

**GOVERNMENT OF NEW BRUNSWICK UPDATE**  
**Bulletin #24b: COVID-19 GNB News Release from April 16**  
Distributed: April 16, 2020

The following update on COVID-19 (the novel coronavirus) was issued today:

**No new cases of COVID-19, state of emergency extended**

FREDERICTON (GNB) – Public Health reports no new cases of COVID-19 today.

Of the 117 cases previously confirmed, 66 are travel-related, 42 are close contacts of confirmed cases and nine are the result of community transmission.

During the pandemic, 13 people have been hospitalized and seven have since been discharged. Three of the six patients remaining in hospital are in an intensive care unit.

To date, 80 people have recovered.

Dr. Jennifer Russell, the province's chief medical officer of health, said these results are encouraging but she urged New Brunswickers to continue to stay home as much as possible and practise physical distancing when they do have to go out.

"We must not lose focus," said Russell. "We need to maintain the barriers to the spread of infection that we have built over the last month. We cannot take a break from these actions. They remain very important in protecting the health of all New Brunswickers."

Russell praised the work of Public Health teams that are engaged in contact-tracing to slow the spread of the virus. Community-based teams administered by the regional health authorities are working with the Department of Health to determine and limit the spread.

Russell stressed that public co-operation is needed to ensure that contact tracing is effective. She urged New Brunswickers to closely follow directions from Public Health if they have been in contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

**State of emergency extended to April 30**

Premier Blaine Higgs announced that the declaration of emergency under the *Emergency Measures Act* was formally extended today. A state of emergency was declared on March

19, however such declarations expire after 14 days unless extended by the lieutenant-governor in council. Both cabinet and the all-party cabinet committee have approved the extension.

“We will extend the declaration every 14 days until we are confident we do not need the emergency powers to impose restrictions to slow the spread of this infection,” said Higgs.

Some parts of the emergency order have also been clarified to ensure that residents and business owners understand what they can and cannot do. For example, the government clarified that restaurants offering take-out must ensure physical distancing of customers who are on the premises waiting for their food, and that property owners must take steps to prevent gatherings.

“We have been listening closely to the feedback of New Brunswickers throughout this evolving situation,” said Higgs. “We have received a number of requests for changes to the emergency order that could make life a little bit easier during these difficult times. However, there are some requests that we still cannot accommodate because the goal of keeping New Brunswickers safe and healthy must remain our top priority.”

The latest version of the declaration [is available online](#).

### **Gardening and agricultural retailers to reopen**

Since gardening and agricultural retailers are an important part of the food supply, Higgs announced that this sector will be allowed to reopen starting today.

“In the weeks ahead, we will look for other adjustments,” said Higgs. “We are all keen to help our businesses recover, and we want New Brunswickers to begin to return to some of their normal activities.”

### **Public drug plans**

Higgs addressed the issue of medical coverage under New Brunswick’s public drug plans. He said the government encourages all pharmacists to remove the extra dispensing and co-pay fees associated with the new limits of prescription refills.

### **More flexible rules for restaurant owners**

Higgs also announced that, for the duration of the state of emergency and at the request of restaurant owners, restaurants with a licence will be allowed to sell liquor off their menu for take-out or delivery. Owners will also need to ensure they do not sell liquor to minors.

### **Closed borders and cottage owners**

The government is asking non-residential cottage owners from outside the province to be patient and not to visit their cottage in the coming weeks.

"I appreciate that some individuals have chosen to make New Brunswick their second home," said Higgs. "But right now, due to the situation we are all in, I ask them to remain in their primary province of residence. In the weeks ahead, we will reassess the situation."

Up-to-date information about COVID-19 [is available online](#)