

Dear Employer,

British Columbia has declared a public health emergency due to the rising number of cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The BC Provincial Health Officer has ordered anyone returning to Canada from international travel to self-isolate for 14 days. In addition, the Public Health Agency of Canada advises returning travelers and any individual who is experiencing respiratory symptoms to stay on self-isolation until 24 hours AFTER symptoms have FULLY resolved.

Please excuse your employees from work or accommodate alternative work arrangements (if an employee is well enough and able to work from home) under the following circumstances:

1. Any employee who has travelled outside of Canada, including the United States of America, is ordered to self-isolate at home for 14 days upon their return.
2. Any employee is ordered to self-isolate for 14 days who lives with, provides care for, or has spent extensive time with someone who:
 - a. Has tested positive for COVID-19, or
 - b. Is suspected to have COVID-19, or
 - c. Has respiratory symptoms (fever, cough, or shortness of breath).

In accordance with provincial health guidelines, asymptomatic patients and those with mild symptoms are not being tested. Patients with mild symptoms or who are feeling ill, have been ordered to self-isolate for 14 days.

BC Health Minister Adrian Dix stated at a press conference on March 16, 2020 **“there is no need – none - for sick notes at this time.”** Sick notes place an unnecessary burden on the health care system at a time when physicians need to focus on addressing one of the biggest public health challenges of our time. We agree with Dr. Kathleen Ross, the Doctors of BC president, who has stated: “When patients come into the office to get sick notes, they are putting physicians, their staff and other patients at risk.” For further information, see the statement issued by the Doctors of BC [urging employers to stop asking for sick notes](#).

Please treat this letter as a sick note based on the provincial health guidance. Individualized sick notes will not be provided to confirm if your employee has been tested for COVID-19 or to confirm recovery from illness. It is our civic responsibility to each other and to our communities to follow the guidance of the Provincial Health Officer.

Please check the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) for more information and guidance.

Thank you,
BC Family Doctors

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