

COVID-19 (University protocol for sharing COVID-19 case information)
Internal memo

MEMORANDUM

To: UBC Vancouver Deans, Vice-Presidents and Associate Vice-Presidents
From: Andrew Szeri, Provost and Vice-President, Academic, UBC Vancouver
Date: March 23, 2020
Subject: University protocol for sharing COVID-19 case information

University protocol for sharing COVID-19 case information

Please forward this to your respective units

We have been asked about the University's protocol for sharing information about COVID-19 cases.

In the event of a confirmed student, faculty or staff case, information would be provided to the public, if needed, and to the Director, Student Health Services, if needed, by Vancouver Coastal Health's public health team, according to their protocols.

The health authority's public health team is responsible for contact tracing, identifying, and advising individuals who need to be notified. Notifying faculty, staff and students of a positive case is not the responsibility of a UBC Faculty or Department. This will be done on an as-needed basis by the local health authority.

The Chief Medical Health Officer has directed that employers not disclose any information about confirmed cases for any reason, as doing so has legal implications under BC's Public Health Act. Information provided by an individual regarding their health is personal information under provincial privacy legislation (FOIPPA). An individual's personal and private information will be maintained, unless there is a danger to the public.

The situation with confirmed cases is clear – all steps and actions that are to be taken are in the hands of the health authority's public health team. Unless UBC is directed by the health agency to communicate a case on campus, we cannot and will not do so, as any such communication would be in direct contravention of the Public Health Act.

To provide greater clarity, if a faculty or staff member has COVID-19-like symptoms and is not offered testing, we cannot breach their privacy by advising others that they may have been exposed. Rather, we suggest that everyone takes the following steps:

- We should advise our staff and faculty that we must all be monitoring ourselves for symptoms.
- We should know the [symptoms](#) and be familiar with the COVID-19 BC Support App and Self-Assessment Tool at <https://bc.thrive.health/>.

- We should know the difference between [self-monitoring, self-isolation, and isolation for COVID-19](#).
- And lastly, we should know what to do [if we are ill](#).

If we familiarize ourselves with these aspects of COVID-19, we will be far better positioned to protect our health and prevent the spread of infection, while also protecting the personal and private information of the people in our units.