

BC Association of Aboriginal
Friendship Centres

BCA AFC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 20, 2020

How Friendship Centres Are Supporting Communities During COVID-19

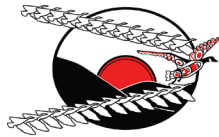
VICTORIA, B.C. - At the best of times, Friendships Centres work against high unemployment rates, cutbacks in government spending, and general economic uncertainty. Now, amid the global COVID-19 crisis, Friendship Centres continue to find ways to provide critical services with disproportionately less support from provincial and federal governments.

While Friendship Centre doors may be closed to the public, many programs such as their counselling services and classes have moved online to ensure that clients can continue to receive supports. Additional supports are also being implemented to adapt to the times including:

- Delivering meals to individuals unable to travel to the Friendship Centre (such as Elders and shut ins).
- Offering grocery gift cards and coupons to families and individuals.
- Constructing vegetable gardens and greenhouses, planting fruit trees and berries to provide fresh produce.
- Implementing extra safety precautions in overnight shelter facilities to protect the health of clients and staff.
- Distributing hygiene kits to homeless, creating handwashing stations.
- Implementing extra precautions to continue providing access to storage space, washrooms, showers, and laundry, as safely as possible.
- Setting up clients in isolation with tablets and Zoom to stay connected to each other and Friendship Centre counsellors.
- Preparing and distributing an outline of all support organizations within the community (i.e. hours of operation, if the office is open/closed, contact information, services available), and updating the document weekly to provide clarity for clients.
- Helping clients access housing subsidies and other financial resources available to them.
- Purchasing Chromebooks for youth who need access to school work.

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(Office) 250-388-5522 or 1-800-990-2432 | (Fax) 250-388-5502



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- Providing prescription pick-up and delivery.

To inquire about collaborating with B.C. Friendship Centres, please email
communications@bcaafc.com.

Contact

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