



SEMIAHMOO
HOUSE
SOCIETY

PENINSULA
ESTATES HOUSING
SOCIETY

THE
SEMIAHMOO
FOUNDATION

July 3, 2020

Re: COVID-19 Pandemic

Dear Semiahmoo House Society Community,

I am addressing this letter to the whole Semiahmoo House Society community: people we support, the families of people we support, home share providers, and all our staff members. For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be working together, with as few boundaries as possible to ensure that everyone is supported and safe.

July 3rd Update

SHS's Phase Three

This week, SHS Community Services support workers have been reaching out to North and South Campus participants and their families/home share providers/supporters to schedule an increase in hours of support, for those who are interested. This increase to 4 to 6 weekly hours of support will be accomplished by SHS workers potentially supporting more than one person at a time. Small groups of people (up to six people) will also be joining together, when it makes sense and with proper social distancing and safety protocols, for classes and activities—usually outdoors.

I have been asked why we are not opening up our day services more—having classes and gathering in larger groups, which would allow us to have more hours of support available to Community Services participants. As we have throughout this crisis, we are taking our advice from the advice given to all BCers by Dr. Henry and the Provincial Health Office. These guidelines include the following:

BC's Phase 3 Guidelines for Social Interaction

If you are at greater risk (over the age of 60 or with underlying medical conditions), be informed of your risk, think through your risk tolerance and take extra precautions (I should add that having an intellectual disability is **NOT** an underlying medical condition and should not prevent people from enjoying the same rights as other BCers during Phase 3).

BC's Phase 3 Guidance for People "Inside Your Bubble"

Your bubble includes members of your immediate household and can be carefully expanded to include others (in some cases during Phase 3, this will include support workers and other people who are supported by SHS):

- Try to limit the number of people in your bubble
- Every time you add someone to your bubble, you are also connecting with everybody in their bubble
- Inside your bubble, you do not need to wear a mask or stay 2 m apart
- Remember, vigilant hand-washing and space cleaning is still important
- If you are sick, self-isolate from people in your bubble as much as possible

BC's Phase 3 Guidance for People "Outside Your Bubble"

In personal settings when you're seeing friends and family who aren't in your bubble (for SHS, that would be when people get together who are not in a shared bubble):

- Only get together in small groups of 2 to 6 people
- Keep 2 m of physical distance from those who are outside your bubble and limit your time together
- Stay home and away from others if you have cold or flu-like symptoms
- Take extra precautions for those at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19, including older people and those with chronic health conditions.

More information about BC's Phase 3 can be found here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/phase-3>

We are also bearing in mind the guidance provided by CLBC during BC's Phase 3 (called Stage 2 by CLBC). This guidance includes the following:

- Assess staff for symptoms/self-assess prior to supporting the person (regardless of location of support or other exposure control). Staff must not come to work if they are symptomatic, required to self-isolate, or have any reason to think that they might be contagious.
- Consider the health and safety of not just the individual but also their family, caregivers and/or house mates when planning support.
- Minimize the number of staff that work with an individual to keep their "bubble" of exposure small.
- Encourage staff who work with an individual have a small "bubble" to minimize the individual's potential exposure.
- Avoid having staff at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 supporting individuals where there is a heightened risk of spreading COVID-19 from person to staff due to inability to maintain physical distancing, and/or lack of other exposure control measures.
- Assess and make use of the safest transportation option(s) to reduce risks associated with travel.
- Work with the individual and their network as necessary to ensure that any health and mental health needs continue to be met.

If BC continues to do well in this COVID-19 battle, I do envision SHS creatively figuring out how to get more supports safely in place for people over the summer—meaning more and interesting things to do and perhaps some scheduled classes at our buildings.

Home Share Emergency Funding

Thank you to all home share providers for their patience as we have gathered information and worked with CLBC to get your Emergency Funding. It is coming and hopefully will be with you before my next community letter.

Culinary Arts Program (CULA)

Students have returned to CULA for in-person training with Chef Roger and May. We have set the class size limit at two students per day at this time. This may grow in the future.

Important and Ongoing Information

Pandemic Learning Project

UNITI and SHS are participating in a project that will help us and others be better prepared for future emergencies by learning about what people have been doing during the pandemic. The project involves collecting stories from people from across Metro Vancouver with all different kinds of experiences, especially people with disabilities, their families, home share providers, and the people who work with and support them. Please check out our project page and click on the link at the bottom if you have a story or stories to share. If you need someone to help you with doing this, contact Lynne Ford at l.ford@shsbc.ca or 604-536-1242 ext. 258. The more stories that are told by people in the disability community, the better. The project page is here: <https://uniti4all.com/pandemic-learning/>

Self-Advocate Work

Semiahmoo House Society and The Semiahmoo Foundation has been supporting self-advocates to have a voice during the COVID-19 pandemic. I wanted to share with you some of the advocacy work that two self-advocate groups that we are associated with have been doing. The Provincial Self-Advocate Leadership Network (SALN) have been creating news releases and sending them to provincial and federal leaders, and the Self-Advocates of Semiahmoo (SAS) have created five public awareness videos about COVID 19. SALN news releases and SAS videos can be found on the [Uniti4All COVID-19 webpage](https://uniti4all.com/covid-19-information/) < <https://uniti4all.com/covid-19-information/> >

Guidance Counselor

Shab Khan, Registered Family Counsellor, MPCC, RPC, will be providing support to people connected to Semiahmoo House Society during the COVID-19 pandemic. The counselling is meant for people SHS supports, including people already on the Guidance Counselor's active list, people on her wait list, family members, and home share providers. Priority will be given to the people in the most critical situations (environmental, health, or emotional). The support given will be virtual—through phone, email, or secure online platforms. Contact information below:

Guidance Counselor contact information:

Shab Khan, Registered Family Counsellor, M.P.C.C., R.P.C.
Telephone: 604-536-1242 Extension: 276
Email: s.khan@shsbc.ca

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

If someone we support in home share or residential services does get ill with COVID-19, we have N-95 masks, face shields, and other PPE to distribute to people we support, home share providers, and staff members who are at risk. Due to limited supplies, these PPE are reserved for cases of confirmed COVID-19 infection (by Fraser Health) in staffed residential settings (group homes and Chorus) and home share homes only.

Additional Support

If you need additional support, please contact the relevant person listed below.

SHS Staff Member	Service/Program
Lise Boughen Director of Inclusive Living l.boughen@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 227	Staffed Residential (Group Homes) Chorus Apartment Supports
Gale Cooper Manager, Community Support Network g.cooper@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 231	Home Share Providers
Liz Deschenes Community Services Director e.deschenes@shsbc.ca 604-536-1242 ext. 234	Peninsula Child Care Acquired Brain Injury Services
Brianna Hopaluk Community Services Manager b.hopaluk@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 232	South Campus (formerly PD)
Teresa Randle Transitions Services Supervisor t.randle@shsbc.ca 604 536 1242 ext. 311	North Campus (formerly Transitions) Focus Group Encore
Anita Bhatti Recreation and Leisure Services Program Coordinator a.bhatti@shsbc.ca 604-536-1242 ext. 255	Rec & Leisure Services
Kristyl Downing Program Coordinator—ABIS k.downing@shsbc.ca 604-592-1006 ext. 230	Acquired Brain Injury Services
Seema Tripathi Employment and Innovative Services Director s.tripathi@shsbc.ca 778 888 5916	WISE Employment Solutions Culinary Arts Program (CULA) SPARK tidyAlot

Sincerely,



Doug Tennant

CEO, Semiahmoo House Society

Semiahmoo House Society's COVID-19 Principles

- 1) All our decisions will be made with the safety of the people we support and our staff members being our first priority**
- 2) We will support people with disabilities to have the same right to safety as all other citizens in BC**
- 3) We are person-centred and will adapt our services to support people in the way that is best for them, given safety and resource realities**
- 4) We are open-minded and will revise our plans when new information suggests this**
- 5) We will be responsible with taxpayer funds and will use alternate resources when necessary in our response**

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](#)
- [CLBC COVID-19 Information Page](#)

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

<https://uniti4all.com/covid-19-information/>