

Helping Seniors Live Well



BC Seniors' Guide

9th Edition



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

A Personal Record & Emergency Numbers

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Postal Code _____

Telephone _____

B.C. Gold CareCard Number _____

Old Age Security Number _____

Name & telephone number of closest:

Relative _____

Friend _____

Clergy _____

Doctor _____

Pharmacy _____

Health Unit _____

Lawyer _____

Ambulance _____

Fire Department _____

Police _____

BC Health and Seniors' Information Line

Toll Free, call: _____ 1 800 465-4911

In Greater Victoria call: _____ 250 952-1742

Message from the B.C. Government

As an older British Columbian, you are part of an ever growing group that is healthier, more active and engaged in your communities than ever before.

We envision – for decades to come – a province where older people continue to be an integral part of our social and economic life, where you are encouraged to use your talent and expertise; where you are invited to be involved in your community; and where you feel safe and supported in your physical environment.



Premier Gordon Campbell (seated, centre) and Ministers Polak, Lekstrom, Abbott, Coleman, Coell, Hansen, Falcon, van Dongen and Oppal

We recognize that, as part of our commitment to building the best system of support for seniors in Canada, providing the information you need to connect with resources in your communities is key. Access to this information is equally important for caregivers and service providers.

This is the reason we've once again updated our B.C. Seniors' Guide – the 9th edition – which contains information on the programs and benefits available to seniors in British Columbia.

Visit our Seniors' website at www.gov.bc.ca/seniors for constantly updated versions of this guide and translated versions in French, Chinese and Punjabi.

Additional information on government services can be accessed through the BC Health and Seniors Information Line (toll free at 1 800 465-4911 or 250 952-1742 in Victoria).

We trust this guide will be a useful resource, helping you access the services and supports that can make a real difference in your life.

The 9th Edition of the British Columbia Senior's Guide was printed in the winter of 2008-2009. Information may change from the time of publication. Updates to this guide can be found online at www.hls.gov.bc.ca/seniors/

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HEALTHY LIVING



Helping Seniors Live Well

Notes _____

Healthy Living

Seniors Redefine the Concept of Aging

It may be time to redefine what being senior really means. Statistics Canada's report, *A Portrait of Seniors in Canada*, says that seniors are more dynamic than ever. Seniors enjoy increased life expectancy and generally better health. They are more physically active and more involved in groups and activities in their communities. They are more connected and they have better access to information than any previous generation of senior citizens. The number of seniors who use the Internet has increased by seven times in the last 10 years.



The BC Seniors Games, for example, show that physical activity, fun, and social engagement know no age barriers. This annual event brings more than 3,500 British Columbians over the age of 55 together for four days of competition and celebration in activities from dragon-boating to lawn-bowling, and from track and field to cribbage. With BC Seniors Games Society memberships and regional zone playdowns, seniors can benefit from social and active living year-round.

Boomer Friendly Boot Camps are available to seniors who want to take the first step to competing at the BC Seniors Games, or who just want to have fun and be more active.

It's all about living a healthier lifestyle, and staying active is the key. In this section you will find information about how to connect with your community, become involved in sports or other activities, and eat healthier foods. The Active Aging Symposium promotes these values, along with programs such as Age-Friendly Communities and the provincial Age-friendly Leadership Network.

Healthy Living

Volunteer organizations such as Volunteer BC are a natural fit with seniors interested in giving back to their communities. The skills and experience that seniors bring to these organizations are highly valued, and there is information in this section about finding ways to volunteer.

For seniors engaged in continued learning, there is information available about some of the province's post-secondary institutions, which offer reduced or free tuition for some educational programs, or English Language Training. There is also information about other ways seniors are being encouraged to remain healthy, active, and involved, including reduced fees for camping, hunting, and fishing, as well as discounts for the Royal BC Museum.

Healthy Living

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SENIORS

The older we get, the more concerned we tend to be about our health. Yet, as we age, many of us find it harder to move around and get the physical activity we need to enjoy the best possible quality of life.

Getting active and staying active benefits more than just our bodies. It helps us stay engaged in life, improves our mood and mental health, and gives us opportunities to meet new people. It also helps our confidence and self-esteem – and some studies show it can ward off problems such as dementia by keeping our minds in good condition.

ActNow BC

ActNow BC is the most comprehensive health promotion program of its kind in North America, and is encouraging all British Columbians, including seniors, to be more physically active and make healthier eating choices.

ActNow BC Healthy Living Pledge

ActNow BC is committed to helping all British Columbians live healthier lifestyles. You can take the ActNow BC Healthy Living Pledge to take small, simple steps to improve your health; the ActNow BC website has many helpful tools and tips to help you reach your goals.

Visit the ActNow BC website to take the Healthy Living Pledge.

Website:

www.ActNowBC.ca

Healthy Living

Healthy Eating for Seniors

Healthy Eating for Seniors is a handbook available in English, Chinese, and Punjabi that includes information about healthy eating – what seniors should pay attention to when it comes to food, meals, and supplements. It gives tips on how to eat to prevent or manage common chronic diseases. It also provides advice on simple ways to eat with less salt and fat, how to read labels, and how to maintain a healthy body weight. Several delicious recipes are included in portion sizes for one or two people. *Healthy Eating for Seniors* is free of charge in B.C.

To order a free printed copy of *Healthy Eating for Seniors*, call the Health and Seniors Information Line.

In Victoria, call:	250 952-1742
From elsewhere in B.C., call toll free:	1 800 465-4911

An online version of *Healthy Eating for Seniors* is also available on the ActNow BC website at: www.actnowbc.ca/EN/seniors/healthy_eating_for_seniors
Website: www.ActNowBC.ca/EN/seniors

Annual Active Aging Symposium

The Annual Active Aging Symposium is a provincial event to share successes, promote networking, and report on progress in promoting active aging throughout British Columbia. Each year the symposium attracts the participation of older people, their representative organizations, the health sector, and partner organizations leading the way in promoting active aging.

2008 Symposium website:	www.bcactiveaging.ca
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Healthy Living

Peer Health Promotion

The Provincial Government is supporting the Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC (COSCO) in delivering a province-wide health promotion initiative, Staying Healthy and Safe, aimed at improving older people's health through peer-led education workshops on falls prevention, nutrition, safe use of medication, elder abuse awareness, caregiving, and other topics.

Website: www.coscobc.ca

Falls Prevention Information

Information on how to prevent falls can be found by calling your local public health unit or by visiting the website at:

www.injuryresearch.bc.ca/categorypages.aspx?catid=1&subcatid=7&ctname=Injury%20Topics&subcatname=Falls%20Prevention

Website: www.injuryresearch.bc.ca

Personal Supports Information Line

This toll free Personal Supports Information Line directs callers from British Columbia to provincial government programs that may provide equipment and assistive devices.

Toll Free, call: 1 888 818-1211

Deaf/Hearing-impaired, call Toll Free: 1 800 661-8773

E-mail: PersonalSupportsInformation@gov.bc.ca

Healthy Living

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Local governments play an important role in creating the kinds of environments that help people make healthy choices in all areas of their lives, improving quality of life, reducing demand on the health care system, and helping us achieve our goal of leading North America in healthy living and physical fitness.

Age-Friendly Communities

British Columbia is developing tools, resources, and support to local governments and communities to help them plan and adapt to become more accessible and inclusive for older persons. The goal is to make B.C. the most age-friendly jurisdiction in Canada by 2010. In an age-friendly community, policies, services, settings, and structures support and enable older people to age actively by:

- Recognizing the wide range of capacities and resources among older persons;

- Anticipating and responding flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences;

- Respecting decisions and lifestyle choices;

- Protecting those who are most vulnerable; and

- Promoting inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life.

Website: www.health.gov.bc.ca/seniors/initiatives/age_friendly.html

Healthy Living

BC Healthy Communities Initiative

The BC Healthy Communities Initiative acts as a catalyst to strengthen the capacity of B.C. communities and enhance individual and collective health, well-being, and development by promoting and supporting the Healthy Communities approach.

Website: www.bchealthycommunities.ca/Content/Home.asp

Provincial Age-friendly Leadership Network

The provincial *Age-friendly Leadership Network* works to engage leaders from a wide range of diverse sectors and perspectives in developing age-friendly communities in B.C. The Network consists of leaders of business, financial, professional, government, Aboriginal, service, community, and seniors' organizations who are in positions to influence change in their communities and to support the creation of age-friendly communities.

Website: www.seniorsincommunities.ca/leadership_network.php

Seniors in Communities Website

Through a partnership between the Provincial Government and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, a new website has been developed to provide resources for communities, including newsletters, a directory of best practices and community stories, and age-friendly planning guidelines.

Website: www.seniorsincommunities.ca

Healthy Living

Volunteering

Healthy communities are about more than physical activity; they require the engagement of citizens of all ages. Volunteering is a great way to stay connected and take part in building the health of your community. With many useful skills and a wealth of experience to share, seniors and retirees who volunteer make a significant contribution in all sectors of society.

Local Volunteer Centres can provide information about volunteer opportunities in your community.

Volunteer BC is a provincial organization, based in Vancouver, that promotes the development and value of volunteerism in B.C. by working co-operatively with volunteer centres, governments, and other organizations. If you need assistance in connecting with your local volunteer centre, Volunteer BC can help.

E-mail: volbc@vcn.bc.ca

Website: www.volunteerbc.bc.ca

VolWeb.ca™ is helping to increase access to volunteer opportunities and celebrates the spirit of volunteerism across B.C. Created by 2010 Legacies Now and supported by the Province, this on-line service connects volunteers with organizations that need special event volunteers. No long-term commitments are required, and volunteer times range from one hour to one weekend – you decide. Best of all, it is free and easy to use.

Website: www.volweb.ca

Healthy Living

EDUCATION

Post-Secondary Tuition

Some of British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions offer reduced or free tuition to seniors. Contact information for post-secondary institutions is available from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development website.

Website: www.aved.gov.bc.ca/institutions/welcome.htm

English Language Training

New immigrants and refugees may qualify for beginner-level ESL courses through the English Language Services for Adults program. For more information about this program, visit the ELSA Net website.

Website: www.elsanet.org/index.html

RECREATION

Hunting and Fishing Licences for Seniors

These programs allow B.C. residents 65 years of age or over to buy hunting and fishing licences at a reduced rate. Information on hunting licences can be found on-line.

Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/wildlife/hunting/regulations/

Information on fishing licences can also be found on-line.

Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/fish/

Healthy Living

More information about hunting and fishing licences may be obtained at any Service BC Centre or by calling Service BC.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 663-7867
In Greater Victoria call:	250 387-6121
In Greater Vancouver call:	604 660-2421
Deaf/Hearing-impaired Toll Free, call:	1 800 661-8773
Deaf/Hearing-impaired, in Vancouver call:	604 775-0303

Campsite Fee Discounts

B.C. seniors receive a discount on campsite fees during the shoulder season (from the day after Labour Day to June 14 of the following year). The discount does not apply to group camping, group picnicking, backcountry, marine, or day-use fees.

Website: www.env.gov.bc.ca.bcparks/fees/fees.html#seniors

More information is available by calling Service BC.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 663-7867
In Greater Victoria call:	250 387-6121
In Greater Vancouver call:	604 660-2421
Deaf/Hearing-impaired Toll Free, call:	1 800 661-8773
Deaf/Hearing-impaired, in Vancouver call:	604 775-0303

Healthy Living

Royal BC Museum

Seniors pay reduced admission fees at the Royal BC Museum in Victoria, both individually and as a pre-booked group. For more information, contact the numbers listed below.

Toll Free, call: 1 888 447-7977

In Greater Victoria call: 250 356-7226

E-mail: reception@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca

Website: www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca

The Royal BC Museum involves volunteers in a wide range of activities, including school programs, the Royal Museum shops, the coat check, exhibit interpreters, and museum hosts. Seniors interested in volunteering their services can contact the Royal BC Museum, Volunteer Services.

Royal BC Museum Volunteer Services

In Victoria call: 250 387-7902

E-mail: [gmiller@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca](mailto:gmillier@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca)

Royal BC Museum

675 Belleville Street

Victoria, B.C. V8W 9W2

Healthy Living

BC Seniors Games

The BC Seniors Games promote active participation in sport and recreation for B.C. seniors 55 years of age and over. This annual four-day celebration attracts about 3,500 older adults from all corners of the province. Participants qualify through regional zone playoffs. Competitors are required to pay a registration fee and must be members of the BC Seniors Games Society.

One of the major funding partners of the BC Seniors Games is the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport.

For more information, contact the BC Seniors Games Society.

In Victoria call: 250 385-3610

E-mail: bcsgs@shaw.ca

Website: www.bcseniorgames.org

Boomer-Friendly Boot Camps and Get Strong for Life Camps

Check your local recreation centres, activity centres, parks, or shopping malls for Boomer-Friendly Boot Camps and Get Strong for Life Camps. These activity camps, developed through a partnership between the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, BC Recreation and Parks Association, and the BC Seniors Games Society, will provide opportunities for seniors to learn new skills in a fun and adventurous, yet non-threatening, environment. Whether you just want to have fun, or you want to take the first step to competing at the BC Seniors Games, these boot camps are meant to be enjoyed.

To find out more, or to register in boot camps or other seniors' recreation activities, contact your local recreation centre.

Healthy Living

Websites:

For more information about boot camps:

www.bcrpa.bc.ca/BoomerFriendlyBootCamps.htm

For contact information for your local recreation centre:

www.activecommunities.bc.ca

HEALTH SERVICES



Helping Seniors Live Well

Health Services

Offering You the Best in Patient Care and Health

If you are a senior citizen living in British Columbia, you are a growing and vibrant part of this province's population. More senior citizens choose to live here than in any other part of Canada. According to the

2006 census, nearly 15 per cent of British Columbians are aged 65 or older.

British Columbia's health care system encourages seniors to stay healthy and independent for as long as possible. We have accessible and affordable health services that respond to the needs of seniors, and we are committed to making it easier for residents to find the information they need about programs and services that apply to them. Being aware of what's available is the first step to enjoying improved health services.

This section of the guide has information about the provincial health care system, transportation assistance, health and wellness programs and focused medical care. If you are looking for information about managing disease or disability, assisted living resources or planning for the inevitability of the end of life, services listed here can help.

The government is working hard to make information about programs and services, especially health information, readily available to seniors through the expanded BC Health and Seniors Information Line and HealthLink BC.

HealthLink BC is the gateway to access non-emergency health information and services in British Columbia. HealthLink BC helps you learn about health topics, check your symptoms, and find health services and resources that you need for healthy living.



Health Services

You can call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse, pharmacist or dietitian or visit HealthLinkBC.ca for easy access to help you find the health services you need, closest to where you live. Translation services are available in over 130 languages on request.

Visit our website at www.healthlinkbc.ca for medically-approved information on over 4,000 health topics and over 2,500 health services in a searchable database, along with reliable information on prescription and over-the-counter drugs through a comprehensive medication library.

We have written the book on how to recognize and cope with common health concerns. You can also find topics of interest to seniors, including a chapter on healthy aging. Preventing illness, home treatment, and when to see a health professional – it is all in the free BC HealthGuide Handbook, available in English, French, Chinese, and Punjabi. In print and on the web, you can also find BC HealthFiles or fact sheets on public health and safety topics.

Any time of the day or night, every day of the year, British Columbians have trusted health information at their fingertips, just a phone call or a click away with HealthLink BC.

It is all part of your provincial government's commitment to providing you with accessible public health care.

Health Services

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

In British Columbia's regionalized health care system, responsibility for the direct delivery and management of most health services rests with the health authority in each region. The Ministry of Health Services has ultimate authority and responsibility for our publicly administered health care system. The ministry ensures that health authorities manage and deliver health services consistent with provincial legislation, regulation, policy, standards, and other requirements made by the Minister of Health Services.

The Ministry of Health Services delivers several province-wide programs, including the Medical Services Plan, Travel Assistance Program, PharmaCare, and BC Ambulance Service.

HealthLink BC helps you learn about health topics, check your symptoms, and find the health services and resources that you need for healthy living. Call 8-1-1 to consult with a nurse, pharmacist or dietitian, or visit HealthLinkBC.ca for easy access to help you find the health services you need, closest to where you live.

If you have difficulty finding or contacting local health services, call Service BC for assistance.

In Greater Vancouver call:	604 660-2421
In Greater Victoria call:	250 387-6121
Toll Free, call:	1 800 663-7867
Deaf/Hearing-impaired, Toll Free, call:	1 800 661-8773
Deaf/Hearing-impaired, in Greater Vancouver call:	604 775-0303

Health Services

You may also call the BC Health and Seniors Information Line.

Toll Free, call: 1 800 465-4911

In Greater Victoria call: 250 952-1742

Translation services are available in 130 languages.

Website: www.hls.gov.bc.ca/seniors

HEALTH AUTHORITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH

11th Floor – 601 West Broadway

Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 4C2

In Greater Vancouver

call: 604 736-2033

Toll Free, call: 1 866 884-0888

Fax: 604 875-4750

Website: www.vch.ca

FRASER HEALTH

300 – 10334 152A Street

Surrey, B.C. V3R 7P8

In Greater Vancouver

call: 604 587-4600

Toll Free, call: 1 877 935-5669

Fax: 604 587-4666

Website: www.fraserhealth.ca

NORTHERN HEALTH

Suite 600 – 299 Victoria Street

Prince George, B.C. V2L 5B8

In Prince George 250 565-2649

Toll Free, call: 1 866 565-2999

Fax: 250 565-2640

Website: www.northernhealth.ca

VANCOUVER ISLAND HEALTH

1952 Bay Street

Victoria, B.C. V8R 1J8

In Greater Victoria call: 250 370-8699

Toll Free, call: 1 877 370-8699

Fax: 250 370-8750

Website: www.viha.ca

INTERIOR HEALTH

220 – 1815 Kirschner Road

Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 4N7

Call: 250 862-4200

Fax: 250 862-4201

Website: www.interiorhealth.ca

PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY (PHSA)

700 – 1380 Burrard Street

Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2H3

In Vancouver call: 604 675-7400

Fax: 604 708-2700

Website: www.phsa.ca

Health Services

HEALTH CONNECTIONS

Northern Health Authority (NHA) and Interior Health Authority (IHA) have implemented a program called Health Connections.

This program is a partnership with private providers, BC Transit and regional districts. Within each health authority, the service works with patients to help improve their access to health care by connecting them to medical appointments in a timely, economical and convenient manner

Northern Health Authority

Please have your CareCard number and appointment information ready.

To reserve your seat call 1-888-647-4997

Website: www.northernhealth.ca/Your_Health/Programs/NH_Connections/default.asp

Interior Health Authority

If you would like more information regarding Health Connections in the Interior, please contact the BC Health and Seniors Information Line number listed below, or check the Interior Health Authority website

Toll Free, call: 1 800 465-4911

Website: www.interiorhealth.ca/health-services.aspx?id=440&terms=transportation

Health Services

ABOUT HEALTHLINK BC

Some of British Columbia's most trusted and recognized health information and services are consolidated in HealthLink BC. We have brought together the existing and reliable services that British Columbians count on for health information – BC HealthGuide, BC HealthFiles, BC NurseLine and Pharmacist service, and Dial-a-Dietitian – and expanded these with an online and by-phone navigation service to help B.C. residents find the health resources and facilities they need, closest to where they live.

HealthLink BC is the gateway to access non-emergency health information and services in British Columbia. It is a phone number, and it is a website; it is a collection of print and telephone resources that puts services and health know-how into the hands and homes of B.C. residents. Through HealthLink BC programs and services, you can get the information you need to manage your health concerns or those of your family.

By phone: 8-1-1

Speak to a nurse: Call 8-1-1 to ask a registered nurse your health questions, any hour of the day or night. Nurses are available 24/7 to help you with non-emergency health concerns, to discuss symptoms and procedures, and to recommend whether you should see a health professional.

Speak to a pharmacist: Call 8-1-1 to ask medication questions. Pharmacists are on call at 8-1-1 when your community pharmacist may be unavailable, every night from 5 p.m. to 9 a.m.

Health Services

Speak to a dietitian: Call 8-1-1 and speak to a dietitian for nutrition advice on Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Translation services are available in over 130 languages on request. For deaf and hearing-impaired assistance (TTY), call 7-1-1 in B.C.

On the web:

www.healthlinkbc.ca

Check your symptoms, learn about health conditions and topics, and find the resources and services you need.

HealthLink BC.ca has medically-approved information on over 4,000 health topics and over 2,500 health services in our searchable database, available in English. You will find reliable information on medications and prescription drugs here too through our comprehensive medication library. The integrated search and mapping function of our new Health Navigation Service helps you find the health services you need, closest to where you live.

In print: BC HealthGuide Handbook and BC HealthFiles

We have written the book on how to recognize and cope with common health concerns. You can also find topics of interest to seniors, including a chapter on healthy aging. Preventing illness, home treatment and when to see a health professional – it is all in the free BC HealthGuide Handbook, available in English, French, Chinese, and Punjabi. The BC First Nations HealthGuide Handbook, an online companion document to the BC HealthGuide, is also available on our website.

Health Services

The BC HealthFiles are fact sheets on public health and safety topics, available on the website and at local public health units. Some BC HealthFiles are available in French, Chinese, Punjabi, Farsi, Spanish, or Vietnamese. See translated BC HealthFiles at www.healthlinkbc.ca for more information.

The handbook and other resources are available free of charge only to British Columbia residents and organizations that help to distribute these in their community. For more information, call 8-1-1 or see the order form on our website. You can also get your free BC HealthGuide in your community. English handbooks are available at your local pharmacy or Government Agent's office. Chinese or Punjabi handbooks are available at many community or multicultural organizations, and French handbooks are available through your local francophone organization.

Is it an emergency?

Call 9-1-1 (or a local emergency number) in the event of a medical emergency when immediate action is required.

If you are concerned about a possible poisoning or exposure to a toxic substance, call Poison Control for 24-hour toll-free poison information.

Toll-free in B.C.

1-800-567-8911

In Greater Vancouver

604-682-5050

Health Services

MEDICAL SERVICES PLAN

The Medical Services Plan of British Columbia (MSP) insures medically required services provided to British Columbians by physicians and supplementary health care practitioners, laboratory services and diagnostic procedures.

All B.C. residents are required to enroll with MSP and pay a monthly premium. If your income is low and you are a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant (permanent resident) who has held that status and lived in Canada for the last 12 months, you may be eligible to receive assistance with premium payments or a premium waiver. If you are a Status Indian or Inuit, the federal government may pay premiums on your behalf.

New residents or persons re-establishing residence in B.C. are eligible for coverage after completing a waiting period that normally consists of the remainder of the month of arrival, plus two months. To allow time for your application to be processed, you should apply for MSP coverage immediately after arriving in B.C., rather than at the end of the waiting period. If you are 65 years of age or older and enrolled in MSP, you will automatically receive a Gold CareCard. Your Gold CareCard is useful as proof of age and residence for discounts offered by certain government programs and many businesses.

Medical Benefits

MSP pays for medically required services of physicians and surgeons, diagnostic X-rays and laboratory services (enrolled with MSP). In addition, MSP will cover dental and oral surgery when medically required and must be performed in a hospital.

Health Services

MSP contributes towards supplementary benefits for eligible beneficiaries. For MSP beneficiaries receiving premium assistance, MSP pays \$23 per visit for a combined annual limit of 10 visits per calendar year for the following services: acupuncture, chiropractic, massage therapy, naturopathy, physical therapy and non-surgical podiatry. Surgical podiatry is a benefit for all beneficiaries.

Routine eye examinations are a benefit for those aged 18 years of age and under, or 65 years of age and older. Medically required eye examinations are a benefit for all beneficiaries. MSP contributes \$44.83 towards each eye examination provided by an optometrist. All supplementary benefit providers, including optometrists, may charge supplemental fees to their patients, provided the patient is advised in advance.

Who is Health Insurance BC (HIBC)?

Health Insurance BC administers the Medical Services Plan (MSP) and PharmaCare on behalf of the Ministry of Health Services. Health Insurance BC can answer your questions about both of these programs. For more information, call MSP's toll free automated service, or visit the website.

In Greater Vancouver, call:	604 683-7151
Toll Free, call:	1 800 663-7100
Website:	www.hibc.gov.bc.ca

Application forms and correspondence can be sent to the following address

Health Insurance BC
PO Box 9035, STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E3

Fax:	250 405-3595
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Health Services

For more information, visit your local Service BC (Government Agent) office (check the blue pages of your telephone directory to see if an office is located in your community, or refer to the Service BC page of this guide for a listing of Service BC Centres in B.C.).

Temporary Premium Assistance

Temporary Premium Assistance (TPA) provides a short-term period of Medical Service Plan (MSP) premium waiver for qualifying individuals and families.

To be eligible for TPA, you must meet all of the following criteria:

You are a Canadian citizen or a holder of a permanent resident status for the last 12 months;

You have resided in Canada for the last 12 months;

You are billed directly for your own MSP premiums;

You (and your spouse, if applicable) have filed the previous year's income tax return with the Canada Revenue Agency;

You are experiencing unexpected financial hardship for which you could not reasonably have budgeted;

The essential living cost for your household exceeds the total income of you and your spouse. Essential living cost does not include consumer debt or loan payments.

For eligible applicants, TPA can be provided for up to six months from the date the application was received.

For more information or to receive an application package, contact our toll-free number or e-mail.

In Greater Victoria call:

250 356-8285

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Toll-free call: 1 800 207-2051
E-mail: TPA@gov.bc.ca
Fax: 250 387-8021
Mail: Temporary Premium Assistance - MSP
PO BOX 9627 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9P1

MEDICAL SERVICES ONLY

Low-income seniors who have left provincial income assistance for federal income support may be eligible to receive coverage for costs associated with the Medical Services Plan, PharmaCare, basic dental, optical and other approved medical supports.

More information is available at the Ministry of Housing and Social Development website.

Website: www.eia.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/2004/MSO.htm

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Travel Assistance Program (TAP) offers travel discounts to eligible B.C. residents who must travel within the province for non-emergency medical specialist services not available in their own community, and whose travel expenses are not covered by third-party insurance or other government programs. A physician's referral is necessary, and the patient must have the physician complete a TAP form. TAP must be contacted prior to travel for a confirmation number in order to receive a discount.

Health Services

TAP is a private and public sector-corporate partnership program coordinated by the Ministry of Health Services. Instead of direct financial assistance, its partners waive or discount fees. They may also provide travel assistance.

For more information and to process your completed TAP form, contact our automated service, or visit the website listed below.

In Greater Victoria, call:	250 952-2657
Toll Free, call:	1 800 661-2668
Website:	www.health.gov.bc.ca/msp/mtapp/tap_patient.html

You may also contact your health authority to see if you qualify for other travel assistance.

ACUTE, HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

B.C.'s health authorities provide a variety of acute and community health services, residential services and special support services to assist people whose ability to function independently is affected by health-related problems. The type of assistance and support required varies from one person to another, and may change over time for each individual.

Hospital Care

If you are registered with the Medical Services Plan, and have a valid CareCard, you are insured for most services provided by hospitals. This includes emergency care in the Emergency Department, inpatient care (where you stay overnight) and outpatient care (where you go in for a scheduled service and go home the same day).

Health Services

When you are admitted into an acute care hospital in B.C. for inpatient care, you will automatically receive standard accommodation, meals, nursing services, and other goods and services that are medically required while you are a patient in the hospital. This includes any needed laboratory or diagnostic tests and X-rays, prescription medications, most medical supplies, routine surgical supplies, and rehabilitation services provided in the hospital.

Patients may only be charged for goods and services used in the hospital when they are not medically required. If you request a private or semi-private hospital room, you will be required to pay a room charge determined by the individual hospital; however, some third-party medical plans cover this cost. Patients may also be charged for certain non-standard medical devices, but you must give your consent to purchase these items in advance.

Patients are also responsible for paying for medical equipment, medical supplies, prosthetics that are not implanted in the body, and medications, when these are to be used after the patient returns home. Some of these items may be insured under Fair PharmaCare, depending on the circumstances of the patient.

Home and Community Care

Home and community care services provide health care and support services to eligible British Columbians who have acute, chronic, palliative or rehabilitative health care needs. They are provided by health authorities, either directly or through partnerships with non-profit and for profit housing and care providers. Services are meant to complement or supplement clients' needs which are met mainly through families, friends and other community resources.

In-home services include home care nursing, rehabilitation, home support and palliative care. Community-based services include adult day programs,

Health Services

meal programs, assisted living, residential care services and hospice care. Case management services are provided in both the home and the community. Depending on the type of care required and an individual's income, there may be a cost associated with some services. Contact your health authority for more information.

Home and Community Care Services

- Support clients to remain independent and in their own homes for as long as possible;
- Provide services at home to clients who would otherwise require admission to hospital or would stay longer in hospital;
- Provide assisted living and residential care services to clients who can no longer be supported in their homes; and
- Provide services that support people who are nearing the end of their life, and their families, at home, in assisted living, in residential care or in a hospice.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for services such as home care nursing, physiotherapy or occupational therapy, clients must:

- Be a resident of British Columbia;
- Be a Canadian Citizen or have permanent resident status (landed immigrant or on a Minister's permit approved by the Ministry of Health Services Medical Advisory Committee); and
- Require care following discharge from an acute care hospital, care at home rather than hospitalization, or care because of a terminal illness.

Health Services

To be eligible for subsidized services, such as home support, assisted living, adult day care, case management, residential care services and/or palliative care services, clients must:

- Be 19 years of age or older;
- Have lived in British Columbia for the required period of time. (This depends on the service; contact your local health authority for current information.);
- Be a Canadian citizen or have permanent resident status (landed immigrant or on a Minister's permit approved by the Ministry of Health Services Medical Advisory Committee); and
- Be unable to function independently because of chronic, health-related problems, or have been diagnosed by a doctor with an end-stage illness.

Obtaining Services

For information about home and community care services, contact your local health authority. A relative, friend or professional (physician, nurse, pharmacist or social worker) may also contact the health authority on a client's behalf.

A staff member determines the urgency of the client's situation and if a care assessment is required.

Case Management and Care Coordination

Assessing the client's care needs and abilities, the case manager develops a plan with the client and their family. The case manager recommends home health services and resources available in the community; refers clients to specific programs; and stays in touch to help clients with arrangements or to make needed adjustments if their care needs change.

Health Services

Home Support

Home support services help clients remain in their own homes by providing personal assistance with daily activities. These include bathing, dressing, grooming and light household tasks to help maintain a safe and supportive home.

Choice in Supports for Independent Living (CSIL)

Choice in Supports for Independent Living is an alternative for clients who want more flexibility in arranging home support services. They receive funds to purchase their own services and they manage, coordinate and are financially responsible for recruiting, hiring, training, scheduling and supervising home support workers.

Family members who provide care and assistance may be eligible to be paid under this program.

Seniors and people with disabilities who are unable, or not always able, to direct their own care can obtain CSIL funding through a client support group. The case manager can provide more information on how to establish a support group to manage CSIL services on the client's behalf.

Home Care Nursing and Community Rehabilitation Services

Home care nursing and community rehabilitation provide non-emergency, in-home nursing care and rehabilitation therapy. They assist British Columbians with acute or chronic illnesses, adults recovering from a hospital stay and clients nearing the end of their lives.

Health Services

Adult Day Centres

Adult day programs provide supportive group programs and activities to assist seniors and adults with disabilities to remain independently in the community, and to provide caregivers with short periods of respite. Activities vary with each centre, but may include personal care, social activities and caregiver respite.

Caregiver Relief/Respite

Respite care offers caregivers temporary relief from the emotional and physical demands of caring for a friend or family member. It gives caregivers the opportunity to join in community activities or renew their energies so they can continue to provide quality care.

Respite can include assistance in the home or arranging for clients to attend adult day centres or be temporarily admitted to a residential care facility.

Assisted Living

Assisted living residences provide housing, hospitality and personalized assistance services for adults who can live independently, but require regular assistance with daily activities, usually due to age, illness or disability.

Residences range from a high-rise apartment complex to a private home.

Units can vary from one room to private, self-contained apartments. Services may include help with bathing, grooming, dressing and mobility. Meals, housekeeping, laundry, social and recreational opportunities and a 24-hour response system are also provided.

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The health and safety of assisted living occupants are overseen by a provincial assisted living registrar. The registrar ensures that complaints about health and safety are cleared up in a timely and effective way (see Assisted Living Registrar). For more information, see Independent Living BC in this guide.

Residential Care

Residential care is for people who need 24-hour professional nursing care and can no longer be supported in their own homes. For seniors and people with disabilities with complex care needs, residential care provides a protective, supportive environment. Clients with the highest need and urgency have priority for placement in the first appropriate bed available.

Group Homes

Adults with disabilities can often live independently in their community in publicly funded group homes. Group homes are safe, affordable homes, usually accommodating four to six residents. They offer short- or long-term accommodation, skills training, peer support and counselling.

Family Care Homes

Family care homes are single family residences that provide residents with a home-like atmosphere. Services include meals, housekeeping services and assistance with daily activities for up to two clients. Family care homes are most common in rural areas, where they allow residents to stay in their own communities.

Health Services

End-of-Life Care

Compassionate end-of-life care aims to preserve clients' comfort, dignity and quality of life by relieving symptoms, so those facing death can devote their energy and time to embracing that which is most important to them. End-of-life care services are provided to clients in their own homes and in home-like settings, assisted living residences, residential care facilities and hospices.

Hospices and Hospice Palliative Care

British Columbians who are in the end stages of a terminal illness or preparing for death, and who do not require acute hospital care, may prefer to spend their remaining time in a hospice. Hospices are home-like settings that provide hospice palliative care, including medical and nursing care, pain and symptom management, and psychosocial, spiritual and bereavement support. Some hospices may provide hospice palliative care services in the community to people who would rather receive this care at home.

BC Palliative Care Benefits Program

The BC Palliative Care Benefits Program assists people who are nearing the end of their lives to receive palliative care at home. British Columbians can apply through their doctors. The program provides coverage for medications used in palliative care through PharmaCare Plan P, and some medical supplies and equipment through the local health authority.

Website:

www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme/plans/

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For More Information

For more information on home and community care services, visit the home and community care website at:

www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/hcc/index.html

PHARMACARE

PharmaCare subsidizes eligible prescription drugs and designated medical supplies. PharmaCare provides assistance to British Columbians under Fair PharmaCare and other specialty plans.

B.C.'s Fair PharmaCare Plan

B.C.'s Fair PharmaCare Plan focuses assistance on those who need it most, based on their net income. It requires a one-time registration.

Monthly Deductible Payment Option

British Columbians with the lowest incomes do not have a deductible and receive immediate assistance for eligible prescriptions under the Fair PharmaCare Plan.

Some families have a deductible that is based on their family net income. PharmaCare offers a payment option to help these individuals and families.

Once enrolled in the monthly deductible payment option, families pay their Fair PharmaCare deductible in monthly installments and receive PharmaCare assistance with eligible prescription costs right away.

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Registering for Fair Pharmacare

You can register for Fair PharmaCare by telephone or on the Internet. There is no charge to register and there are no premiums to pay. See the contact information below for the phone number and website address.

Here's what you will need to register for yourself and, if applicable, your spouse:

- BC CareCard;
- Net income information from line 236 of your income tax return, or from your Canada Revenue Agency Notice of Assessment from two years ago;
- Social insurance number; and
- Date of birth.

After you register, PharmaCare will mail you a consent form. Remember to sign and return the consent form.

PharmaCare bases your assistance on your family net income from two years earlier (for example, assistance in 2008 is based on income information from 2006). If you have experienced a significant decrease in family net income (10 per cent or more) since that year, you may apply to have your assistance based on more recent income information.

For More Information

Health Insurance BC administers PharmaCare and the Medical Services Plan (MSP) on behalf of the Ministry of Health Services. Health Insurance BC can answer your questions about both these programs. Customer service representatives are available Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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For more information about the PharmaCare program or to register for the Fair PharmaCare Plan, you can call Health Insurance BC or visit the PharmaCare website.

In Greater Vancouver call:	604 683-7151
Toll Free, call:	1 800 663-7100
Website:	www.hibc.gov.bc.ca

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

The Ministry of Health Services funds a comprehensive and integrated system of mental health and addiction services delivered by health authorities. These services focus on health promotion, prevention, harm reduction, treatment, rehabilitation and recovery, including supporting individuals and families in self-care and resiliency. Mental health and addiction services are targeted to different age groups, including seniors, and provide the following services:

- Assessment;
- Emergency and urgent services;
- Treatment;
- Residential services;
- Individual and group therapy;
- Caregiver support and education;
- Rehabilitation;
- Family involvement and support; and
- Consultation.

Although seniors have developed long-standing coping skills to manage their day-to-day stresses, they are as prone as the rest of society to suffering from the effects of mental illness and addictions. Of particular concern are

Health Services

issues surrounding depression, anxiety, addictions such as alcohol abuse, and dementia. The treatment of seniors' mental health issues is often made more complex due to the presence of chronic pain or some other physical health problem. Mental health services for seniors often focus on the need for collaborative practices that can include the family physician and/or home and community care services.

Contact your local health authority for information about available services. As well, the following provincial resources may be of assistance.

Alzheimer Society

The Alzheimer Society has three levels (national, provincial and local) that work together to form a nationwide network of services to help Canadians affected by Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia. It is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization that provides province-wide support services and education programs to people with Alzheimer's disease, families, physicians and health care providers.

In Vancouver call: 604 533-5277

Toll free, call: 1 888 251-3111

For information about Alzheimer Society supports located in the B.C. Interior, contact:

Alzheimer Society Resource Centres

Website: www.alzheimerbc.org/contact_resourcecentres.php

Society Dementia Help Line

Toll Free, call: 1 800 936-6033

Health Services

In the Lower Mainland

call Tuesday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m:

604 681-8651

Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of British Columbia

Throughout the province, trained volunteers, supported by professionals, provide telephone crisis intervention for people experiencing emotional distress. For services in your local community, please consult the emergency section of your telephone book or call the following numbers.

24-Hour Distress Line Toll Free in B.C., call: 1 866 661-3311

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 872-3311

Suicide-Related Crisis Toll Free in B.C., call: 1 800 784-2433

Translation services are available.

Website: www.crisiscentre.bc.ca

B.C. Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service

B.C. Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service can refer you to counselling and resources in your community. Call for 24-hour services.

Toll Free in B.C., call: 1 800 663-1441

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 660-9382

BC Partners for Mental Health and Addictions Information

Seven provincial mental health and addictions agencies are working together to provide evidence-based information on mental health and addictions. The BC Partners Program includes the following agencies:

- Anxiety Disorders Association of BC
- Jessie's Hope Society

Health Services

- BC Schizophrenia Society
- Canadian Mental Health Association, B.C.
- Centre for Addictions Research of BC
- FORCE Society for Kids' Mental Health Care
- Mood Disorders Association of BC

A toll free information line provides 24-hour taped information on various mental health and substance use disorders, including symptoms, causes, treatment, options, support groups and community resources. The website is an excellent source of information for individuals and families.

Toll Free in B.C., call:	1 800 661-2121
In Greater Vancouver call:	604 669-7600
Website:	www.heretohelp.bc.ca

Centre for Addictions Research of BC

In Greater Vancouver call:	604-408-7753
Toll Free:	1-866-677-LINK (5465)
Website:	www.carbc.ca

Problem Gambling

The Problem Gambling Help Line is a confidential, toll-free service available to all British Columbians. The Help Line provides counselling information and referral 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Information and referral specialists can provide immediate information for problem gamblers, their families and friends, and can refer callers to professional problem gambling counselling services around the province.

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Toll Free, call:	1 888 795-6111
Deaf or hearing-impaired (collect calls accepted):	604 875-0885
Website:	www.bcresponsiblegambling.ca

Brain Injury

The Brain Injury Association of Canada facilitates post-trauma research, education and advocacy for Canadians affected by brain injury.

The British Columbia Brain Injury Association is a provincial organization in British Columbia dedicated to promoting a better quality of life for those living with an acquired brain injury (ABI), through education information, prevention, support and advocacy.

B.C. Brain Injury Association

P.O. Box 2324, Chilliwack, B.C. V2R 1A7

Toll Free, call:	1 877 858-1788
In Vancouver call:	604 465-1783
Fax:	604 465-1725

BRITISH COLUMBIA AMBULANCE SERVICE

Public ambulance services, both ground and air, are provided to B.C. residents by the British Columbia Ambulance Service.

The Province of British Columbia subsidizes about 90 per cent of the cost of transporting a patient by ambulance. When an emergency medical problem requires that you be transported by ambulance, you will be billed a user fee of \$80. If the fee poses a financial problem, the Ministry of Health Services

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revenue section will work out a payment schedule to accommodate you. There is a \$50 fee if an ambulance is called by the patient, the patient's family, or a care facility and the patient is not transported to hospital.

In a medical emergency:

- Call 911, where available; or
- Call the EMERGENCY phone number listed on the inside cover of your telephone book; or
- If a telephone book is not available, call the operator by dialing 0.

For more information about ambulance services, contact the following number.

Victoria: 250 953-3298

For ambulance billing, contact:

British Columbia Ambulance Service
Ambulance Billing Department
PO Box 9676 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9P7

Website: www.bcas.ca/

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public health units across British Columbia offer a variety of health services. These services support the health and independence of seniors and contribute to family and community health. These services include nutrition resources and immunization.

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Immunization Services

Information on the availability of immunization, such as influenza and pneumococcal vaccines, can be obtained by calling your local public health office in the blue pages of your telephone book.

Information is also provided on the Internet on the following topics:

- Why seniors should get flu vaccinations:
www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile12a.stm
- Pneumococcal vaccine information:
www.healthlinkbc.ca/kbase/topic/detail/drug/tv8594/bib.htm
- Immunization during an influenza pandemic:
www.health.gov.bc.ca/pandemic/pdf/immunization.pdf
- International travel immunizations for adults:
www.healthlinkbc.ca/kbase/topic/special/immun/sec6.htm

LIVING A HEALTHY LIFE WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS PROGRAM (Chronic Disease Management Program)

The B.C. government has provided funding to health authorities who work with the University of Victoria Centre on Aging to provide free six-week patient education programs for people with chronic health conditions such as arthritis, diabetes and lung disease. More information is available on the University of Victoria Centre on Aging website, or by calling the program's information line.

Health Services

Toll Free, call:

1 866 902-3767

Website:

www.coag.uvic.ca/cdsmp

Bounce Back

Reclaim Your Health is a program providing resources and services to individuals living with chronic health conditions and who may also be experiencing pain, depression or anxiety. The program offers telephone coaching in a series of self-help modules along with a DVD – called *Living Life to the Full*. The coaching component of Bounce Back is offered in many, but not all communities throughout B.C.; and the DVD can be accessed through family physicians' offices everywhere. To find out more about Bounce Back, seniors are encouraged to talk to their family doctor.

Bounce Back is delivered through the BC division of the Canadian Mental Health Association with funding from the BC Ministry of Health Services.

HOUSING



Helping Seniors Live Well

HOUSING

Housing Options for a Growing Seniors Population

From living independently in the family home, to the programs and support provided by assisted living, seniors in British Columbia have a wide range of housing alternatives. But planning for the future is critical. By 2029, nearly 30 per cent of Canada's seniors will be ages 75 to 84 and 13 per cent will be over age 85. As our lifespan increases, many more seniors are able to remain highly independent. Others will require more support. The provincial government is working hard to meet the unique housing needs of a diverse group of seniors with a wide range of programs and services.



In this section, you will find information about Independent Living BC, homeowner grants for seniors, affordable housing, property tax assessment and deferment, and how to receive assistance to renovate and adapt your home. You can even receive cash back for energy efficient home improvements.

Support for assisted living is a crucial service for our aging population. More than 4,000 affordable assisted living units are being created through partnerships between the Province and various groups. This includes providing assisted living for seniors with lower incomes and people with disabilities. These units include accommodation, meals, personal care and hospitality services, such as housekeeping, laundry, recreational opportunities and a 24-hour response system.

The British Columbia government subsidizes rents in affordable housing units built in partnership with non-profit housing providers and other levels of government, and provides rent subsidies to seniors living in private rental housing.

Housing

Under the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program, the Province has increased rent ceilings. This includes seniors who pay pad rental fees for owner-occupied manufactured homes.

Families are a traditional source of support for vulnerable seniors, who rely on family members, for the most part, to help them remain in their own homes. The Province is doing as much as it can to fill the gaps that sometimes arise in these traditional supports.

Housing

SHELTER AID FOR ELDERLY RENTERS (SAFER)

The Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters Program provides monthly cash payments to eligible British Columbia seniors. You may be eligible if:

- you are age 60 years or older;
- you pay rent for your home, including a pad rental for a manufactured home (trailer) that you own and occupy;
- you pay more than 30 per cent of your gross (before tax) monthly household income for rent;
- you are a Canadian citizen, or authorized to take up permanent residence in Canada, or a Convention refugee;
- you have lived in British Columbia for the full 12 months immediately preceding when you apply.

Application forms and further information on eligibility are available from any BC Housing office, or can be downloaded from BC Housing's website.

For more information, contact the numbers listed below.

BC Housing SAFER

101– 4555 Kingsway

Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4V8

Toll Free, call:

1 800 257-7756

In Greater Vancouver, call:

604 433-2218

Fax:

604 439-4729

E-mail:

applicantinquiries@bchousing.org

Website:

www.bchousing.org/programs/SAFER

Housing

CASH BACK FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT HOME IMPROVEMENTS

If you are a British Columbia homeowner thinking about making energy efficient improvements to your home, the new LiveSmart BC: Efficiency Incentive Program (EIP) will give you cash back for making these improvements.

This \$60 million program creates a single access point for provincial, utility and federal incentives.

For example: you could get up to \$1,630 back for installing a new efficient gas furnace, or up to \$560 back for a new gas water heater.

The first step for homeowners in the LiveSmart BC program is to contact a certified energy advisor to book a home energy assessment. The advisor will recommend cost-effective options for reducing energy use and will handle the paperwork for the incentive application.

For a detailed summary of available LiveSmart BC incentives, and to contact an energy advisor through the LiveSmart BC: Efficiency Incentive Program, go to www.livesmartbc.ca.

An energy efficient home will help you save money, increase comfort and reduce your impact on the environment. For more information about this program, call the toll free number below.

Toll Free, call:	1 866 430-8765
Website:	www.livesmartbc.ca
Email:	EfficiencyIncentives@gov.bc.ca

Housing

HOMEOWNER GRANT FOR SENIORS

If you own your home, are a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, ordinarily reside in British Columbia and occupy your residence as your principal residence, you may be eligible for the provincial Home Owner Grant. The grant reduces the amount of property taxes you have to pay.

To apply for the Home Owner Grant, complete the application form on the back of the property tax notice that is sent to you each year. You must confirm that you are the registered owner, that you are, or will be, at least 65 in the calendar year (to receive the additional grant) and provide your date of birth and phone number. The amount of the grant will be deducted from the property taxes you will pay.

In 2008 the maximum grant available to those eligible for the additional grant (including seniors) is \$845, but the amount you may claim may be less as you must pay a minimum property tax of \$100. The maximum grant available will also be reduced if you live on a property that is assessed at more than a specific threshold value. For the 2008 tax year, the threshold value has been increased to \$1,050,000 from \$950,000.

For more information contact the Home Owner Grant Administration section.

Toll Free, call:	1 888 355-2700
In Greater Victoria, call:	250 356-8904 or 250 387-8166
E-mail:	hogadmin@gov.bc.ca
Website:	www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/Home_Owner_Grant/hog.htm

Or call your local tax collector's office or Service BC Centre (Government Agent).

Housing

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

In January of each year, BC Assessment sends all property owners a Property Assessment Notice showing the fair market value of the property. This market value is used, in part, by taxing authorities to calculate your property taxes. If you believe the information on your Assessment Notice is incorrect, please contact your local BC Assessment office by January 31 at the phone number or address written on the front of your Assessment Notice.

Website: www.bccassessment.ca

PROPERTY TAX DEFERMENT

Homeowners aged 55 years and over may defer the payment of annual property taxes on their principal residence. The Property Tax Deferral Program is a low interest loan program that assists qualified British Columbia homeowners in paying the annual property taxes on their home.

The deferred taxes are paid by the Province to the taxing authority (municipality or provincial collector), on behalf of the homeowner. The deferred taxes must be repaid with interest and an administration fee to the Province, either:

- before the home can be transferred to a new owner other than to a surviving spouse; or
- upon the homeowner's death, with repayment through their estate.

The program is also available to homeowners of any age who are surviving spouses of homeowners who were enrolled in the deferral program, or who have been designated as a Person with Disability by the Ministry of Housing and Social Development or have supplied a disability certification form completed by their physician.

Housing

For more information on the Property Tax Deferment Program, including other eligibility criteria for the program, contact your local government office or government agent office (refer to Service BC Centres page) where you pay your property taxes. Or call the Real Property Taxation Branch.

Real Property Taxation Branch, Tax Deferment Section

Ministry of Small Business and Revenue

PO Box 9446 STN PROV GOVT

Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V6

In Victoria, call:

250 387-0555

E-mail:

ruraltax@gov.bc.ca

Website:

[www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/
Property_Tax_Deferment/ptd.htm](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/Property_Tax_Deferment/ptd.htm)

SENIORS' SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (SSH)

The Seniors' Supportive Housing (SSH) program provides specially modified rental homes, in selected subsidized housing developments, primarily to low-income seniors who need some assistance in order to continue to live independently. You may be eligible for SSH if:

- you would benefit from a modified physical environment and support services to assist you to live independently;
- you don't require a permanent level of support that exceeds the services provided under the SSH program;
- you are able to manage your own lifestyle, including reacting appropriately in an emergency situation; and
- you don't demonstrate behaviour(s) that place you or other tenants at risk.

Housing

Application forms and further information on eligibility are available from any BC Housing office or can be downloaded from BC Housing's website. For more information contact the numbers listed below.

BC Housing SSH

101 – 4555 Kingsway,

Burnaby B.C. V5H 4V8

Toll Free, call:

1 800 257-7756

In Greater Vancouver call:

604 433-2218

Fax:

604 439-4729

E-mail:

applicantinquiries@bchousing.org

Website:

www.bchousing.org/programs/SSH

INDEPENDENT LIVING BC

Independent Living BC (ILBC) offers a middle option for seniors who need some assistance but do not want or need 24-hour residential care. ILBC tenants receive accommodation, hospitality services, including meals, housekeeping, recreational opportunities and 24-hour response, and personal care services including assistance with grooming, mobility and medications.

Seniors pay 70 per cent of their after tax income for ILBC assisted living units.

You may be eligible for ILBC if you need additional support to continue to live independently.

Housing

To determine if you are eligible for ILBC, contact your local health authority. The Health Authorities section of this guide provides further information. A health authority case manager will work with you to find out whether assisted living is the best option for you. For information about Assisted Living, see the Home and Community Care section under Health Services.

Website: www.bchousing.org/programs/independent

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR SENIORS

Low-income seniors able to live independently without any support services, or with the assistance of home care, may apply to live in affordable housing developments.

There are three types of affordable housing developments:

- Public housing – managed by BC Housing;
- Non-profit housing – managed by non-profit societies; and
- Co-op housing – managed by residents.

Many affordable housing developments are listed on the Housing Registry, a centralized listing and application service maintained by BC Housing. The Housing Registry includes public housing and some non-profit and co-op housing providers. Other non-profit and co-op housing providers maintain their own registries.

To apply to developments listed in the Housing Registry, complete and submit an Application for Accommodation form. Application forms and further information on eligibility are available from any BC Housing office, or can be downloaded from BC Housing's website.

Website: www.bchousing.org/applicants/affordable

Housing

To apply to non-profit societies and housing co-op developments that maintain their own registries, contact these groups directly. Contact information for societies and co-ops across the province is available from any BC Housing office, or can be downloaded from BC Housing's website.

Website: www.bchousing.org/applicants/housing_listing

For more information contact the numbers listed below.

BC Housing – The Housing Registry

101 - 4555 Kingsway

Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4V8

Toll Free, call 1 800 257-7756

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 433-2218

E-mail: applicantinquiries@bchousing.org

Website: www.bchousing.org/applicants/housing_listing

Lower Mainland

Vancouver Coastal Regional Office

In Vancouver, call: 604 609-7024

Fraser Regional Office

In Burnaby, call: 604 525-3033

Vancouver Island Regional Office

Toll Free, call: 1 800 787-2807

In Greater Victoria, call: 250 475-7550

Interior Regional Office

Toll Free, call: 1 800 834-7149

In Penticton, call: 250 493-0301

Housing

Northern Regional Office

Toll Free, call:	1 800 667-1235
In Prince George, call:	250 562-9251
In Prince Rupert, call:	250 627-7501

Information about the Cooperative Housing Federation of BC can be found on the website or by calling the phone number below.

Toll Free, call:	1 866 879-5111
Website:	www.chf.bc.ca/pages/contact.asp

HOME ADAPTATIONS FOR SENIORS' INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM (HASI)

The Home Adaptations for Seniors' Independence Program (HASI) helps homeowners and landlords pay for minor home adaptations to extend the time that low-income seniors can live in their own homes independently. The maximum assistance available is \$3,500 and it is intended to cover adaptations such as handrails, lever handles on doors and bathtub grab bars.

To qualify for HASI, the seniors living in the home must have a household income below a set limit (the threshold varies according to where you live). This assistance is provided in the form of a forgivable loan that does not need to be repaid, as long as the homeowner continues to occupy the unit for six months.

Housing

To obtain full details and an application form, contact your local Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation office listed in the white pages of the telephone book, or call the numbers listed below.

Toll Free, call: 1 800 668-2642

Website: www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/ab/noho/noho-006.cfm

RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) for homeowners provides low-income homeowners with financial assistance for the repair of lower value homes. The money is provided in the form of a forgivable loan.

Financial assistance is also available for modifications that make homes more accessible for persons with disabilities.

For more information on RRAP, contact your nearest Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation office, listed in the white pages of your telephone book, or call the numbers listed below.

Toll Free, call: 1 800 668-2642

Websites:

Homeowner RRAP link:

www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/prfinas/prfinas_009.cfm

RRAP for Persons with Disabilities link to CMHC website:

www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/prfinas/prfinas_003.cfm

Housing

RESIDENTIAL TENANCY BRANCH

The Residential Tenancy Branch provides information to landlords and tenants about their rights and responsibilities, and options under the Residential Tenancy Act and the Manufactured Home Park Tenancy Act. The office can provide information to help resolve disputes related to tenancy, such as claims for damages, return of security deposits, rent increases, or eviction notices. Where disputes cannot be resolved by the landlord and tenant, you can apply for dispute resolution. The Residential Tenancy Branch also provides information and dispute resolution services for manufactured home park tenancies.

Information about landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities is available on the Residential Tenancy Branch website. To speak to an information officer or listen to 24-hour recorded information on renting in B.C., call the numbers listed below.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 665-8779
In Greater Vancouver, call:	604 660-1020
In Victoria, call	250 387-1602
E-mail:	housing@seniorshousing.bc.ca
Website:	www.rto.gov.bc.ca

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SENIORS' SERVICES SOCIETY

This non-profit organization provides information on all types of housing options and services for seniors living in or wanting to live in British Columbia's Lower Mainland area. Housing directory information is available on the program's website. For more information, call the number below.

Seniors' Services Society
#209 – 800 McBride Blvd.
New Westminster, B.C. V3L 2B8

In New Westminster call:	604 520-6621
E-mail:	housing@seniorshousing.bc.ca
Website:	www.seniorshousing.bc.ca

TRANSPORTATION



Helping Seniors Live Well

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is Crucial to Help Seniors Stay Active



Transportation can be a major issue in a senior's life. As roads become busier and communities grow and expand, accomplishing the day's errands can become more of a challenge. Whether you rely on public transportation or you own a vehicle, you need reliable access to a range of transportation options to stay active in your community.

In this section you will find information about programs and services available to seniors. There are discounts for transportation services like transit fares and bus passes, and passage on BC Ferries. The Bus Pass Program is offered in over 60 B.C. communities and benefits more than 65,000 people each year.

If you need someone to drive for you, many local community services organizations provide volunteer driving services, or they can put you in touch with commercial driving services. Or you can access specialized services like the HandyDART, the Elders Transportation Program, and the Taxi Saver Program.

Seniors are eligible for reduced automobile insurance. Information about driver's licences for seniors and licence plates for veterans can be found here. If you need road report and travel weather updates, the Drive BC website provides up-to-the-minute information about conditions, travel hazards and road closures.

With a record one-in-seven Canadians now aged 65 or older, there may be more seniors on the road now than ever before. Many seniors wonder how long they should continue to drive. In this section, you can learn about driver fitness medical reports, and a provincial program for mature drivers to help you continue to drive well.

Transportation

TRANSIT SENIORS' FARE DISCOUNT

TransLink, in the Metro-Vancouver region, and BC Transit-funded services elsewhere in B.C., offer discount fares for passengers 65 years of age or over. You will receive this discount by presenting your B.C. Gold CareCard when you pay your fare.

TransLink – Vancouver Region: 604 953-3333

Website: www.translink.bc.ca

Victoria Regional Transit System: 250 382-6161

Website: www.bctransit.com/regions/vic

BC Transit – rest of the province: Contact your local transit operator, or check the website below.

Website: www.bctransit.com

BUS PASS PROGRAM

The Bus Pass Program provides affordable transportation to low-income seniors and persons with disabilities. Eligible people can buy a yearly pass at a reduced cost. The bus pass allows travel without additional cost on BC Transit and TransLink, including SkyTrain and SeaBus. The bus pass is not valid on HandyDART or the West Coast Express.

To be eligible for the bus pass, you must live in an area serviced by public transit and:

- Be receiving federal Old Age Security (OAS), and either the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or Spouse's Allowance; or
- Be an immigrant to Canada who would qualify for OAS and either the GIS or Spouse's Allowance if not for the residency requirement; or

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- Be between the ages of 60 and 64 and be receiving BC Employment and Assistance; or
- Be receiving BC Employment and Assistance disability assistance.

The bus pass is valid from January 1 to December 31. For Bus Pass Program Information, please call the number listed below.

Toll Free, call: 1 866 866-0800 (press 4, then 3)

If your name or address changes, please call the number above to ensure next year's application and pass is sent to you.

Website: www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/programs/other.htm#bp

HandyDART CUSTOM TRANSIT

HandyDART is a special transportation service for eligible persons with a disability who cannot use regular public transport due to mobility issues.

This transit service uses specially equipped vehicles, provides door-to-door service and is available in all of the province's larger centres, as well as in many smaller communities.

Other transit services are provided to seniors, persons with a disability, and others in many smaller communities. These services use smaller, accessible vehicles and offer a range of services, including door-to-door and fixed commute.

For areas other than Metro Vancouver, contact HandyDART listed in the white pages of your phone book, or contact the number listed below for information on accessible services by location. In Metro Vancouver, please contact your local community resources centre or visit the TransLink transportation services website.

Transportation

Website: www.translink.bc.ca/Transportation_Services/Accessibility_handydart.asp

In Greater Victoria, call: 250 727-7811

Website: www.bctransit.ca/regions/vic/accessible/handydart.cfm

Elsewhere in B.C.: 604 575-6600

Website: www.bctransit.com

TAXI SAVER PROGRAM

BC Transit and TransLink offer a Taxi Saver Program for HandyDART registrants living in Vancouver, Victoria, and other B.C. municipalities. This program provides a 50 per cent subsidy toward the cost of taxi rides. Passengers use coupons for taxi travel by booking directly with a participating taxi company, without having to pre-plan the trip.

Taxi Saver coupons are sold by local HandyDART offices to any adult who has been issued a BC Transit handyPass or TransLink handyCard, which are available to any permanent registered HandyDART user.

Contact your local HandyDART operator for more information or call the numbers listed below. You can also find contact information on the websites listed below. In Metro Vancouver, please contact your local community resources centre or visit the TransLink transportation services website.

Website: www.translink.bc.ca/Transportation_Services/Accessibility_HandyCard_TaxiSaver.asp

In Greater Victoria, call: 250 995-5618

Transportation

Elsewhere in B.C., call: 604 575-6600

Website: www.bctransit.com/regions/vic/accessible/taxi_saver.cfm

Website: www.bctransit.com

COMMUNITY TRAVEL TRAINING PROGRAM

The Community Travel Training Program is a free service that provides training to seniors and people with disabilities who wish to use the regular transit service.

Travel trainers have in-depth knowledge of the transit system and are familiar with the issues facing seniors and persons with disabilities. They have experience working with a range of assistive devices, mobility aids and special needs and work with you and your caregiver or family member. Training is free and follow-up is provided to make sure you are comfortable using the transit system.

In Greater Victoria, call: 250 384-7723

In Kelowna, call: 250 979-1312

FERRY FARES – BC FERRIES

B.C. Seniors travel free on most BC Ferries' routes sailing Monday through Thursday, except on holidays. This applies to passenger fares only. To take advantage of this program, please present your B.C. Gold CareCard when you arrive at the terminal. Note that this does not apply to BC Ferries' Port Hardy-Prince Rupert, Port Hardy-Mid Coast, Discovery Coast Passage or Prince Rupert-Skidegate routes, though there are special passenger fares for B.C. seniors using these ferry services.

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Customer Information and Reservations

Toll Free, from anywhere in North America, call:

1-888-BC FERRY (1-888-223-3779)

From a cell phone on Rogers or TELUS Mobility Networks, call: *BCF (*223)

From outside North America, call: 250-386-3431

Seniors, who are 65 or older, and produce a valid B.C. Gold CareCard:

- are exempt from the requirement to pay the passenger fare on all BC Ferries routes, except the Northern Routes from Monday to Thursday, excluding all statutory holidays; and on Remembrance Day;
- receive a 33 per cent discount on the passenger fare on each day of the week for travel on any of the Northern Routes (10, 11 and 40).

For more information, contact the number listed below.

Toll Free, call: 1 888 223-3779

Website: www.bcferries.com

INLAND FERRIES

Passage on inland ferries operated under contract with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is available to the public free of charge. This includes both passengers and vehicles. Route and schedule information, plus telephone numbers for individual routes, are available at the ministry website.

Website: www.th.gov.bc.ca/marine/ferry_schedules.htm

Information is also available from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's Marine Branch, or through Drive BC at: www.drivebc.ca/

In Victoria call: 250 387-7585

Transportation

SENIORS' AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE DISCOUNTS

If you are 65 or older, plus the principal operator of your vehicle is also 65 or older, and your motor vehicle is driven for pleasure only, you may qualify for a discount of 25 per cent off your basic Autoplan insurance premium. If you are 65 or over and have a disability, you may be eligible for a further 25 per cent disability discount off your basic Autoplan insurance premium.

For more information about these discounts, contact ICBC.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 663-3051
In Greater Vancouver call:	604 661-2800
Website:	www.icbc.com

Or contact your Autoplan broker.

DRIVERS' LICENCES

If you are 65 years or older, fees for some services offered by ICBC Driver Licensing Centres are reduced or are free of charge.

Reduced fees apply to:

- Driver's licence renewals; and
- Original British Columbia Identification Cards.

Free services include:

- British Columbia Identification Card, if you are giving up driving and surrender your driver's licence; and
- Driver's examinations, including knowledge and road tests.

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For more information, contact ICBC.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 950-1498
In Greater Victoria call:	250 978-8300
Website:	www.icbc.com

MATURE DRIVERS PROGRAM *LIVING WELL, DRIVING WELL*

Mature Driver Workshops

The BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation's *Living Well, Driving Well* Mature Drivers Workshops are designed to help mature drivers assess their own driving skills, habits and knowledge in a peer group environment while getting tips and strategies to help change and improve their driving, promoting self-awareness and ending in results that protect the population as a whole.

Mature Drivers Workshops were developed specifically to:

- Promote greater self-assessment and informed decision-making;
- Increase mature drivers' awareness of the physical changes related to aging and potential risks they may create for themselves, their passengers and other road users;
- Provide realistic solutions, options and alternatives; and
- Foster a greater understanding of the direct (and indirect) benefits that can result from making responsible choices and decisions regarding their mobility needs.

The community-based, 'Seniors Helping Seniors' approach, through a network of volunteer seniors, is an integral part of the Mature Drivers Program. The free workshops enable volunteers to help other seniors in their community

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become more aware of and realistic about changes they're going through, and how these changes may impact their safe driving ability.

For more information about these free *Living Well, Driving Well* Mature Drivers Workshops, call the number listed below, or visit the website.

Toll Free, call: 1 877 297-2254

Website: www.MatureDrivers.ca

DRIVER FITNESS MEDICAL REPORTS AND ROAD TEST RE-EXAMS

Through British Columbia's Driver Fitness Program, drivers are assessed and identified to determine that they are physically, cognitively and medically fit to drive:

- when they apply for a British Columbia driver's licence;
- at regular intervals if they hold a commercial class driver's licence;
- when a reliable report is received from a medical professional, police officer, concerned family member or other individual. (Doctors, registered psychologists and optometrists have a reporting obligation under the Motor Vehicle Act); and
- at regular intervals beginning at age 80, as medical conditions affecting driving are more common as people age.

If you are required to provide a driver's medical exam report for any of the reasons listed above, you will be mailed the form, which you should then take to your doctor. There are detailed instructions on the back of the form.

Your doctor will complete this report and send it for review to the Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles. You will be notified in writing only if there

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is any change to your driver's licence status or if more information or testing is needed, to determine your fitness to drive.

For more information on driver licensing and driver testing, or general inquiries about driver medical requirements, contact ICBC.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 950-1498
In Greater Victoria call:	250 978-8300
Website:	www.icbc.com

Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles

Website:	www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/osmv/index.htm
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LICENCE PLATES FOR VETERANS

Veteran specialty licence plates are available to veterans who served:

- During wartime;
- In a post-war capacity; or
- During a NATO or UN operation, including members of the RCMP and Municipal Police.

To apply for a veteran specialty plate, print the application form from ICBC's website or pick up a copy from your Autoplan broker.

Website: www.icbc.com/registration/reg_spec_lic_plates_vet_plates.asp

For more information on the application process or eligibility requirements, please contact the British Columbia Veterans Commemorative Association.

Call:	604 876-2838
Website:	www.bcveterans.org

Transportation

DRIVE BC

The Drive BC website is updated with the most current information on highway conditions for major highways in British Columbia. Travellers can access information on-line or by calling the toll free number, including weather information, travel advisories, road closures, webcams, U.S. – B.C. border traffic wait times, inland ferry schedules, BC Ferries schedules, TransLink and other important links.

Toll Free, call:

1 800 550-4997

Website:

www.drivebc.ca

TAXI BILL OF RIGHTS

The Taxi Bill of Rights is a statement of principles, outlining expectations of both taxi drivers and passengers. The purpose of the Taxi Bill of Rights is to improve taxi service in Metro Vancouver. As a taxi passenger, you have the right to:

- Be picked up and transported to your stated destination by any available on-duty taxi driver;
- Pay the posted rate by cash, or accepted credit card or Taxi Saver voucher;
- A courteous driver who provides assistance, if requested;
- Travel with an assistance dog or portable mobility aid;
- A taxi that is clean, smoke free and in good repair;
- Direct the route, or expect the most economical route;
- A quiet atmosphere, upon request; and
- A detailed receipt, when requested.

Further information regarding these rights can be found on the website.

Website:

www.taxirights.gov.bc.ca

Transportation

ELDERS TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

The Elders Transportation Program supports Elders who want to share and celebrate Aboriginal culture and oral traditions. The program provides partial funding for travel costs for Elders to attend the Annual Elders Gathering. Travel within British Columbia for distances greater than 200 kilometres one way may be eligible. Applications are accepted between April 1 and the second Friday in June of each year.

For further information on the Elders Transportation Program, contact the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres.

B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

200 – 506 Fort Street

Victoria, B.C. V8W 1E6

Toll Free, call:

1 800 990 2432

In Greater Victoria call:

250 388-5522

E-mail:

info@bcaafc.com

Website:

www.bcaafc.com/content/view/32/264/

FINANCES



Helping Seniors Live Well

Notes _____

FINANCES

Support for Seniors' Financial Needs

Seniors across Canada are living longer, are more active, more technology-literate and more financially secure than ever before. While many seniors fare well, others need support and may experience financial challenges.



The British Columbia government is committed to providing the best system of supports for seniors in Canada. With a strong provincial economy, a key priority for the provincial government is to support low-income seniors by providing better benefits.

This section of the guide has information about these benefits, including the Senior's Supplement, which provides about \$50 per eligible senior each month. Approximately 45,000 seniors receive this supplement. As well, eligible seniors qualify for the British Columbia Sales Tax Credit of \$75.

Further seniors' initiatives announced in Budget 2007 include funding to convert or upgrade 750 units of subsidized housing to supportive housing for seniors (see the Housing section of this guide for more information), and providing additional funding to strengthen and modernize the full range of health care services for seniors.

In Budget 2008, the provincial government introduced the annual B.C. Low Income Climate Action Tax Credit to assist low-income individuals and families offset the carbon taxes they may pay.

The federal government also offers a range of programs and provides benefits to seniors, including the Old Age Security Pension and the Guaranteed Income Supplement. Veterans Affairs Canada provides support to veterans and their caregivers.

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Seniors often donate to charities, and it is essential they have as much information as possible about the charities they are involved with. The provincial government has partnered with the Canada Revenue Agency to help seniors get the facts they need before they give.

Finances

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

For information on any Government of Canada program or service, contact Service Canada, or visit the website.

Toll Free, call: 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232)
Website: servicecanada.gc.ca

INCOME SECURITY – PENSIONS

The Old Age Security Pension (OAS) is a federally-funded base monthly pension, paid to you once you have reached the age of 65, provided you are a Canadian citizen or legal resident of Canada who meets the residence requirements. If you have lived or worked in another country that has a social security agreement with Canada, under this agreement you may be eligible for OAS benefits from Canada or from the other country. Old Age Security benefit rates are reviewed in January, April, July and October to reflect increases in the cost of living as measured by the Consumer Price Index. To receive OAS, you should apply at least six months before your 65th birthday or the date of your eligibility. For more information about the OAS, contact Service Canada, or visit the website.

For service in English, call Toll Free (Canada & USA): 1 800 277-9914
For service in French, call Toll Free (Canada & USA): 1 800 277-9915
Deaf/Hearing-impaired, call Toll Free: 1 800 255-4786
Website: servicecanada.gc.ca

Finances

GUARANTEED INCOME SUPPLEMENT

If you are a senior living on a low income, you may be eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), which provides additional money, on top of the Old Age Security Pension. To receive the GIS, you must apply. If you are either a new applicant or an individual who already receives these benefits, your benefits will be renewed automatically each year, as long as you remain eligible and you file an annual income tax return on time.

If you do not file your income tax return on time, or if further information is needed, you will receive a renewal form in the mail. The GIS is based on your annual income, or the combined income of you and your spouse or common-law partner. As your annual income may change from year to year, you must provide your income each year, either by completing an application form or by filing your income tax return. For more information about the GIS, contact Service Canada, or visit the website.

For service in English, call Toll Free (Canada & USA):	1 800 277-9914
For service in French, call Toll Free (Canada & USA):	1 800 277-9915
Deaf/Hearing-impaired, call Toll Free:	1 800 255-4786
Website:	servicecanada.gc.ca

ALLOWANCE/ALLOWANCE FOR THE SURVIVOR

If you are a spouse or common-law partner of someone receiving both the OAS and GIS, you may qualify for a benefit called the Allowance. The Allowance provides extra money to eligible low-income individuals aged 60 to 64. The benefit you receive will be based on the combined incomes of you and your spouse or common-law partner.

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If your spouse or common-law partner dies (or has died), and depending on your income, you may receive a benefit called the Allowance for the Survivor until you reach age 65.

If you are either a new applicant or an individual who already receives these benefits, your benefits will be renewed automatically each year, as long as you remain eligible and you file an annual income tax return on time.

If you do not file your return on time, or if further information is needed, you will receive a renewal form in the mail. As your annual income may change from year to year, you must provide your income each year either by completing an application form or by filing your income tax return.

For more information about the Allowance or about the Allowance for the Survivor, contact Service Canada, or visit the website.

For service in English, call Toll Free (Canada & USA):	1 800 277-9914
For service in French, call Toll Free (Canada & USA):	1 800 277-9915
Deaf/Hearing-impaired call Toll Free:	1 800 255-4786
Website:	servicecanada.gc.ca

CANADA PENSION PLAN

The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) provides a retirement pension and other benefits for those who have contributed to the plan through paid employment in Canada. The amount of CPP benefit is determined by the contributions you made during the time you were employed. Your CPP retirement pension normally begins the month after your 65th birthday. If you apply between the ages of 60 (the earliest you can receive the pension) and 70, the amount will be adjusted. The CPP is adjusted for inflation every

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January to keep up with increases in the cost of living. You should apply for CPP at least six months before you want to receive it.

If you have lived or worked in another country that has a social security agreement with Canada, or if you are the surviving spouse or common-law partner of someone who has lived or worked in another country having a social security agreement with Canada, under this agreement you may be eligible for benefits from Canada or from the other country.

If you have contributed to the CPP for the necessary number of years, the CPP also offers a one-time lump-sum death benefit to your estate upon your death. Furthermore, your spouse or common-law partner may be eligible to receive a monthly survivor pension. Dependent children up to the age of 25 may also be eligible for benefits (those between 18 and 25 must be attending school full-time).

Applications for Canada Pension Plan benefits are available from any federal Service Canada office or on-line from the Service Canada website.

For more information about the CPP, contact Service Canada.

For service in English, call Toll Free (Canada & USA):	1 800 277-9914
For service in French, call Toll Free (Canada & USA):	1 800 277-9915
Deaf/Hearing-impaired call Toll Free:	1 800 255-4786
Website:	servicecanada.gc.ca

Finances

EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

Seniors who wish to continue working after age 65 are eligible for the same Employment Insurance benefits as other workers in Canada. You must meet the qualifying and entitlement conditions.

The receipt of pension income does not prevent you from receiving EI benefits. If you return to work and accumulate enough insurable hours and meet the entitlement conditions to set up a claim, your pension income will not be deducted from your EI benefits.

It is possible to apply for Employment Insurance benefits on-line. Please visit the following website:

www100.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ae-ei/dem-app/english/home2.html

For more information about Employment Insurance Benefits, contact Service Canada.

Call Toll Free:

1 800 206-7218

Website:

servicecanada.gc.ca

VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) provides assistance to elderly clients and caregivers residing at home and in community facilities. This assistance may include things such as disability benefits, attendance allowances, health care, home care, respite care, palliative care, special equipment and home adaptations. VAC uses a case management approach to coordinate services between the community, the province and the department to meet the total needs of the client and their caregiver.

Finances

For more information call the number listed below.

Toll Free, call:

1 866 522-2122

Website:

www.vac-acc.gc.ca

FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL NON-REFUNDABLE TAX CREDITS

The following information describes tax credits that may be available to you when you prepare and submit your annual tax form.

Age Amount

In addition to the Basic Personal Amount, if you turned 65 during the year (or are older), you may be entitled to claim the Age Amount, which allows eligible seniors a non-refundable tax credit to reduce their income tax payable. Your eligibility and the amount you can claim are based on your level of net income.

Pension Income Amount

If you receive pension income, you may be able to claim an allowable amount for certain pension incomes. Your qualifying Pension Income Amount will be used in determining the total non-refundable tax credits used to reduce your federal income tax.

Amounts Transferred from Spouse

Your spouse may be able to transfer to you amounts that he or she qualifies for but does not need to reduce his or her federal income tax to zero. For example: the age amount, pension income amount or the disability tax credit.

Finances

Other Amounts

You may also be able to claim a disability amount, an amount for medical expenses, and expenses for an attendant or full-time care in a nursing home.

For more information, please refer to your income tax guide or call the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

Toll Free, call: 1 800 959-8281
Website: www.cra.gc.ca

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX CREDIT

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Credit is a tax-free quarterly payment that helps individuals and families with low and modest incomes offset all or part of the GST they pay.

To receive GST credit quarterly payments, people must file their income tax and benefit return and complete the Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST) credit application area on the first page of the return. Individuals who move must inform the Canada Revenue Agency immediately to ensure that payments of their GST/HST credit are not disrupted, even if they use direct deposit and their bank account does not change.

Toll Free, call: 1 800 959-1953
Website: www.cra.gc.ca
Website: www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/gsthst/

Finances

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS

Donating To Charities – Get the Facts Before You Give

Each year, British Columbia seniors generously donate to a variety of charitable organizations. These funds are used to support important work in our communities. However, there are situations when it is necessary for donors to take extra care before making a donation.

In recognition of this, the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport has partnered with the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency to produce the brochure, "Donating To Charities – Get the Facts Before You Give."

Copies of this brochure are available in English, French, Punjabi and Chinese, through the BC Health and Seniors Information Line.

Toll Free, call:

1 800 465-4911

Website: http://www.hls.gov.bc.ca/seniors/PDFs/donating_to_charities.pdf

PROVINCIAL PROGRAMS

Senior's Supplement

The Senior's Supplement is a monthly payment to low-income seniors who are receiving federal Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement or federal allowances. If the income level of an eligible senior falls below a level guaranteed by the province, the supplement is provided to make up the difference. It is paid automatically to those who are eligible – seniors do not need to apply.

Finances

For more information, contact the Senior's Supplement call centre.

Toll Free, call: 1 866 866-0800 (press 4, then 1)

Website: www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/publicat/bcea/ss.htm

British Columbia Sales Tax Credit

The provincial government offers a tax credit of \$75 each for you and your spouse or common law partner if you are a low-income person or family living in British Columbia on December 31 in the year for which the income tax return is submitted. If you had a spouse or common-law partner, only one of you can claim this credit for both of you. The application for this benefit can be found on the British Columbia Credits form (BC479) included with your income tax return package.

Website: www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Income_Taxes/Personal_Income_Tax/tax_credits/salestax.htm

British Columbia Low Income Climate Action Tax Credit

Effective July 2008, the provincial government introduced a new ongoing low income climate action tax credit to help low-income individuals and families with the carbon taxes they pay. The tax credit will be combined with the quarterly federal GST credit starting in October 2008. The October payment will include the payment for the July to September period.

The BC Low Income Climate Action Tax Credit (BCLICATC), which begins in October 2008, is a program designed to offset the costs of the new provincial carbon tax for low income British Columbia residents.

Finances

For 2008, the tax credit provides up to \$100 for an individual, \$100 for a spouse or common-law partner and \$30 per child (\$100 for the first child in a single-parent family). The maximum amount of the credit for 2009 is \$105 (\$31.50 per child).

For single individuals with no children, the credit will be reduced by 2 per cent of their 2007 net income over \$30,000. For families, the credit will be reduced by 2 per cent of their 2007 net income over \$35,000. The net income thresholds are indexed annually to the BC Consumer Price Index.

Website: [www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Income_Taxes/
Personal_Income_Tax/tax_credits/low_income_climate_action.htm](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Income_Taxes/Personal_Income_Tax/tax_credits/low_income_climate_action.htm)

Website: [www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/income_Taxes/
Personal_Income_Tax/contact.asp](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/income_Taxes/Personal_Income_Tax/contact.asp)

Taxpayer Services Information Line

Call: 250 387-3332

Website: [www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Income_Taxes/
Personal_Income_Tax/contact.asp](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Income_Taxes/Personal_Income_Tax/contact.asp)

Income Assistance For Seniors Not Receiving Old Age Security

If you are 65 or over and not eligible for the Old Age Security Pension and its supplement (GIS), you may be eligible for income assistance from the Ministry of Housing and Social Development. Eligibility is based on your income, assets and shelter costs.

Finances

For more information, please contact the Ministry of Housing and Social Development.

Toll Free, call:

1 866 866-0800 (press 3 + 1)

PERSONAL SECURITY



Helping Seniors Live Well

Notes _____

Personal Security

Protection and Support When Seniors Need it



Personal security is a big issue for seniors, and with more seniors than anywhere else in Canada, British Columbia is committed to keeping this population secure by ensuring that law and order are maintained, and by actively promoting the safety of seniors.

It is easy to understand why security for seniors is a priority for the provincial government. Statistics Canada figures show that Kelowna's population was the oldest in Canada in 2006, with 19 per cent of its population aged 65 and older. Victoria is home to the highest proportion of very elderly people (with nearly double the national average) with 6.4 per cent aged 80 and older. In Parksville, nearly one person in 10 was 80 or older in 2006. The national average is about one person in 27.

In this section of the guide, you will find information about the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia, the Assisted Living Registrar, legal education and the Legal Services Society, victim services, crime prevention and consumer protection.

As an example, through the Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority (BPCPA) consumers are protected from unfair business practices. This independent authority enforces B.C.'s consumer protection laws, provides consumer protection services, and supports a fair marketplace for B.C. consumers and businesses. The BPCPA licenses the travel industry, the debt collection industry, segments of the telemarketing industry, and the cremation, interment and funeral services industry, as well as providing film classification services for general release films.

Personal Security

PUBLIC GUARDIAN AND TRUSTEE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Public Guardian and Trustee (PGT) provides a range of services to adults who may need help managing their affairs, as well as their families, legal representatives, the courts and general public.

A person who cannot manage their own financial, legal and personal care matters is vulnerable in our society. Sometimes, adults cannot seek the help they need because of an illness, disease, injury or other condition that affects their ability to make decisions. In these circumstances, the Public Guardian and Trustee may assist with the decision making on their behalf, or the court may order that another person undertakes this.

The Adult Guardianship Act ensures steps are taken when senior abuse, neglect or self-neglect is suspected. The PGT designates agencies under the Act who are required to respond when a senior is experiencing abuse, neglect or self-neglect. For the designated agency number in your community, visit the Public Guardian and Trustee website.

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

700 – 808 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6C 3L3

In Vancouver, call: 604 660-4444

In Victoria, call: 250 387-6121

Service BC

In Vancouver, call 604 660-2421

In Victoria, call 250 387-6121

Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-7867

And ask to be transferred, free-of-charge, to the office you wish to contact.

Personal Security

E-mail:

mail@trustee.bc.ca

Website:

www.trustee.bc.ca

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT – COMMUNITY PROGRAMS BRANCH

The Community Programs Branch manages programs and services for women and children who have experienced, or are at risk of, violence. These include emergency temporary housing, counselling for women and children, and outreach including multicultural outreach services. Services are available to all women fleeing abuse, including older women.

The following services specifically address the unique needs of older women. Contact information for these and other services is available on the Ministry of Housing and Social Development website.

Transition House

South Surrey – Atira Women’s Resource Society, Ama House 604 542-5992

Safe Homes

Victoria – Victoria Women’s Transition House 250 380-7527

Crisis Line: 250 385-6611

Penticton – South Okanagan Women In Need 250 493-7233

Creston – Kootenay Community Centre Society,

Irvine House 250 428-6856

Personal Security

Second Stage Housing

Victoria – Victoria Women’s Transition House,

Harrison Place

250 385-2103

Website:

www.gov.bc.ca/eia

ASSISTED LIVING REGISTRAR

The Assisted Living Registrar is appointed by the Minister of Health to protect the health and safety of people who live in assisted living residences.

All assisted living residences in B.C. must be registered with the registrar.

Operators of registered assisted living residences must meet and maintain provincial health and safety standards.

For further information, contact the numbers listed below.

Office of the Assisted Living Registrar of British Columbia

200 – 1333 West Broadway Avenue

Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4C6

Toll Free, call:

1 866 714-3378

In Greater Vancouver, call:

604 714-3378

E-mail:

info@alregistrar.bc.ca

Website:

www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/assisted

Personal Security

PEOPLE'S LAW SCHOOL

The People's Law School is a non-profit society that provides free and impartial legal information in plain language. A wide range of law-related topics are covered in publications and community events, including scams to avoid. The society also provides many of these services in languages other than English. They do not provide legal advice on individual legal problems; however, they can refer individuals to other sources of help.

For more information contact the number listed below, or visit the website.

The People's Law School
150 – 900 Howe Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2M4

In Vancouver call:	604 331-5400
Fax :	604 331-5401
E-mail:	staff@publiclegaled.bc.ca
Website:	www.publiclegaled.bc.ca

LEGAL SERVICES SOCIETY

If you have a legal problem and a low income, the Legal Services Society (LSS) can give you legal aid. Legal aid includes:

- legal information to help you work through your problem on your own;
- legal advice from a lawyer who can help you work through your problem; and/or
- legal representation (a lawyer to act for you) in court if you have a serious legal problem and no other way to solve it.

Personal Security

The particular services you can get depend on your legal problem. You do not have to be financially eligible to get legal information. You must be financially eligible for most legal advice services and for a lawyer to represent you. Many publications and some other services are available in languages other than English.

To find out what services you qualify for, contact your local legal aid office (listings are on the LSS website) or the LSS Call Centre.

Toll Free, call:	1 866 577-2525
In Greater Vancouver, call:	604 408-2172
Website:	www.lss.bc.ca

CRIME PREVENTION, COMMUNITY POLICING AND VICTIM SERVICES

Government, police and community partners in B.C. are dedicated to ensuring the safety of seniors through a number of local crime prevention programs. For information on these programs, call Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division or your local police.

Victims of certain crimes may be eligible for financial assistance and benefits through the provincial government's Crime Victim Assistance Program, which helps victims of crime protect themselves and their homes, and recover from these experiences. In addition, the provincial government funds more than 150 victim service programs. These programs are run by non-profit agencies and police departments. They provide information about the justice system, practical help, emotional support and referrals to other programs and resources.

Personal Security

If you or someone you know is a victim of crime or violence, call the B.C. government's information and help line, VictimLINK.

VictimLINK

Toll Free, call:	1 800 563-0808
E-mail:	VSDVictimsServices@gov.bc.ca
Website:	www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/victim_services
Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division:	604 660-3747

PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

There are many things people of all ages, and in particular seniors, can do to maintain their personal safety. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police in British Columbia have listed some tips on a personal safety page on their website.

Website: <http://bc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=87&languageId=1&contentId=1142>

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Abuse of seniors is a major societal issue. An action or deliberate behaviour by someone in a position of trust, such as an adult child, family member, friend or caregiver, that causes an adult physical, emotional or mental harm or damage to, or loss of, assets or property is abuse. This includes shoving, hitting or threatening, as well as financial abuse, neglecting care or giving medication improperly, and the taking away of rights. Many of these abuses are criminal offences under the Criminal Code of Canada. If you think an older adult is abused, neglected or self-neglected and cannot get help on their own, contact the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC.

Personal Security

BUSINESS PRACTICES AND CONSUMER PROTECTION AUTHORITY

The Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority (BPCPA) is a not-for-profit corporation independent from government. B.C.'s consumer protection laws provide the framework to help the BPCPA protect consumers. Through their website and toll-free inquiry line, the BPCPA provides the public with information on how to become more informed consumers and assists callers with concerns around their consumer transactions.

To improve consumer protection, the BPCPA licenses the travel industry, the debt collection industry, segments of the telemarketing industry, and the cremation, interment and funeral services industry, as well as classifying general release motion pictures.

The BPCPA is also responsible for the administration of the Travel Assurance Fund (TAF). The TAF is a fund of last resort which provides compensation for travel services paid for, but not received, when those services are obtained from a licensed B.C. travel agency. The BPCPA offers complaint resolution and referrals through a toll free B.C. inquiry centre. For more information, contact the BPCPA.

Toll Free, call:	1 888 564-9963
In Greater Vancouver call:	604 320-1667
Fax, (in Victoria):	250 920-7181
E-mail:	info@bpcpa.ca
Website:	www.bpcpa.ca

Personal Security

MOTOR VEHICLE SALES AUTHORITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (VSA)

The Motor Vehicle Sales Authority of British Columbia is a not-for-profit independent agency created by legislation to administer the Motor Dealer Act, prescribed sections of the Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act and related regulations under those Acts.

The VSA licenses and regulates more than 1,700 motor dealers and over 7,000 sales professionals. The VSA Learning Division conducts mandatory certification courses for all persons who directly deal with consumers in retail vehicle sales in B.C.

The VSA oversees consumer protection legislation applicable to licensed motor dealers including standard setting and enforcement, complaint resolution, consumer protection and public industry education. The goal is a respected motor dealer industry serving an informed and confident public.

There are many things that a consumer should know before buying a new or used vehicle, and the VSA provides the tools and information to help the consumer make an informed buying decision.

For more information, please visit our website or call the numbers listed below.

Toll Free, call:	1 877 294-9889
In Vancouver call:	604 574-5050
Fax:	604 294-9313
E-mail:	enquiry@mvsabc.com
Website:	www.vehiclesalesauthority.com

Personal Security

BC CENTRE FOR ELDER ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT (BC Coalition to Eliminate Abuse of Seniors)

The BC Coalition to Eliminate Abuse of Seniors (BC CEAS) provides information, training, community development and materials on abuse and neglect of seniors to individuals, community agencies and organizations. The society also offers information on services and support groups available to seniors who have experienced abuse.

An information and referral line offers legal information, referral and legal advocacy to seniors, community agencies, organizations, victims' services and others throughout the province.

For further information, contact the numbers listed below.

BC CEAS

411 Dunsmuir Street

Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1X4

Toll Free, call:

1 866 437-1940

In Greater Vancouver call:

604 437-1940

Fax:

604 437-1929

E-mail:

ceas@telus.net

Website:

www.bcceas.ca

Personal Security

INVESTOR EDUCATION PROGRAM HELPS SENIORS AVOID SCAMS – BC SECURITIES COMMISSION

Many older British Columbians have lost their life savings to risky or dangerous investments because they did not understand the risks, ask the right questions, do independent research, or get a second opinion.

Con artists design sales pitches to deceive people, sometimes guaranteeing high returns on an investment, or telling them this is an investment opportunity of a lifetime. These types of pressure tactics can lead a person to make an impulsive, emotional, or irrational investment decision. If you encounter a sales pitch that sounds too good to be true, stop. Think about it. Start asking some questions.

InvestRight and the BC Securities Commission (BCSC) can help you answer questions about unsuitable investments, scams and investment planning. The InvestRight website is a one-stop resource for investors to educate themselves on how to make informed investment decisions. It provides a wide range of tools to help investors develop the critical thinking skills they need to protect themselves and make informed investment decisions.

The BCSC's Red-Flags communications campaign alerts investors to common sales pitches used by scam artists along with a province-wide seminar program. You can find investment information, report a scam, and do background checks on financial advisers by visiting InvestRight.org. If you would like to book a free seminar or ask an investment-related question, call the numbers listed below.

Personal Security

The BCSC is an independent provincial government agency that protects investors and fosters efficient capital markets by:

- Setting the rules for securities trading in B.C.;
- Making sure people comply with those rules and take enforcement action when necessary; and
- Providing a consumer-friendly investor education program called InvestRight that shows investors how to avoid fraud and unsuitable investments.

Toll Free, in B.C. and Alberta, call:

1 800 373-6393

In Vancouver call:

604 899-6854

Website:

www.investright.org

OTHER SERVICES



Helping Seniors Live Well

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Other Services

Other Government Services for Senior



The provincial government offers a range of services to seniors other than health, housing, transportation, financial, lifestyle or security.

These include providing information in printed form, such as through this guide, and also in person, online and over the telephone at Service BC Centres across British Columbia.

For example, many seniors are continuing to work past the age of 65, contributing to the need for more skilled workers in the workforce. In this section you will find information about initiatives for older workers offering re-training for new careers.

As more seniors travel or arrive to live in Canada from other countries, the need for consular information increases. There is information listed below explaining how to connect with foreign country services.

The BC Seniors website offers a wealth of information, including contacts and publication listings.

For help marking a significant date or achievement, congratulatory messages from government officials are available. Information about receiving these messages is listed below.

Seniors are also eligible for many programs and services that may not be described in this guide, as they are available to all British Columbians.

Other Government Services for Seniors

BC HEALTH AND SENIORS INFORMATION LINE

This toll free 1-800 telephone line offers seniors a single source of information about government services, including information about health services. Telephone agents can answer individual questions about seniors' services provided by federal and provincial ministries and agencies.

The information line is available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Translation services are available in more than 130 languages. To contact the BC Health and Seniors Information Line, call the numbers listed below.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 465-4911
In Greater Victoria call:	250 952-1742

TARGETED INITIATIVE FOR OLDER WORKERS

Older workers who are interested in re-entering the workforce can be a key element in addressing the skills and labour shortage B.C. is facing. Recognizing that, the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW) program has awarded \$7.5 million of federal and provincial funding to 12 organizations across B.C. to deliver community-based programs. In total, it is estimated that these projects will help 900 unemployed older workers, mostly from the forestry industry.

TIOW is designed to assist B.C.'s older workers retrain for new careers and prepare to re-enter the workplace. By funding these programs through local service providers, workers all across the province will be able to upgrade their skills, benefit from job counselling and gain work experience. The programs and projects are especially geared to assist unemployed older workers in communities experiencing economic transition, such as those affected by mountain pine beetle.

Other Government Services for Seniors

Community-based organizations offering these programs can be found in Abbotsford, Campbell River, the Cariboo Region, Columbia Valley, Cranbrook, Hazelton, Kamloops, Kitimat, Lake Cowichan, Langley, Maple Ridge, Mission, Nass Valley, North Qualicum, Port Alberni, Powell River, Prince Rupert, Prince George, Sechelt, Sooke, Terrace, the Central Kootenay regional district and Vancouver Island.

For more information about TLOW contact Leslie Page, at the e-mail address listed below.

E-mail:

LabourMarket.Dev.Branch@gov.bc.ca

SERVICE BC

Government services are available in person, online and over the telephone.

Enquiry BC

Enquiry BC provides the following services to all British Columbia residents, on behalf of provincial government ministries, Crown corporations and public agencies:

- Basic provincial government information;
- Assistance in identifying the program or person that the caller needs to speak to;
- Government program or government employee phone and facsimile numbers or addresses;
- Assistance in identifying the level of government responsible for a program or service; and
- Toll free transfer for callers who would otherwise incur a cost for obtaining information from, or conducting business with, the provincial government.

Other Government Services for Seniors

Hours of operation for Service BC are 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. PST, Monday through Friday.

Toll Free, call:	1 800 663-7867
In Greater Vancouver call:	604 660-2421
In Greater Victoria call:	250 387-6121
E-mail:	EnquiryBC@gov.bc.ca
Deaf/Hearing-impaired Toll Free, call:	1 800 661-8773
Deaf/Hearing-impaired, in Greater Vancouver call:	604 775-0303

Service BC Centres (Government Agents)

Service BC Centres or Government Agents Offices assist seniors in getting access to provincial government programs and services. These offices are a point of contact for services and programs for people living outside the Lower Mainland and Victoria. Staff members have knowledge of local programs and will refer seniors to other sources of information and assistance.

Visit your local Service BC Centre for information and services, including permits, fishing licences, and Medical Services Plan information and payments. To be transferred by phone free of charge to the office you wish to contact, call Service BC.

For a listing of office locations, please refer to the Government Agents page of this guide. These offices are also listed under Governments – British Columbia in the blue pages of your telephone book.

Website: www.servicebc.gov.bc.ca

Other Government Services for Seniors

BC SENIORS WEBSITE

The BC Seniors website provides information on services and programs for seniors offered by the British Columbia and federal governments.

Through an on-line version of this BC Seniors' Guide, seniors, their families, caregivers and supporting service organizations have access to reliable, consistent and up-to-date information. The online version of this guide is revised regularly. Your comments and suggestions for future updates are most welcome.

Other BC Seniors website features include links to key federal government websites, a "How to Contact" page, a publications page, and links to legislation affecting seniors.

Website:

www.gov.bc.ca/seniors

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

Congratulatory messages may be requested for a significant birthday or wedding anniversary. Messages can be requested from a range of officials: your Member of the Legislative Assembly, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Lieutenant Governor, the Prime Minister, the Governor General, or The Queen.

To request a congratulatory message, a request form is available on-line or by mail. Nine weeks advance notice is preferred, to ensure the information can be shared and processed by the various officials involved and your message will be delivered on time.

Other Government Services for Seniors

For more information, the provincial government's Office of Protocol website includes information on what kind of events are eligible for greetings and from what official.

In Victoria, call: 250 387-1616
Website: www.protocol.gov.bc.ca/protocol/prgs/congrat/congrat.htm
Service BC Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-7867

FOREIGN COUNTRY SERVICES

Over 80 countries are represented by Consular Officers resident in British Columbia. Based mainly in Vancouver, Consular Officers generally perform the following functions:

- Assist and protect nationals of the country they represent;
- Administer oaths, legalize foreign documents and issue passports, travel visas and certificates;
- Represent their country and promote their country's trade within the Consular District; and
- Explain their country's policies and achievements in fields such as culture and tourist attractions.

The provincial government's Office of Protocol website includes a listing, with contact information, for all countries represented in British Columbia.

Website: www.protocol.gov.bc.ca/protocol/prgs/consular/consular.htm

All other countries can be contacted through their embassies and high commissions based in Ottawa. Contact information is available on the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade website.

Website: www.international.gc.ca

DIRECTORY



Helping Seniors Live Well

Following is an alphabetical listing of services described in this guide or available to seniors.

A

Aboriginal Transportation Program

(See Elders Transportation Program.)

Active Communities B.C.

Local recreation centre information

Website: www.activecommunities.bc.ca

ActNow BC

Visit the ActNow BC website to take the Healthy Living Pledge

Website: www.ActNowBC.ca

Acute, Home and Community Care Services

Look in "Health Authorities" in the blue pages of your telephone book for the number in your area, or call the Health and Seniors Information Line.

Addictions

Problem Gambling Help Line or Referral to Counselling Services

Toll Free, call: 1 888 795-6111

(See B.C. Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service.)

(See Centre for Addictions Research of B.C.)

(See BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Information.)

Affordable Housing

(See BC Housing.)

Age-Friendly Communities

Website: www.health.gov.bc.ca/seniors/initiatives/age_friendly.html

Directory

Age-Friendly Implementation Team

PO Box 5000, Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2C5

In Victoria call:

250 652-7087

Age-Friendly Leadership Network

Website: www.seniorsincommunities.ca/leadership_network.php

Allowance/Allowance for the Survivor

(See Federal Income Security.)

Assisted Living Registrar

In Greater Vancouver call:

604 714-3378

Toll Free, call:

1 866 714-3378

Annual Active Aging Symposium

2008 Symposium website

www.bcactiveaging.ca

Automobile Insurance Discounts

(See Seniors Automobile Insurance Discounts.)

B

B.C. Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service

In Greater Vancouver, call:

604 660-9382

Toll Free, call:

1 800 663-1441

BC Ambulance Service

In a medical emergency

Call: 911 where available, or

Call: the EMERGENCY phone number listed on the inside cover of your
telephone book, or If a telephone book is not available

Call: the operator by dialing 0.

Non-Emergency Information about Ambulance Services

In Victoria, call:

250 953-3298

BC Association of Community Response Networks

Website:

www.bccrns.ca/general_public/index.php

BC Centre for Elder Advocacy and Support (BC CEAS)

In Greater Vancouver, call:

604 437-1940

Toll Free, call:

1 866 437-1940

BC Ferries

Customer Information and Reservations

In North America call toll free:

1 888 BC-FERRY (1 888 223-3779)

From outside North America call:

250 386-3431

From cell phone on Rogers or TELUS Mobility networks call:

*BCF (*223)

BC Health and Seniors Information Line

In Greater Victoria call:

250 952-1742

Toll Free, call:

1 800 465-4911

BC HealthGuide Program

To get a free copy of the guide, visit your local pharmacy or Government Agent office, or call the BC Health and Seniors Information Line.

For information by telephone, see HealthLink BC.

BC Healthy Communities Initiative

Website:

www.bchealthycommunities.ca/Content/Home.asp

Directory

BC Housing and the Housing Registry

Head Office

In Greater Vancouver
call: 604 433-2218
Toll Free, call: 1 800 257-7756

Lower Mainland

Vancouver Coastal
Regional Office
In Greater Vancouver
call: 604 609-7024

Fraser Regional Office

In Burnaby call: 604 525-3033

Vancouver Island Regional Office

In Greater Victoria
call: 250 475-7550
Toll Free, call: 1 800 787-2807

Interior Regional Office

In Penticton call: 250 493-0301
Toll Free, call: 1 800 834-7149

Northern Regional Office

In Prince George
call: 250 562-9251
Toll Free, call: 1 800 667-1235
In Prince Rupert
call: 250 627-7501

BC Hydro

For electric service or energy-efficiency information

Call: 1 800 BCHYDRO (1 800 224-9376)

To report a power outage or downed wires

Call: 1 888 POWERON (1 888 769-3766)

BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Information

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 669-7600

Toll Free, call: 1 800 661-2121

BC Sales Tax Credit

Canada Revenue Agency

Toll Free, call: 1 800 959-1953

BC Securities Commission

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 899-6500

Toll Free Monday – Friday (from B.C. and Alberta) call: 1 800 373-6393

Inquiries call: 604 899-6854

E-mail address: Inquiries@bcsc.bc.ca

BC Seniors Games Society

In Victoria call: 250 385-3610

BC Transit

In Victoria call: 250 382-6161

Elsewhere in B.C., contact your local transit operator

Website: www.bctransit.com

Or contact TransLink, call: 604 575-6600

Boomers Friendly Boot Camps and Keep Strong for Life

Website: www.bcrpa.bc.ca/BoomerFriendlyBootCamps.htm

(See Active Communities B.C. for your local active communities programs and local recreation centre information.)

Bus Fare Discount for Seniors

(See Transit Seniors Fare Discount.)

Bus Pass Program

Toll Free, call: 1 866 866-0800 (Press 4, then 3.)

Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority of B.C.

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 320-1667

Toll Free, call: 1 888 564-9963

Directory

C

Canada Pension Plan

(See Federal Income Security.)

Canada Revenue Agency

Tax Information Phone Service, call:

1 800 267-6999

Centre for Addictions Research of BC

Call:

604 408-7753

Toll Free, call:

1 888 677-LINK (5465)

Website

www.carbc.ca

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

(See Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions Program.)

Community Programs Branch

(See Women's Services.)

Community Response Networks

(See BC Association of Community Response Networks.)

Community Services Agencies

Abbotsford Community Services

Call: 604 859-7681

Agassiz

Agassiz-Harrison Community Services

Call: 604 796-2585

Toll Free, call: 1 888 748-5777

Burnaby

Burnaby Community Connections

Call: 604 299-5778

Campbell River

Campbell River Family Services Society

Business line, call: 250 287-2421

Crisis line, call: 250 287-7743

Castlegar

Castlegar and District
Community Services Centre
Call: 250 365-2104

Chilliwack

Chilliwack Community Services
Call: 604 792-4267

Coquitlam

Greater Coquitlam Crisis &
Information Line
SHARE Family and Community
Services
Business line, call: 604 540-9161
Crisis line, call: 604 540-2221

Courtenay

Crossroads Crisis Centre Society
Business line call: 250 338-0512
Crisis line call: 250 334-2455

Cranbrook

Canadian Mental Health
Association for the East Kootenay
Business line, call: 250 426-5222
Crisis line (local)
call: 250 426-8407
Toll-free crisis line call:
1 800 667-8407
Volunteers, call: 250 426-8019

Delta

Deltassist Family and
Community Services Society
Call: 604 946-9526

Duncan

Volunteer Cowichan
Call: 250 748-2133

Fort St. John

North Peace Community
Resources Society
Call: 250 785-6021

Fraser Lake

Fraser Lake Community Society
and Crisis Line
Call: 250 699-6315
Toll Free, call: 1 800 279-5799

Golden

Golden Community Resources
Society
Call: 250 344-2311

Hope

Hope Community Services
Call: 604 869-2466

Kamloops

Volunteer Kamloops
Call: 250 372-8313

Kelowna

Kelowna Community Resources
Society
Business line, call: 250 763-8008
Crisis line, call: 250 763-9191

Directory

Kitimat

Kitimat Community Services
Society
Call: 250 632-9107
Toll Free, call: 1 877 632-9101

Ladysmith

Ladysmith Resources Centre
Association
Call: 250 245-3079
Fax: 250 245-3798

Langley

Langley Community Services
Call: 604 534-7921

Lumby

White Valley Community
Resource Centre
Call: 250 547-8866

Maple Ridge

Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows
Community Services Council
Call: 604 467-6911

Mission

Mission Community Services
Society
Business line, call: 604 826-3634
Crisis line, call: 604 820-1166
Toll Free, call: 1 877 820-7444

Nakusp

Arrow and Slocan Lakes
Community Services
Call: 250 265-3674

Nanaimo

Volunteer Nanaimo
Call: 250 758-7121

Nelson

Nelson Community Services
Centre
Call: 250 352-3504

North Vancouver

North Shore Community
Resources Society
Information North Shore
Business line call: 604 985-7138
Seniors One-Stop Information
Line: 604 983-3303 or
604 925-7474

Parksville

District 69 Society of Organized
Services
Call: 250 248-2093

Penticton

Penticton and District
Community Resources Society
Call: 250 492-5814

Port Hardy

North Island Crisis and
Counselling Centre Society
Business line, call: 250 949-8333
Crisis line, call: 250 949-6033
Alert Bay Crisis line, call:
250 974-5326

Powell River

Medichair

Call: 604 485-9310

Prince George

Prince George Crisis

Intervention Society

Prince George Crisis and
Information Centre

Business line, call: 250 564-5736

Crisis & information line
call: 250 563-1214

Toll Free, call: 1 888 562-1214

Prince Rupert

Prince Rupert Community

Enrichment Society

Call: 250 627-7166

Quesnel

Seniors Advocacy Service

Call: 250 992-9330

E-mail address:

seniorsadvocate@gmail.com

Richmond

Volunteer Richmond

Information Services

Information Centre

Call: 604 279-7020

Salmon Arm

Shuswap Family Resource &

Referral Centre

Call: 250 832-2170

Salt Spring Island

Salt Spring Island Community
Services Society

Call: 250 537-9971

Sechelt

Sunshine Coast Community
Services Society

Call: 604 885-5881

Sicamous

Eagle Valley Community
Resource Centre

Call: 250 836-3440

Sidney

Beacon Community Services at
the Shoal Centre

Call: 250 656-5537

Smithers

Smithers Community Services
Association

Call: 250 847-9515

Squamish

Sea to Sky Community Services
Society

Call: 604 892-5796

Surrey

Surrey Community Services
Society

Call: 604 584-5811

Options: Services to
Communities Society

Call: 604 596-4321

Directory

Terrace

Terrace and District Community
Services Society
Call: 250 635-3178

Trail

United Way of Trail and District
Call: 250 364-0999

Vancouver

Information Services Vancouver
Call: 604 875-6431

Vancouver Community Network

Business line, call: 604 606-2603
Help line, call: 604 257-3811

Vanderhoof

Nechako Valley Community
Services
Call: 250 567-9205

Vernon (Revelstoke, Salmon Arm, Enderby)

Seniors Information &
Resources Bureau
Call: 250 545-8572
People in Need Crisis
Intervention
Business line, call: 250 545-8074

Vernon

Crisis line call: 250 545-2339

Revelstoke

Crisis line call: 250 837-6601

Salmon Arm

Crisis line call: 250 833-1488

Enderby

Crisis line call: 250 838-0880

Victoria

NEED Crisis and Information Line
Business line call: 250 386-6328
Crisis line call: 250 386-6323
Seniors Serving Seniors
Call: 250 382-4331

White Rock

Peace Arch Community Services
Information and Referral Help
Line Call: 604 542-4357

Community Travel Training Program

In Greater Victoria call:

250 384-7723

In Kelowna call:

250 762-3278 or 250 979-1312

Consular Services

(See Foreign Country Services.)

Consumer Protection

(See Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority.)

Crime Prevention and Community Policing

Contact your local police department or RCMP detachment.

(See Victim Services.)

Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of B.C.

Crisis Centre

In Greater Vancouver, call:

604 872-3311

Toll Free, call:

1 866 661-3311

D

DriveBC

Toll Free, call:

1 800 550-4997

Website:

www.drivebc.ca

Driver Examinations and Medical Reports, and Drivers' Licences

ICBC

In Greater Victoria, call:

250 978-8300

Toll Free, call:

1 800 950-1498

Websites:

www.icbc.com

www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/osmv/index.htm

Directory

Driving – Mature Drivers’ Workshops (BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation)

For information on free *Living Well, Driving Well* Mature Drivers workshops

Call: 1 877 297-2254

Website: www.MatureDrivers.ca

E

Economic Development

(See Targeted Initiatives for Older Workers.)

Elders Transportation Program

B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

In Greater Victoria, call: 250 388-5522

Toll Free, call: 1 800 990 2432

E-mail address: info@bcaafc.com

Website: www.bcaafc.com/content/view/32/264/

Employment Insurance

Service Canada

Toll Free, call: 1 800 206-7218

Website: www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Employment Standards Branch

Administers the *Employment Standards Act and Regulation*, which sets minimum standards of wages and working conditions in most workplaces.

Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-3316

F

Fair PharmaCare

(See Pharmacare.)

Federal Income Security

Service Canada

Toll Free (English), call: 1 800 277-9914

or Toll Free (French), call: 1 800 277-9915

Telephone Device for the Deaf Toll Free, call: 1 800 255-4786

Website: www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Federal Non-Refundable Tax Credits

Toll Free, call: 1 800 959-8281

Website: www.taxtips.ca/nonrefundablecredits.htm

Federal Programs

For information on any Government of Canada program or service, contact Service Canada.

Toll Free, call: 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232)

Website: www.servicecanada.gc.ca

Ferries – BC Ferries

(See BC Ferries.)

Foreign Country Services

For information on the British Columbia Office of Protocol's listing, with contact information, of over 80 countries represented by Consular Officers in the province:

Website: www.protocol.gov.bc.ca/protocol/prgs/consular/consular.htm

For information on all other countries, which can be contacted through their embassies and high commissions based in Ottawa:

Website: www.international.gc.ca/protocol-protocole/index.aspx?menu_id=23&menu=L

Directory

G

Goods and Services Tax Credit

Canada Revenue Agency

Toll Free, call:

1 800 267-6999

Website:

www.cra-arc.gc.ca/bnfts/gsthst

Government Agents

(See Service BC Centres.)

Grants to Address Seniors' Issues

Age-Friendly Communities Implementation Team

PO Box 5000, Saanichton, B.C. V8M 2C5

Call:

250 652-7087

Union of BC Municipalities (grants available to local governments only)

545 Superior Street,

Victoria, B.C. V8V 1T7

Call:

250 356-5134

Guaranteed Income Supplement

(See Federal Income Security.)

H

HandyDART Custom Transit

BC Transit In Greater Victoria, call:

250 727-9607

Website:

www.bctransit.com

TransLink call:

604 575-6600

Website:

www.translink.ca

Health and Seniors Information Line

In Greater Victoria, call:

250 952-1742

Toll Free, call:

1 800 465-4911

Health Authorities

Northern Health

In Prince George

call: 250 565-2649

Toll Free, call: 1 866 565-2999

Interior Health

In Kelowna call: 250 862-4200

Vancouver Coastal Health

In Greater Vancouver,

call: 604 736-2033

Toll Free, call: 1 866 884-0888

Vancouver Island Health

In Victoria, call: 250 370-8699

Toll Free, call: 1 877 370-8699

Fraser Health

In Greater Vancouver,

call: 604 587-4600

Toll Free, call: 1 877 935-5669

Provincial Health Services

In Vancouver, call: 604 675-7400

Health Connections

Northern Health

Toll Free, call:

1 888 647-4997 to reserve your seat.

Please have your CareCard number and appointment information ready.

Website:

www.northernhealth.ca/Your_Health/Programs/NH_Connections/default.asp

Interior Health

Toll Free, call:

1 800 465-4911

Website

www.interiorhealth.ca/health-services.aspx?id=440

HealthLink BC

Call:

811

website:

www.healthlinkbc.ca

Directory

Healthy Eating for Seniors

www.actnowbc.ca/EN/seniors/healthy_eating_for_seniors

Website

www.ActNowBC.ca/EN/seniors

Home Adaptations for Seniors' Independence Program (HASI)

Call your local Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation office listed in the white pages of the telephone book, or

Toll Free, call:

1 800 668-2642

Website

www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/ab/noho/noho_006.cfm

Home Owner Grant for Seniors

Call your local tax collector's office or the Home Owner Grant Administration Branch.

In Greater Victoria call:

250 356-8904

Toll Free, call:

1 888 355-2700

Hunting and Angling Licences for Seniors (See Service BC.)

I

ICBC

In Greater Vancouver, call:

604 661-2800

Toll Free, call:

1 800 663-3051

Immunization Services

Contact your local public health office listed under "Health Authorities" in the blue pages of your telephone book.

Income Security (Federal programs)

(See Federal Income Security.)

Information and Referral Organizations

Alzheimer Society of British Columbia

Toll Free, call: 1 800 667-3742
Website: www.alzheimerbc.org

Arthritis Society

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 875-5051
Toll Free, call: 1 800 321-1433
Website: www.arthritis.ca/bc

BC Cancer Agency

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 877-6000
Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-3333
Website: www.bccancer.bc.ca

BC Care Providers Association

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 736-4233
Website: www.bccare.ca

BC Hospice Palliative Care Association

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 806-8821
Toll Free, call: 1 877 422-4722
Website: www.hospicebc.org

Canadian Diabetes Association

In Vancouver, call: 604 732-1331
Toll Free, call: 1 800 226-8464
Website: www.diabetes.ca

Heart and Stroke Foundation of B.C. and Yukon

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 736-4404
Toll Free, call: 1 888 473-4636
Website: www.heartandstroke.ca

Directory

Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 689-3144
Toll Free, call: 1 800 268-7582
Website: www.mssociety.ca

Osteoporosis Society of Canada

British Columbia Division
Toll free, call: 1800 463-6842
E-mail address: bcdivision@osteoporosis.ca
Website: www.osteoporosis.ca

Investor Education Program

InvestRight

To book a free seminar or ask an investment-related question

Call: 604 899-6854
Toll Free Monday – Friday (from B.C. and Alberta) call: 1 800 373-6393
Website: www.investright.org

L

Land Title and Survey Authority of BC

Corporate Office

Call: 250 952-5021

Kamloops Land Title Office

(Kamloops/Nelson Land Title Districts)

Call: 250 828-4455

New Westminster Land Title Office

(Vancouver/New Westminster/Prince George/Prince Rupert Land Title Districts)

Call: 604 660-2595

Prince George/Prince Rupert Land Title Districts

Toll free, call: 1 866 660-3223

Victoria Land Title Office

(Victoria Land Title District)

Call: 250 387-6331

Website: www.ltsa.ca

Legal Services Society

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 408-2172

Toll Free, call: 1 866 577-2525

Licence Plates for Veterans

(See Veteran Specialty Licence Plates.)

LiveSmart BC: Efficiency Incentive Program

Toll Free, call: 1 866 430-8765

Website: www.livesmartbc.ca

Email: EfficiencyIncentives@gov.bc.ca

Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions Program

(Chronic Disease Self- Management Program)

Toll Free, call: 1 866 902-3767

M

Medical Services Plan

Health Insurance BC

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 683-7151

Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-7100

Directory

Mental Health Services

Contact your local health authority for information on available services.
(See BC Partners for Mental Health and Addiction Information.)
(See Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention.)

Motor Vehicle Sales Authority of B.C.

Call: 604 574-5050

N

Nutrition Information

Dial-A-Dietitian

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 732-9191

Toll Free, call: 1 800 667-3438

O

Old Age Security

(See Federal Income Security.)

P

Peer Health Promotion

Website: www.coscobc.ca

People's Law School

In Vancouver, call: 604 331-5400

Fax: 604 331-5401

Personal Supports Information Line

Contact information about and referrals to government programs that may provide equipment and assistive devices.

Toll Free, call: 1 888 818-1211
E-mail address: PersonalSupportsInformation@gov.bc.ca
Telephone Device for the Deaf
Toll Free, call: 1 800 661-8773

PharmaCare

Health Insurance BC

In Greater Vancouver, call: 604 683-7151
Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-7100

Power Outages and Repairs

To report a power outage or downed wires

Toll Free, call: 1 888 POWERON (769-3766)

Problem Gambling

Toll Free, call: 1 888 795-6111
Deaf or Hearing Impaired (collect calls accepted) 604 875-0885
Website: www.bcreponsiblegambling.ca

Property Assessment

Contact your local BC Assessment office at the phone number or address written on the front of your Assessment Notice.

Website: www.bcassessment.ca

Property Tax Deferral Program

Contact your local tax collector's office or Service BC Centre (Government Agent office) where you pay your property taxes, or

In Victoria call: 250 387-0555
Website: www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/individuals/Property_Taxes/Property_Tax_Deferral/ptd.htm

Directory

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 660-4444
(For toll-free access from elsewhere in B.C., see Service BC.)

Public Health

(See Nutrition Information.)

(See Immunization Service.)

R

Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program

Contact your nearest Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation office, listed in the white pages of your telephone book, or

Toll Free, call: 1 800 668-2642

Homeowner Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program

Website: www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/ab/noho/noho_006.cfm

Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program for Persons with Disabilities

Website: www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/prfinas/prfinas_003.cfm

Residential Tenancy Branch

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 660-1020

In Victoria, call: 250 387-1602

Toll Free, call: 1 800 665-8779

Royal BC Museum

In Greater Victoria call: 250 356-7226

Toll Free, call: 1 888 447-7977

Volunteer services only call: 250 387-7902

E-mail address: reception@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca

Website: www.royalbcmuseum.bc.ca

Rural Property Tax Office

Contact your local tax collector's office or Service BC Centre (Government Agent office) where you pay your property taxes, or

In Victoria call: 250 387-0555

S

Seniors' Automobile Insurance Discounts (ICBC)

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 661-2800

Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-3051

Seniors' Housing & Support Initiative

Union of BC Municipalities

In Victoria call: 250 356-5134

Seniors in Communities

Website for local governments and communities.

Website: www.seniorsincommunities.ca

Seniors' Information

– BC Health and Seniors Information Line

In Greater Victoria call: 250 952-1742

Toll Free, call: 1 800 465-4911

Seniors Not Receiving Old Age Security

Contact the local Ministry of Housing and Social Development office.

Toll Free, call: 1 866 866-0800 (Press 3.)

Seniors' Services Society (Lower Mainland only)

In New Westminster call: 604 520-6621

Directory

Senior's Supplement

Toll Free, call: 1 866 866-0800 (Press 4, then 1.)

Service BC

Call for information on any Province of British Columbia service or program.

In Greater Victoria call: 250 387-6121

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 660-2421

Toll Free, call: 1 800 663-7867

Telephone Device for the Deaf, in Vancouver call: 604 775-0303

Toll Free, call: 1 800 661-8773

Service BC – Government Agents

100 Mile House

300 South Highway 97,
Box 1600,
100 Mile House, B.C. V0K 2E0
Call: 250 395-7832

Ashcroft

318 Railway Avenue, Box 189,
Ashcroft, B.C. V0K 1A0
Call: 250 453-2412

Atlin

3rd Street, Box 100,
Atlin, B.C. V0W 1A0
Call: 250 651-7595

Bella Coola

636 Cliff Street, Box 185,
Bella Coola, B.C. V0T 1C0
Call: 250 799-5361

Burns Lake

161 Highway 16, Bag 3500,
Burns Lake, B.C. V0J 1E0
Call: 250 692-2528

Campbell River

115 – 1180 Ironwood Road,
Campbell River, B.C. V9W 5P7
Call: 250 286-7555

Chetwynd

4744 – 52nd Street, Bag 105,
Chetwynd, B.C. V0C 1J0
Call: 250 788-2239

Chilliwack

Suite 1 – 45467 Yale Road West,
Chilliwack, B.C. V2R 3Z8
Call: 604 795-8415

Clinton

1423 Cariboo Highway, Box 70,
Clinton, B.C. V0K 1K0
Call: 250 459-2268

Courtenay

2500 Cliffe Avenue,
Courtenay, B.C. V9N 5M6
Call: 250 897-7500

Cranbrook

100 Cranbrook Street,
North Cranbrook, B.C. V1C 3P9
Call: 250 426-1211

Creston

1404 Canyon Street, Box 1190,
Creston, B.C. V0B 1G0
Call: 250 428-3211

Dawson Creek

1201 – 103rd Avenue,
Dawson Creek, B.C. V1G 4J2
Call: 250 784-2224

Dease Lake

Highway 37, Bag 2000,
Dease Lake, B.C. V0C 1L0
Call: 250 771-3700

Duncan

5785 Duncan Street,
Duncan, B.C. V9L 5G2
Call: 250 746-1400

Fernie

401 – 4th Avenue, Box 1000,
Fernie, B.C. V0B 1M0
Call: 250 423-6845

Fort Nelson

5319 – 50th Avenue,
South Bag 1000,
Fort Nelson, B.C. V0C 1R0
Call: 250 774-6945

Fort St. James

470 Stuart Drive, Box 1328,
Fort St. James, B.C. V0J 1P0
Call: 250 996-7585

Fort St. John

10600 – 100th Street,
Fort St. John, B.C. V1J 4L6
Call: 250 787-3350

Ganges

343 Lower Ganges Road,
Salt Spring Island, B.C. V8K 2V4
Call: 250 537-5414

Golden

903 – 9th Street South, Box 39,
Golden, B.C. V0A 1H0
Call: 250 344-7550

Grand Forks

7290 – 2nd Street, Box 850,
Grand Forks, B.C. V0H 1H0
Call: 250 442-4306

Directory

Hazelton

2210 Highway 62, PO Box 380,
Hazelton, B.C. V0J 1Y0
Call: 250 842-7624

Houston

3400 – 11th Street, Bag 2000,
Houston, B.C. V0J 1Z0
Call: 250 845-5828

Invermere

625 – 4th Street, Box 265,
Invermere, B.C. V0A 1K0
Call: 250 342-4260

Kamloops

250 – 455 Columbia Street,
Kamloops, B.C. V2C 6K4
Call: 250 828-4541

Kaslo

312 – 4th Street, Box 580,
Kaslo, B.C. V0G 1M0
Call: 250 353-2219

Kitimat

334 City Centre,
Kitimat, B.C. V8C 1T6
Call: 250 632-6188

Lillooet

Suite A – 639 Main Street,
Bag 700, Lillooet, B.C. V0K 1V0
Call: 250 256-7548

Mackenzie

540 Mackenzie Boulevard, Bag
5000, Mackenzie, B.C. V0J 2C0
Call: 250 997-4270

Maple Ridge

175 – 22470 Dewdney Trunk
Road, Maple Ridge, B.C.
V2X 5Z6
Call: 604 466-7470

Merritt

2194 Coutlee Avenue,
Box 4400, Stn. Main
Merritt, B.C. V1K 1B8
Call: 250 378-9343

Nakusp

204 – 6th Avenue, PO Box 128,
Nakusp, B.C. V0G 1R0
Call: 250 265-4865

Nanaimo

460 Selby Street,
Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 2R7
Call: 250 741-3636

Nelson

310 Ward Street,
Nelson, B.C. V1L 5S4
Call: 250 354-6104

Oliver

Room 101, Government Building,
9971 – 350th Avenue,
Box 5000, Oliver, B.C. V0H 1T0
Call: 250 498-3818

Penticton

40 Calgary Avenue,
Penticton, B.C. V2A 2T6
Call: 250 487-4200

Port Alberni

4711 Elizabeth Street,
Port Alberni, B.C. V9Y 6M1
Call: 250 724-9200

Port Hardy

8755 Granville Street,
Bag 11000,
Port Hardy, B.C. V0N 2P0
Call: 250 949-6323

Powell River

6953 Alberni Street,
Powell River, B.C. V8A 2B8
Call: 604 485-3622

Prince George

1044 – 5th Avenue,
Prince George, B.C. V2L 5G4
Call: 250 565-4488

Prince Rupert

201 – 3rd Avenue West,
Prince Rupert, B.C. V8J 1L2
Call: 250 624-7415

Princeton

151 Vermilion Avenue, Box 9,
Princeton, B.C. V0X 1W0
Call: 250 295-4600

Queen Charlotte

216 – 3rd Avenue, Box 309,
Queen Charlotte City, B.C.
V0T 1S0
Call: 250 559-4452

Quesnel

102 – 350 Barlow Avenue,
Quesnel, B.C. V2J 2C2
Call: 250 992-4313

Revelstoke

Room 104, Court House,
1123 Second Street West
Box 380,
Revelstoke, B.C. V0E 2S0
Call: 250 837-6981

Salmon Arm

850A – 16th Street, NE Bag 100,
Salmon Arm, B.C. V1E 4S4
Call: 250 832-1611

Sechelt

102 – 5710 Teredo Street,
Box 950, Sechelt, B.C. V0N 3A0
Call: 604 885-5187

Smithers

1020 Murray Street, Bag 5000,
Smithers, B.C. V0J 2N0
Call: 250 847-7207

Directory

Sparwood

96 Greenwood Shopping Mall,
Box 1086, Sparwood, B.C. V0B 2G0
Call: 250 425-6890

Squamish

1360 Pemberton Avenue,
Box 1008,
Squamish, B.C. V8B 0A7
Call: 604 892-2400

Stewart

703 Brightwell Street, Box 127,
Stewart, B.C. V0T 1W0
Call: 250 636-2294

Terrace

101 – 3220 Eby Street,
Terrace, B.C. V8G 5K8
Call: 250 638-6515

Trail

1050 Eldorado Street,
Trail, B.C. V1R 3V7
Call: 250 364-0591

Ucluelet

5 – 1620 Peninsula Road,
Box 609, Ucluelet, B.C. V0R 3A0
Call: 250 726-7025

Valemount

1201 – 5th Avenue, Box 657,
Valemount, B.C. V0E 2Z0
Call: 250 566-4448

Vanderhoof

189 East Stewart Street,
Box 1459, Vanderhoof, B.C.
V0J 3A0
Call: 250 567-6301

Vernon

3201 – 30th Street,
Vernon, B.C. V1T 9G3
Call: 250 549-5511

Williams Lake

540 Borland Street,
Williams Lake, B.C. V2G 1R8
Call: 250 398-4211

Service Canada

For information on any Government of Canada program or service, call Service Canada toll free at 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232).

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)

In the Lower Mainland call: 604 433-2218
Toll Free, call: 1 800 257-7756

Subsidized Housing

(See BC Housing.)

T

Targeted Initiative for Older Workers

E-mail address: LabourMarket.DevBranch@gov.bc.ca.

Taxi Bill of Rights

Website: www.taxirights.gov.bc.ca/

Taxi Saver Program

BC Transit

In Greater Victoria call: 250 385-2551

Website: www.bctransit.com

TransLink

Call: 604 575-6600

Website: www.translink.bc.ca

Temporary Premium Assistance

PO Box 9627 STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9P1

Telephone: Toll-free: 1 800 207-2051

Victoria: 250 356-8285

Fax: 250 387-8021

E-mail: TPA@gov.bc.ca

Telephone Device for the Deaf

In Greater Vancouver call: 604 775-0303

Toll Free, call: 1 800 661-8773

Directory

Transit Seniors Fare Discount

Victoria Regional Transit System

Call: 250 382-6161

Metro Vancouver Transit System

Call: 604 953-3333

TransLink

Call: 604 575-6600

Travel Assistance Program

In Greater Victoria call: 250 952-2657

Toll Free, call: 1 800 661-2668

V

Veteran Specialty Licence Plates

To apply for a veteran specialty plate, print the application form from ICBC's website or pick up a copy from your Autoplan broker.

Website: www.icbc.com/registration/reg_spec_lic_plates_vet_plates.asp

Contact the British Columbia Veterans Commemorative Association for more information on the application process or eligibility requirements.

Call: 604 876-2838

Website: www.bcveterans.org/

Veterans Affairs Canada

Toll Free, call: 1 866 522-2122

Website: www.vac-acc.gc.ca

Victim Services

VictimLINK Information and Referral Line

Toll Free, call: 1 800 563-0808

Volunteer BC

Email: volbc@vcn.bc.ca
Website: www.volunteerbc.bc.ca

VolWeb.ca™

Website: www.VolWeb.ca

W

Women's Services

Community Programs Branch

Ministry of Housing and Social Development

Transition House: South Surrey – Atira Women's Resource Society,

Ama House

Call: 604 542-5992

Safe Homes

Victoria

Victoria Women's Transition House

In Victoria call: 250 380-7527

Crisis line call: 250 385-6611

Penticton

South Okanagan Women In Need

Call: 250 493-7233

Creston

Kootenay Community Centre Society, Irvine House

Crisis line call: 250 428-6856

Directory

Second Stage Housing

Victoria Women's Transition House, Harrison Place

Call: 250 385-2103

WorkSafeBC

Administers workplace safety and the workers' compensation system in the event a worker is hurt as a result of their work.

Employer and Small Business Inquiries

Call: 604 244-6181

Toll Free, call: 1 888 922-2768

Worker Services Inquiries (Claims Call Centre)

Call: 604 231-8888

Toll Free, call: 1 888 967-5377

To report unsafe working conditions or an emergency:

Toll Free, during business hours call: 1 888 621-SAFE (1 888 621-7233)

Toll Free, after hours call: 1 866 922-4357

To file a claim for workplace injury, illness or disease:

Toll Free, call: 1 888 WORKERS (1 888 967-5377)

For TELUS, Rogers or Bell Mobility customers during business hours

call: #5377

Website: www.worksafebc.com



Ministry of
Healthy Living
and Sport