



# THE CASS REPORT

2020



*The CASS Senior Leadership Team would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of CASS' frontline staff and subcontractors who have risen to the challenge of maintaining supports for clients in these exceptionally trying and unprecedented times. Your courage, compassion, and creativity are an inspiration. We know that the welfare of the individuals we serve could not be in better hands. If there is anything that you need or any support that CASS can provide, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We will all get through this together stronger.*

## **We want to hear from YOU!**

Send us your submissions for next month's issue to [sarah.clark@c-a-s-s.org](mailto:sarah.clark@c-a-s-s.org)

## **QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

"Clean Hands, Clear Minds and Open Hearts"

-Mayor Naheed Nenshi

# COVID 19 Communication from The CASS Senior Leadership Team

CASS Senior Leadership is closely monitoring the situation with respect to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic and following the recommendations of Alberta Health Services, Health Canada, and the World Health Organization.

While the risk in Alberta remains low at this time, the risk is rising and the situation is very fluid. CASS is taking significant measures to ensure the safety of all clients and staff and to slow the potential transmission of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases in order to reduce the strain on our health care systems and promote the wellbeing of all Calgarians.

See <https://c-a-s-s.org/covid19> for the most current information regarding the CASS response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

## **Enhancing Sanitation Measures**

All CASS worksites (the CASS Main Office, Creative Community Living Activities, Stepping Stone Manor, Langin Place and our Overnight Staffed Residences) have all had their existing sanitization measures significantly enhanced in order to reduce the threat of transmission. All touch surfaces are being sanitized regularly.

We have also secured an adequate supply of personal protective equipment, cleaning, and sanitizing products to ensure that the needs of all of our worksites are adequately addressed.

## **Promoting Good Hygiene**

As always, everyone is encouraged to ensure that they are practicing excellent hygiene including:

- frequent handwashing
- avoiding touching your face
- coughing and sneezing into your elbow or a tissue
- limiting physical contact (no hugs or handshakes)
- If you are wondering if you should be tested for covid19, please use the web-based assessment tool provided by AHS which is available at the following URL: <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Journey/COVID-19/Pages/COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx>
- Contact your primary health provider or [Health Link 811](#) if you have questions or concerns about your health.

Read more about best practices regarding hygiene, and sanitization

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

CASS staff have been instructed not to attend any CASS work site if they are not feeling well and instruction has been provided on how to address the potential need for self-isolation.

In the interests of helping CASS to coordinate our staffing needs and service delivery, we are requesting that clients and staff inform their supervisor(s)/coordinator(s) if they have recently travelled outside of Canada, have plans to travel outside of Canada in the next month, or if they have reason to believe that they have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19.

## **Modifications to CASS Operations**

Effective March 13th 2020, modifications were made across all program areas.

At this time, all CASS programs remain operational, albeit with modifications to operations. Some of these modifications have resulted in freeing up staff so that they can be re-assigned to other program areas in order to ensure continuity of critical services. Thank you to our excellent staff for their dedication to maintaining the essential supports that we provide to clients of CASS.

**Effective April 1st the CASS Main Office is closed to all guests and staff** excluding the CASS Senior Leadership Team and administrative staff. Senior Leadership and admin staff are encouraged to work from home to the extent that they are able to but may work from the CASS Main Office as required.

Incoming calls will be addressed by our auto-attendant. CASS Main Office staff remain available via the main office phone extensions via call routing.

Program-specific details regarding modified operations have been communicated to staff and clients in those programs.

**CASS is also suspending all non-essential gatherings until further notice including but not limited to:**

- All on-site training (CPI, Abuse Awareness Training, Challenging Behaviours II, Med Admin Proficiency, Mental Health First Aid, All in-person CAPSH training)
- Dinner Club
- CADO Art Class
- Emotion Commotion Workshops
- CAES Employment Preparedness Workshops
- Money Matters Financial Literacy Workshops
- Spin-A-Round Food Distribution Program
- CASS Advisory Committee
- Friendships and Dating Workshops
- All client-initiated sales or gatherings at CASS worksites
- All In-Person Committee Meetings (remote meetings can proceed as required)

In addition to the above, wherever possible, staff are being encouraged to work from home, and to meet with clients, staff, and others remotely (over the phone or via remote meeting software) rather than in person. See communications from your respective Director(s) if you are unsure if this applies to you.

## **CASS Administration**

CASS administrative operations remain fully functional at this time. Administration staff are being asked to work from home where possible, however a skeleton crew remains on site at the CASS Main Office to ensure that all administrative needs are addressed in a timely manner and that CASS clients and staff are fully supported.

CASS finance will be mailing all Expense Claim cheques and will not be holding any cheques for pickup in order to reduce the need for staff to come to the CASS Main Office.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the CASS Senior Leadership Team by sending an email to [\*\*cass@c-a-s-s.org\*\*](mailto:cass@c-a-s-s.org).

Thank you for your support.

Stay safe and healthy everyone,

The CASS Senior Leadership Team

# Online Resources & Activities

- Alberta Health Services has released a Text4HOPE program, where they send you a daily text message of encouragement to support with health coping skills and resiliency.

Text COVID19Hope to 393939 to subscribe

- NASA has made their entire collection of images/sounds/video publicly available:

<https://images.nasa.gov/>

- Museums:

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>

- Virtual tour: Yellowstone National Park

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/learn/photosmultimedia/virtualtours.htm>

- Virtual tour: Yosemite

<https://www.virtualyosemite.org>

- Virtual tour: Great Wall of China

<https://www.thechinaguide.com/destination/great-wall-of-china>

- San Diego Zoo: Baboon, Penguin, Panda, Polar Bear, Tiger ... cams

<https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams>

- Georgia Aquarium: Puffin, Jellyfish, Beluga, Penguin, Sea Otter ... cams

<https://www.georgiaaquarium.org/webcam/beluga-whale-webcam/>

- Monterey Bay Aquarium: Aviary, Coral Reef, Jellyfish, Kelp forest, Shark ... cams

<https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams>

- Telus Spark

Telus Spark is offering fun learning programs and activities online. <https://sparkscience.ca>

## Grocery Delivery Programs

### **Calgary Co-op**

Calgary Co-op is delivering free care packages to those under Covid-19 quarantine in accordance with public health agency instruction until April 15. The packages feature non-perishable food essentials and are available while supplies last. Care package requests can be made over email (more details at [calgarycoop.com](http://calgarycoop.com)).

### **Cultivatr**

This online local farm-fresh delivery service has responded to the increased demand and is now offering delivery Thursday through Sunday (formerly just Thursday and Friday). Delivery is free on orders more than \$40. Place your order by 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday for Saturday or Sunday delivery, and by 10:00 a.m. on Saturday for delivery on Thursday or Friday.

[cultivatr.ca](http://cultivatr.ca)

### **The Grocery Link**

This local grocery delivery service lets you place an order at one of eight grocery stores (including Superstore, Save-On-Foods and M&M Food Market), then delivers it within a two hour span on weekdays. The base rate for regular delivery service is \$19.99, plus there are discounted programs for seniors and those with limited access.

*thegrocerylink.com*

### **T & T Supermarket**

T & T Supermarket, which has two locations in Calgary, is one of the latest major grocery store chains to offer home delivery. Shoppers can place orders for Asian snacks, groceries, household items and beauty/health products. Orders will arrive within three to seven days through Canada Post.

*tntsupermarket.com*

## Psychological Health & Safety

### **Stress Busting Tips**

Take control of stress with the following tips:

Simplify

- Set priorities for yourself. Organize your time so that you do the things that are most important to you first. Let less important things go.
- Make decisions right away instead of putting them off. Worrying about what decision you have to make can cause unnecessary stress.
- Identify things that cause you the most stress. Then, look for ways to get around them. For example, if you find traveling stressful, see if you can make a phone call instead.
- Concentrate on doing one thing at a time. Once you have finished a task, take a moment to let yourself feel good about getting it done. Take a rest if you need it, and then move on.
- If you are running late, or if you feel overwhelmed, cancel or reschedule your appointments.
- Learn to say "No." Save your energy for the things that are most important to you.

Get support

- Don't try to do everything yourself. Ask your friends and family members to help with some of your responsibilities.
- Talk about your feelings with family and friends. Make sure you take time for social activities and exercise. You'll be more prepared to deal with situations that cause you stress if you've taken time for fun!

Plan ahead

- Think about which situations cause you stress. Then, plan ahead to minimize or avoid these predictable sources of stress. For example, if waiting in line is stressful for you, bring a book to help pass the time. If you find the morning rush stressful, get up 15 minutes earlier so that you don't feel so rushed.
- Schedule breaks for yourself throughout the day. This will give you a chance to rest, and will also prevent the stress that comes from getting "behind schedule."

Coronavirus Anxiety: Coping with Stress, Fear, and Uncertainty

Fears about COVID-19 can take an emotional toll, especially if you're already living with an anxiety disorder. But you're not powerless. These tips can help you get through this stressful time.

Understanding your anxiety

It's a frightening time. We're in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, with cities and even entire countries shutting down. Some of us are in areas that have already been affected by coronavirus. Others are bracing for what may come. And all of us are watching the headlines and wondering, "What is going to happen next?"

For many people, the uncertainty surrounding coronavirus is the hardest thing to handle. We don't know how exactly we'll be impacted or how bad things might get. And that makes it all too easy to catastrophize and spiral out into overwhelming dread and panic. But there are many things you can do—even in the face of this unique crisis—to manage your anxiety and fears.

### Stay informed—but don't obsessively check the news

It's vital to stay informed, particularly about what's happening in your community, so you can follow advised safety precautions and do your part to slow the spread of coronavirus. But there's a lot of misinformation going around, as well as sensationalistic coverage that only feeds into fear. It's important to be discerning about what you read and watch.

- **Stick to trustworthy sources** such as the CDC, the World Health Organization, and Alberta Health Services, only. Social media platforms such as Facebook is not a credible source of accurate news.
- **Limit how often you check for updates.** Constant monitoring of news and social media feeds can quickly turn compulsive and counterproductive—fueling anxiety rather than easing it. The limit is different for everyone, so pay attention to how you're feeling and adjust accordingly.
- **Step away from media if you start feeling overwhelmed.** If anxiety is an ongoing issue, consider limiting your media consumption to a specific time frame and time of day (e.g. thirty minutes each evening at 6 pm).
- **Ask someone reliable to share important updates.** If you'd feel better avoiding media entirely, ask someone you trust to pass along any major updates you need to know about.
- **Be careful what you share.** Do your best to verify information before passing it on. Snopes' Coronavirus Collection is one place to start. We all need to do our part to avoid spreading rumors and creating unnecessary panic.

### Focus on the things you can control

We're in a time of massive upheaval. There are so many things outside of our control, including how long the pandemic lasts, how other people behave, and what's going to happen in our communities. That's a tough thing to accept, and so many of us respond by endlessly searching the Internet for answers and thinking over all the different scenarios that might happen. But as long as we're focusing on questions with unknowable answers and circumstances outside of our personal control, this strategy will get us nowhere—aside from feeling drained, anxious, and overwhelmed.

When you feel yourself getting caught up in fear of what might happen, try to shift your focus to things you can control. For example, you can't control how severe the coronavirus outbreak is in your city or town, but you can take steps to reduce your own personal risk (and the risk you'll unknowingly spread it to others), such as:

- washing your hands frequently (for at least 20 seconds) with soap and water or a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- avoiding touching your face (particularly your eyes, nose, and mouth).
- staying home as much as possible, even if you don't feel sick.
- avoiding crowds and gatherings of 10 or more people.
- avoiding all non-essential shopping and travel.
- keeping 6 feet of distance between yourself and others when out.
- getting plenty of sleep, which helps support your immune system.
- following all recommendations from health authorities.

### Plan for what you can

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It's natural to be concerned about what may happen if your workplace closes, your children have to stay home from school, you or someone you love gets sick, or you have to self-quarantine. While these possibilities can be scary to think about, being proactive can help relieve at least some of the anxiety.

- Write down specific worries you have about how coronavirus may disrupt your life. If you start feeling overwhelmed, take a break.

- Make a list of all the possible solutions you can think of. Try not to get too hung up on “perfect” options. Include whatever comes to mind that could help you get by.
- Focus on concrete things you can problem solve or change, rather than circumstances beyond your control.
- After you’ve evaluated your options, draw up a plan of action. When you’re done, set it aside and resist the urge to go back to it until you need it or your circumstances significantly change.

## Update from Punctuation

