



Media Release

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For immediate release

Step 3 of BC's Restart plan means changes to mask policy and more at RDCK recreation facilities

Pre-registration system to remain in place until September

Nelson, BC: With the announcement that the province is moving into Step 3 of BC's Restart plan, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) will be making a number of changes to allow the gradual, safe reopening of recreation facilities and services to the public. Changes to the mask policy will be made effective July 1, 2021, with other changes happening gradually as the RDCK plans for full reopening in September.

"The move to Step 3 is great news, because it means we can start to welcome more people back into our facilities and programs with fewer restrictions, and we can start to expand some services as a result," said Joe Chirico, RDCK General Manager of Community Services. "There will be a transition period as we take the necessary steps to deliver safe and enjoyable experiences at our facilities. This includes ensuring we have staff in place who have been trained to handle more visitors, and reinstalling fitness equipment that had been moved to allow for physical distancing."

"We ask patrons at our facilities to follow guidance from the BC Provincial Health Officer, which includes regular hand-washing and staying home if you feel sick."

As of July 1, 2021, guests at all RDCK community complexes and recreation facilities are recommended to wear masks in all indoor common spaces, even though masks are no longer a requirement under the *Emergency Program Act*.

Guests will still be required to pre-register to use fitness centres and pools. This system will be in place until September 7, 2021. Each facility will increase capacity for access to fitness centres and pools according to their staffing and preparedness levels.

Each facility will also increase capacity for registered programs on a per-program basis. Patrons wishing to register for programs should visit www.rdck.ca/recreation to check if the program they're interested in has opened up additional spaces.

Facility amenities, including change rooms, steam rooms, and concessions, will reopen when each facility is able to modify their spaces and when adequate staff are in place to maintain these amenities.

Amenity rentals at facilities, where available, will also become available for booking to new Step 3 capacity levels over the coming weeks. Those who wish to rent indoor or outdoor spaces should contact their local facility directly for more information.

“While our facilities and services are not yet back to pre-pandemic conditions, we are excited to be moving in the right direction,” said Chirico. “I would like to thank patrons of all RDCK recreation facilities for their patience as we adjust our services in response to Step 3 and as we plan for further reopening at Step 4. And, as always, thank you to our dedicated staff for their commitment to the health and safety of their coworkers and our patrons.”

Changes to this reopening plan may occur if guidance from the Provincial Health Officer changes.

Recreation customers are encouraged to visit www.rdck.ca/recreation to explore current program offerings, access contact information for each facility, and learn more about a safe return to recreation.

Incorporated in 1965, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is a local government that serves 60,000 residents in 11 electoral areas and nine member municipalities. The RDCK provides more than 160 services, including community facilities, fire protection and emergency services, grants, planning and land use, regional parks, resource recovery and handling, transit, water services and much more. For more information about the RDCK, visit www.rdck.ca.

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