



SEMIAHMOO
HOUSE
SOCIETY

PENINSULA
ESTATES HOUSING
SOCIETY

THE
SEMIAHMOO
FOUNDATION

March 16, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Semiahmoo House Society Services Participant/Supporter,

This letter is to let you know that we will be maintaining the protocol we established on Monday, March 16, for Tuesday, March 17. Thank you to those who stayed home today. That is the safest thing to do and helps minimize risk for others in the community. The actions I describe in this letter are for the safety of the people we support, our staff members, and the general community, and are based on the advice given by our Canadian and British Columbian Health Officers. **For the rest of this week, you will only be notified if there are any changes to the protocol listed below.**

People Using Community Services (PD, Transitions, Focus Group at our North and South Campuses and ABIS)

Starting on Monday, March 16, we will be going to an essential services protocol, which means if you can stay home, you should. While SHS has stepped up our hand washing and surface cleaning regimes at all of our locations, there is greater risk for catching the virus when and where groups of people gather together. This means there is greater risk for people coming into our buildings, especially since we have vulnerable people who we support in our Community Services programs. For people we support who have no option but to come to SHS on Tuesday, we will be enforcing safety measures including hand washing when first entering the building, maintaining physical distance between people, not taking transit, sending who is coughing or feels ill, and not attending recreation centres or malls (Surrey has just closed all its community centres and pools anyway). In short, we will be running modified services within our buildings or in the outdoors for anyone who cannot stay at home.

Non-essential day programs for Community Services will continue to be modified as we adjust to the COVID-19 pandemic—with the idea that we focus our resources where they are most needed. Contact Brianna Hopaluk at 604-536-1242 (ext. 232) if there is a critical health and welfare issue that needs to be discussed.

People Using Employment Services and WISE Employment Solutions

Starting on Monday, March 16, we will be eliminating any Employment Service activities where people are grouped together. Individual meetings and employment training may still proceed: WISE will be in touch with you to let you know how their services will be structured for the next little while. Contact Seema Tripathi at 778 888 5916 if you have any questions.

An Ongoing Response

The decisions that we are making today and the decisions that we will make in the future are not easy. We realize that many of you rely on SHS supporting you in our Community and Employment Services and that not being able to attend our programs and services will be difficult. However, our primary duty at this time is to ensure the safety of the people we support, our staff members, and the general community. This is best done by following the advice of our Canadian and British Columbian Health Officers and reducing the number of people who are gathering in our buildings and in community buildings. SHS will continue to pay close attention to and make decisions based on the information and guidance being shared by reputable organizations, including the World Health Organization, Canadian and British Columbian government Health Officers, Fraser Health, Community Living British Columbia, and our Resource Nurse.

Sincerely,

Doug Tennant
CEO, Semiahmoo House Society

Resources

While there is much media coverage of the COVID-19 virus it is important to be sure the information is reputable and up to date. Here are five sites that will keep you informed (google the name if this is not an electronic letter):

- [Public Health Authority of Canada](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [BC Ministry of Health](#)
- [Government of Canada Travel Advisories](#)
- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

SHS's communications about COVID-19 and our response can be found here:

www.uniti4all.com/coronavirus-communications/