

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Greater Vernon Chamber responds to new Covid restrictions**

**VERNON** – The Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce is urging the provincial government to initiate measures that ensure the viability of businesses impacted by the latest round of Covid restrictions.

The government has announced that as of Dec. 22 at 11:59 p.m., bars and nightclubs in B.C. must close until Jan. 18, as must gyms, fitness centres and dance studios while indoor organized gatherings of any size, such as weddings and receptions, are cancelled.

“We completely appreciate that the government and health officials are pursuing strategies to keep Covid-19 cases from climbing, and particularly the Omicron variant. We thank all health care professionals for their efforts to keep us safe and healthy,” said Robin Cardew, Greater Vernon Chamber president.

“However, we hope the government recognizes the significant impact these latest restrictions will have on very specific sectors of our economy, many of them small-businesses. Bars, fitness centres and banquet facilities are making a sacrifice on behalf of all British Columbians and it is incumbent on the government to provide direct financial resources to these businesses to minimize the losses they will experience. Small business is the backbone of every community and we stand behind them.”

The government has also announced that seated events are reduced to 50 per cent capacity with vaccination checking and mandatory masking regardless of venue size, while there is a maximum of six people per table at restaurants, pubs and cafes plus physical distancing or barriers.

“We understand that the Covid situation is evolving almost daily and there is a need for immediate decisions, but we are concerned that businesses in B.C. are not being provided sufficient notice to communicate closures or reduced capacities to their employees and customers, or to cancel food and beverage orders,” said Cardew.

The Chamber welcomes the distribution of rapid-test kits and an expansion of booster vaccine capacity.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

**Dan Proulx, General Manager**

Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce, E: [manager@vernonchamber.ca](mailto:manager@vernonchamber.ca) P: 250-545-0771