



## School District 8 Kootenay Lake

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### **Frequently Asked Questions during COVID-19** **March 26, 2020**

On March 17, the BC government suspended all in-class kindergarten through Grade 12 instruction indefinitely to help contain the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, the School District 8 Kootenay Lake all sites are closed for face-to-face instruction to students indefinitely.

This is a very fluid situation, and we are working collaboratively with our partners. To provide you with updated information, we have created the below FAQs so that our partners are well-informed with the updated information. The below FAQs and information would be changed as we receive further information and clarification from BCPSEA, Ministry of Education and Provincial Health Officials. It is a working document and may be amended regularly. If you have a question that you do not see listed below, please let us know, and we will do our best to find an answer in a timely manner.

Question 1: Will schools and sites remain closed for the rest of the school year?

Answer: No, the schools are not closed. The BC government suspended all in-class instruction only. All employees who are scheduled to work in the week of March 23, March 30 or onward are required to attend their normal place of work at the scheduled time. If there are any changes in this direction, we will provide an update accordingly.

Question 2: Are schools and sites being cleaned during the spring break?

Answer: The Health and Safety of our employees is the utmost priority of the school district. All School District 8 Kootenay Lake sites are being cleaned and disinfected during this COVID-19 outbreak, which focuses on increased cleaning of high touch surfaces, doorknobs, desktops, washrooms, food preparation areas, etc.

Question 3: What can I do to prevent the spread of infection?

Answer: Please follow the recommendations of the Provincial Health Officials:

- Stay home and away from others, if sick or in isolation;
- Wash hands frequently;

- Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbows;
- Avoid touching face with unwashed hands;
- Avoid non-essential travel outside Canada;
- Self-isolate for 14 days if returning from travel outside Canada or were exposed to COVID-19; and
- Contact your primary health provider or Health Link 811 if you have questions about your health etc.

Question 4: Will school staff be expected to be at work after the spring break?

Answer: All regular staff who work in schools are expected to be at work on March 30, 2020. Administrative and Operational sites are closed to the public, but open to staff. Those in regular/continuing positions should be available to attend their regular place of work following Spring Break. If you have medical conditions, please call your administrator in advance to discuss the appropriate work arrangements. More guidelines around “Working Conditions” will come out in the days and weeks ahead.

Question 5: Will all staff be paid during this time?

Answer: Questions regarding employment status and pay would be addressed as we receive the information from the Government and Ministry of Education. We will keep you informed accordingly.

Question 6: Are ROEs for TTOCs, casuals or on-call employees being issued?

Answer: Currently, the School district is not issuing ROEs for these classes of employees. As we receive the information from the Government and Ministry of Education on this matter, we will update you accordingly.

Question 7: Will staff be permitted to work virtually?

Answer: The district is considering all the working arrangements. It all depends on the situation and would be assessed case by case.

Question 8: How the School District would manage “14-days Self-quarantine”?

Answer: There is no specific language in the Collective Agreement about quarantine, the approach as outlined below for the use of sick leave and other entitlements are in place for this pandemic season on a without prejudice/without precedent basis. We will continue to review arrangements for employees affected, including options on a without prejudice/without precedent basis. The 14-days self-quarantine will be addressed as below:

8.1 If an employee travels outside of Canada, including the United States, the employee must self-quarantine for at least 14 days.

8.2 If the travel outside of Canada, including the United States, is **essential**, the employee must submit to the district a written note supporting their reasons for travel. If the district is in agreement that the travel is essential in nature. The employee will be allowed to use sick leave and other entitlements such as vacation, banked time etc. upon their return.

- 8.3.If the travel outside of Canada, including the United States, is not **essential**; the employee will not be allowed to use sick leave upon their return. However, the employee can use vacation or banked time.
- 8.4If the medical officer directs an employee to self-quarantine for non-travel related medical issues, the employee would be allowed to use sick leaves and other entitlements such as vacation, banked time etc.
- 8.5For employees who travelled before the Public Health Officer non-essential travel recommendation, i.e. March 12, 2020: where possible, the district will consider whether working from home during self-quarantine is a viable option. If working from home is not a viable option, the employee will be able to access available sick leave banks, vacation or bank time etc. on a without prejudice or precedent basis, given that self-isolation was not avoidable.

Question 9: Can the school district ask employees to provide their travel information?

Answer: Please note that in some circumstances, the school district may have to collect, use, and disclose personal information to prevent or manage the risk and/or reality of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Question 10: What leave reason I can use for COVID – 19 or associated medical conditions?

Answer: The employees must use the code COVID-19 in the SmartFindExpress.

Question: If the childcare is closed, can I bring my child into work with me if I cannot find childcare?

Answer: No, unfortunately, the School district can not allow employees to bring their children at work. Your administrator will work with you to determine appropriate work arrangements.

However, additional restrictions may apply, based on government directives. It may include, but not limited to, extending working remotely. Any temporary changes to our policies and procedure during a pandemic will be communicated in writing, via email, and will link to the authorized source of information that our temporary change is based on.



School District 8  
Kootenay Lake