COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) STATEMENT

**City of New Westminster declares local state of emergency**

New Westminster Hyack Festival Association is currently keeping up to date with the developments surrounding the emergence of COVID-19. We are communicating and coordinating with our members, non-profits, festival partners, and local municipality to ensure we are guided by evidence-based recommendations published by [Fraser Health Authority](https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/coronavirus#.Xmvo2koTG00), [BC Centre for Disease Control](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/coronavirus-%28novel%29), and the [Public Health Agency of Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html#a1).

Our Mayor Jonathan Cote announced today that New Westminster has declared a local state of emergency. The order, which is approved by the province, gives city officials the power to take extraordinary measure to combat COVID-19. Among the powers granted are the ability to enforce directives given by health officials, close facilities and businesses, limit hoarding and enforce rationing, access buildings if needed and take measures to protect vulnerable populations.

The health and safety of members, staff and volunteers is our top priority, and we are carefully reviewing updates to determine our course of action during this time.  We would like to assure our community that we are committed to the safety of all who attend our events and are taking the appropriate measures to help ensure that participants will experience a safe and healthy environment.

As such, we are announcing that the following events are no longer taking place (cancelled or postponed):

**Volunteer Social,** March 28 @ 6:30 pm – Postponed until further notice.

**Hyack Ambassador “First Night”**, JIBC, April 17 @ 6:30 pm – Postponed until further notice.

**Hyack Ambassador “Evening of Stars” Awards Gala**, Douglas College Theatre, April 18 @ 6:30 pm – Postponed until further notice.

All pre-purchased tickets on eventbrite.ca will be refunded by request, please contact Hyack office.

**Events in May are currently being evaluated and we will make an announcement closer to the festival dates.**

What we can continue to collectively do:

* Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
* Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
* Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
* Stay home if you are sick.
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

In compliance with Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry’s recommendation, New Westminster Hyack Festival Association will be conducting all meetings through Zoom (online video conferencing software) in order to maximize social distancing and to protect the health and safety of our community members. Should any new governmental directives require additional cancellation or closure of our events, participants will be advised, and updated messages will be posted on the our website: [www.hyackfestival.com](http://www.hyackfestival.com).

Sincerely,

Vincent Chik
Executive Director, New Westminster Hyack Festival Association

Last updated: March 20, 2020