

More beds to help people recovering from addictions  
Supporting Human Rights and Inclusion  
More Post Secondary Education opportunities  
The Province of BC now offers parenting supports for those in separation  
[Holiday Treats, & Street Greet – RRL office – Dec 16<sup>th</sup>](#)

Dear Constituent,

The further we dig into the holiday season, the busier it seems to get. I hope that during this preparation time, we continue to keep in mind those in need and support our neighbours.

### **[B.C. announces 47 new addiction recovery beds, converts 58 private spots to public](#)**

We all know treatment and supportive recovery services were neglected in B.C., and many people suffered from a fragmented system of care. People in B.C. will now have greater access to substance-use treatment and recovery services as 105 newly funded beds are fully operational across the province. Here in the Comox Valley, The Comox Valley Transition Society is receiving \$425,000 to convert 3 beds from private-pay to publicly funded, making treatment more accessible. As I have said, we know that “[h]aving access to a treatment bed at the right time can be critical for people looking for help with substance use and other challenges,”. See the full story here:

[https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021MMHA0065-002320?fbclid=IwAR25QxJ3IXBeWn3ylbVffhZW1D3NEa\\_oLzqTQgy06jGYuATXLmblZjnTsbs](https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021MMHA0065-002320?fbclid=IwAR25QxJ3IXBeWn3ylbVffhZW1D3NEa_oLzqTQgy06jGYuATXLmblZjnTsbs)

### **Supporting Human Rights and Inclusion**

Everyone deserves to be able to fully participate in their community, but we know that many people face barriers. In his Human Rights Day statement, the Premier said: "Shifting toward recovery from the pandemic, our government remains focused on rebuilding a better and fairer world for everyone. With a focus on equality for all, we can help break cycles of systemic discrimination, create a more sustainable and inclusive society, and ensure a better future for our children." He said: "We are currently engaging with racialized and marginalized communities about how to collect race-based data to improve government services and address systemic barriers. What we hear from communities over the coming months will help to inform how our anti-racism data legislation will be implemented once it is introduced in 2022. This legislation will help tackle inequality head on and pave the way to a more inclusive province."

Additionally, the province announced that 15 community-based projects have received over \$450,000 in grants to help increase accessibility and community inclusion for British Columbians with disabilities. We're committed to building more accessible and inclusive communities, and empowering people with disabilities to have a direct role in identifying the barriers that prevent them from participating fully in their communities.

### **More Post Secondary Education opportunities**

This week our government announced that students throughout B.C. will have access to as many as 3,000 new co-op and work integrated learning opportunities in 2021-22. I personally recognize the value of these programs, because both of my kids were able to explore different pathways and launched successful careers, thanks to student co-ops. [Students prep for jobs with more work experience opportunities](#)

I am equally pleased to share that Electric Vehicle Maintenance Training program has expanded to Camosun College. The program provides Red Seal automotive technicians with the skills they need to work on EVs, supports the growing demand for EVs in B.C. and prepares British Columbians for good-paying jobs in the burgeoning clean-energy economy. Training our young people in relevant fields that support our green future is key in transitioning from fossil fuels. See the news release here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021EMLI0075-002351>

### **The Province of BC now offers parenting supports for those in separation**

British Columbia families going through separation will soon have more access to parenting supports and courses, as well as continued support for different ways to attend court appearances, as a result of updates to the rules governing family court. Beginning Jan. 4, 2022, prior to appearing in Provincial Court family matters, participants will be required to take the Parenting After Separation or Parenting After Separation for Indigenous Families course. Currently, this is a requirement in only 21 of the 89 court registries in the province. These courses help parents to make careful and informed decisions about their separation and offer strategies for keeping the focus on what is best for their child. The free courses are available online and are valuable resources for parents and family members, whether or not the court is involved. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021AG0181-002344>

### **Holiday Treats and Street Greet outside my office**

**There truly is so much for us to be thankful for and to celebrate this festive season. Over half a million booster shots have been administered, children are now being protected as well, and we live in a generous and involved community. Please consider donating this season. There are a lot of organizations help people and families enjoy the holidays. One place to donate is the food bank – they have really seen an uptick in people over 50 years old and young families accessing the food bank.**

**And in that festive spirit, I would love to see you drop by for a safe, outdoor hot chocolate, treats for your dog, and kids can colour my next year's Christmas card at the Holiday Treat, Street & Greet on December 16<sup>th</sup> from 2pm-4pm outside my office at 437 5<sup>th</sup> Street.**

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about any provincial issue, please don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to help you. My office can be reached at 250.703.2410 or [Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca). Office hours are Monday-Thursday 10am-4pm.

Sincerely,

Ronna-Rae Leonard

Ronna-Rae Leonard MLA for Courtenay-Comox  
437 5<sup>th</sup> St, Courtenay BC  
Ph: 250-703-2410  
Community Office Hours: Monday to Thursday, 10 am to 4 pm

MY OFFICE REMAINS OPEN TO ASSIST BY PHONE OR EMAIL  
[www.ronnaraeleonard.ca](http://www.ronnaraeleonard.ca)



*It is a privilege to live and work on the traditional lands of the K'omoks First Nations.*

**Helpful Resources:**

- For medical info on COVID-19, visit [covid-19.bccdc.ca](http://covid-19.bccdc.ca) or call 811
- For vaccination info and the BC vaccine card, [visit this page](#).
- For financial supports for people and businesses, [visit this page](#).
- For PHO orders and guidance, [visit this page](#).
- For mental health and substance-use supports, visit [wellbeing.gov.bc.ca](http://wellbeing.gov.bc.ca)