



March 18th, 2020

Dear Students,

This message is coming to you from Karen, Trevor, Sara, Somi and Yiwen from the International Student office.

We know that the current situation with the COVID 19 is very challenging. We will try to answer your questions and concerns. Please know that your International staff and your host families are here to assist. **You are not alone.**

We hope the following FAQs can answer solve some of your concerns:

1. We heard school is closed for the year. Is this true?

Answer: No, schools are closed indefinitely. This means there is no set date for classes to resume. Once the governments have decided that it is safe for school to start again an announcement will be made.

2. We heard that international students are being sent home. Is that true?

Answer: Absolutely not. You are all students in our school and members of our community. You not being forced to return home to your country.

3. My parents want me to come home. Can we go home to our countries if our parents ask us to come home?

Answer: Yes, your parents have the final say on what they want for you. If they ask you to return home you should follow their instructions to arrange flights.

4. I heard that there won't be enough food soon. Is it true?

Answer: No, this is not true. There is an abundance of food for the entire population.

5. How can I avoid getting sick?

Answer: Wash your hands frequently especially after touching surfaces. Avoid people who appear to be sick and maintain a social distance (about 2 metres) between people when in public locations. Consult professional advice.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

6. What happens if I get sick while I am in Canada? I am an international student will the hospital take care of me?

Answer: Yes. All students are either using the British Columbia Medical Services Plan (MSP) or the Guard Me student plan. It is however, important to only visit or call a health care provider if you are sick or think you may be sick. In the unlikely situation that you become sick please ask your host family for assistance with calling or if needed, to visit a hospital or clinic.

7. If school is cancelled or we go home now what happens to our grades and school work we have done to date?

Answer: The Ministry of Education has stated that all students will receive a final grade for classes they are currently in. You will not "lose" the semester.

8. I have to complete my 30 hours of volunteer work for graduation but the centre where I was going to volunteer is closed? Will I be penalized?

Answer: No, at this time with a State of Emergency you do not have to worry about completing these requirements.

9. The Rocky Mountain Trip was cancelled. Will I receive my money back?

Answer: Yes. Students will receive full refunds to the credit cards used to make the payments. Discovery Tours is asking for your patience as it will take a week or two to process.

10. We heard there will be online classes. When will they start? What will they be like? Do I need a computer?

Answer: The Ministry of Education is working with school districts and teachers to design an online plan to continue learning. Details of this will come out when ready.

11. I am already getting bored at home. What can I do in this situation?

Answer: “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade” In other words this situation really sucks but use the opportunity for a positive outcome:

Here are some examples:

- Start writing a journal (diary) in English of this experience.
- Do the homework now that you need to get caught up on.
- Read, read, and read! Either in English or in your own language.
- Go for a walk for fresh air and sunshine. Spring arrives March 19th!
- Have conversations and activities with your host family.
- Use the Internet researching the good things happening in the world.
- Use YouTube tutor sites for assistance in your subjects or to learn.
- Learn how to cook a new meal with your host family.

We all have a civic duty to follow the guidelines set out by the Health Department to stop the spread of this virus. Being bored is not an excuse to break the rules.

13. If someone at the homestay gets sick, the student would be moved to another house?

Answer: No, in the unlikely case that someone gets sick in the household the student in that home would also be under quarantine or self-isolation with the host family.

14. If a student needs isolation, can they have it at their homestays?

Answer: Yes, this can be done with the cooperation of the host family. We should not be having any self-isolation unless a student unknowing comes in contact with a positive testing person or returns to Canada from another country after March 12. This is why it is very important to observe the guidelines from the health department so that this doesn't become the case.

15. Where can I receive information about the Covid-19 virus that is correct?

Answer: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

16. Where can I find information from the Government of British Columbia?

Answer: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0086-000499>

17. Where can I find information from the New Westminster School District?

Answer: <https://newwestschool.com/>

18. What is the World Health Organization saying?

Answer: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

