongoing COVID-related programming alterations and cancellations and will be applied against Q4 member dues in consideration of the pandemic's impact on our industry. Distribution of the adjustment is weighted accordingly to a percentage of winery contribution to the total.

In case you missed it, Wine Growers British Columbia hosted a member update webinar sharing highlights from Q3. You can watch the replay, read the full report and watch the highlights video [here](#).

UPDATE: BC Liquor Distribution Branch (BC LDB) Hospitality Wholesale

Government announced yesterday, as set out in Minister Farnworth's mandate letter, that the hospitality pricing model that was scheduled to expire March 31, 2021, will be made permanent, allowing hospitality operators to purchase beer, wine and spirits at the wholesale price set by the BC LDB indefinitely. [See media release.](#)

Wineries are reminded they can opt out of the BC LDB hospitality catalogue by submitting [the form](#) for exclusive direct delivery products so that they do not show on the catalogue. [Learn more.](#)

Also announced was reinstating the authorization for liquor manufacturers to deliver products directly to individual consumers from their registered off-site storage facilities, in addition to their on-site stores, until December 31, 2021. However, consumers will not be able to physically purchase product at off-site storage locations as per [current policy](#).

REMINDER: Temporary Expanded Service Area (TESA)

An extension for expanded service areas, such as patios has been extended from October 31, 2020 to October 31, 2021 with the BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch intending to extend all TESA authorizations. [See media release.](#)

New applications for TESA authorization will be considered up until October 31, 2021 and must also receive the approval of local governments. [Learn more.](#)

If you have any questions regarding these changes, please contact the BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch toll free in Canada at 1-866-209-2111 or 250-952-5787.

Market Intelligence Report: Alcohol Trends in Canada and the U.S.

Wine Growers Canada shared the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada release of a customized report on "Alcoholic beverages in Canada and in the U.S.". This report covers the size of these markets, growth by beverage alcohol category, new trends and new products launched. [Download report.](#)

February 4, 2021

WGBC CEO UPDATE

BC Wine Institute now Wine Growers British Columbia

On February 1, 2021, the BC Wine Institute formally changed its name to Wine Growers British Columbia (WGBC). The name change was unanimously supported by members at the September AGM as it better reflects our deep connection to the land, from the vineyard to the glass, and recognizes the B.C. wine industry and WGBC as the high value agri-food product and economic growth generator we are. Read the [media release](#).

Since 1990, WGBC has played a pivotal role in taking B.C.'s wine industry from a vision to an internationally recognized niche region producing premium wines and providing exceptional wine tourism experiences.

WGBC markets the wine and regions of B.C.; delivers quality trade, media and consumer tastings; and acts as the voice of B.C.'s wine industry by advocating to government on behalf of industry that contributes \$2.8 billion in provincial economic growth annually.

WGBC represents all wineries in British Columbia to grow the premium market share for the Wines of British Columbia, while driving awareness of our world-class wines and tourism product – currently drawing 1,000,000 visitors with \$600 million in tourism and tourism employment-related economic impact every year.

Apply Now: BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (BC LCRB) Permanent Patio Extensions

On May 22, 2020, the BC LCRB introduced [Policy Directive 20-13](#): permitting a licensee to temporarily expand their service area (e.g. patios). [Policy Directive 20-26](#) extended this temporary authorization to October 31, 2021 with the LCRB accepting applications for licensees to temporarily expand their service areas until October 31, 2021. Wine Growers BC is working to make these current temporary expanded service areas permanent.

Accordingly, if you haven't already applied for a structural change you are encouraged to begin the process ASAP, as the branch routinely takes six to nine months to complete the process. [Learn more.](#)

BC Liquor Distribution Branch (BC LDB) Vendor Site

A reminder for wineries to regularly log into the BC LDB Vendor site to check the resources page for important notices including the recent updated memo regarding bottleshots and tasting note submissions for BCLiquorStores.com. [Learn more.](#)

For questions regarding access, please e-mail: lodbvendorhelp@bclldb.com.

British Columbia Wine Authority (BCWA) Notice of Nominations

BCWA will accept nominations from members for a position on the board of directors and for two positions on the Wine Industry Advisory Committee (WIAC):

- One director's position open for a three-year term, starting after the AGM, which is tentatively set for Friday, August 6, 2021. Experience in accounting and finance is an asset.
- Two WIAC member positions open for a three-year term, starting after the AGM, which is tentatively set for Friday, August 6, 2021. Both positions represent members in the Okanagan Valley and Similkameen Valley regions.

Nomination deadline is March 3, 2021. For more information, please contact [Scott Hennenfent](#).

January 25, 2021

BCWI CEO UPDATE

BC Liberal Virtual Roundtable

Friday, January 29, 2021 - 3:00-5:00 PM

BC Liberal Official Opposition Caucus will host a virtual roundtable Friday, January 29, 2021 from 3:00-5:00 PM. While the meeting is regarding the environment and responsible natural resource development, it is also a good opportunity to share concerns related to agricultural issues and ideas as MLAs prepare for the Spring Session of the Legislature.

Register [here](#).

For further information, please do not hesitate to contact Ian Paton at ian.paton.mla@leg.bc.ca.

BC Wine Institute Q3 Member Update Webinar

Thursday, February 4, 2021 - 11:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Join the BCWI team for a member update webinar as we share highlights from the Celebrate the Wines of British Columbia Quarterly Review. The webinar will review the work of the BCWI during the third quarter and provide a snapshot of what we've been up to as an organization - working hard to represent the interests of our BC winery members dedicated to producing certified 100% British Columbia grape wines.

Register [here](#).

Canadian Direct Delivery Petition closes February 14, 2021

Member of Parliament, Dan Albas, has introduced a private member's bill to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act so that Canadians can order wine, craft beer and spirits from Canadian producers, and be able to have those products shipped directly to them by Canada Post and support this important industry at a time when they need us the most.

Industry and consumer support is critical via signing the online petition [here](#).

Virtual BC Wine Industry Insight Conference 2021

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Mark your calendars for the 2021 BC Wine Industry Insight Conference to be held virtually this year.

The BC Wine Institute along with the BC Wine Grape Council, BC Grapegrowers' Association and the BC Wine Authority are once again coming together to provide a forum covering industry-related topics, issues, policies and opportunities that impact your business operations.

Stay tuned for the 2021 program and exciting list of BC Wine Industry Insight featured speakers and topics!

January 18, 2021

BCWI CEO UPDATE

Update: Extension of Sale and Delivery Temporary Hours

April 3, 2020 the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) temporarily extended the hours of liquor sales for Licensee Retail Stores, Wine Stores and Special Wine Stores, and Manufacturer Onsite Store endorsements to no earlier than 7:00 AM and end no later than 11:00 PM.

Set to expire January 31, 2021, the LCRB has again extended the temporary authorizations to now expire on March 31, 2021.

The BCWI wishes to thank the LCRB General Manager and staff for their continued support of our industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information:

- [Policy Directive 21-01](#): Extension of temporary hours of sale and delivery
- [Policy Directives](#)

[Liquor license terms and conditions manuals](#)

January 13, 2021

BCWI CEO UPDATE

BC Wine Institute (BCWI) Member Events and Programs

In addition to the BCWI Weekly Update email sent out directly, member industry events and program opportunities can also be found on [WineBC.com](#). If you are not receiving and/or want others in your organization to receive the BCWI Weekly Update, please [email](#) our Communications Manager.

BC Wine Grape Acreage Survey

If you have not yet done so, please complete this important update survey ASAP. The goal of the report is to conduct an in depth analysis of the vineyard landscapes and advise industry members on best practices in terms of healthy vine selection, sustainable farming practices, and the marketability of BC wines in both the domestic and global marketplace and is critical in government advocacy work.

Information is strictly confidential with only compiled information reported, personal information will not be shared publicly. Please complete the survey [here](#).

Safe Food for Canadians Licence Renewals

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has notified all Canadian food industry

associations that many Safe Food for Canadians (SFC) licences are due to expire on January 15, 2021, while others will expire in the days and weeks that follow. If you have an SFC licence, it can be renewed online through your [My CFIA](#) account. You can do so up to 120 days before the expiry date of your licence. No matter how early you apply, your renewed SFC licence will be valid for two years from the original expiry date.

Ongoing BCWI Governance and Advocacy

A volunteer Board of Directors comprised of nine elected voting winery members and three non-voting ex officio members governs the BCWI. The board and management are supported by active committees and ad hoc task groups comprised of expert volunteer members who provide input and assist in specific areas. Volunteer committees and task groups meet and report on an ongoing basis. See the latest reports [here](#).

BCWI represents the BC wine industry's interests to government and key decision makers. We work with members and industry stakeholders to establish BCWI board direction on annual priority regulatory policy and other issues with ongoing reporting of progress. [Learn more](#)