



# ACDS COVID-19 Advocacy Activities

## MARCH to OCTOBER 2020

Since the COVID-19 public health emergency was declared in mid-March 2020, ACDS has intensified supports to the Community Disability Service (CDS) sector. Through the Service Provider Partnership Committee (SPPC) and with regular communication with service providers and Alberta Community and Social Services (CSS), ACDS has kept abreast of emerging issues and been a central player influencing the collaborative development of policy responses.

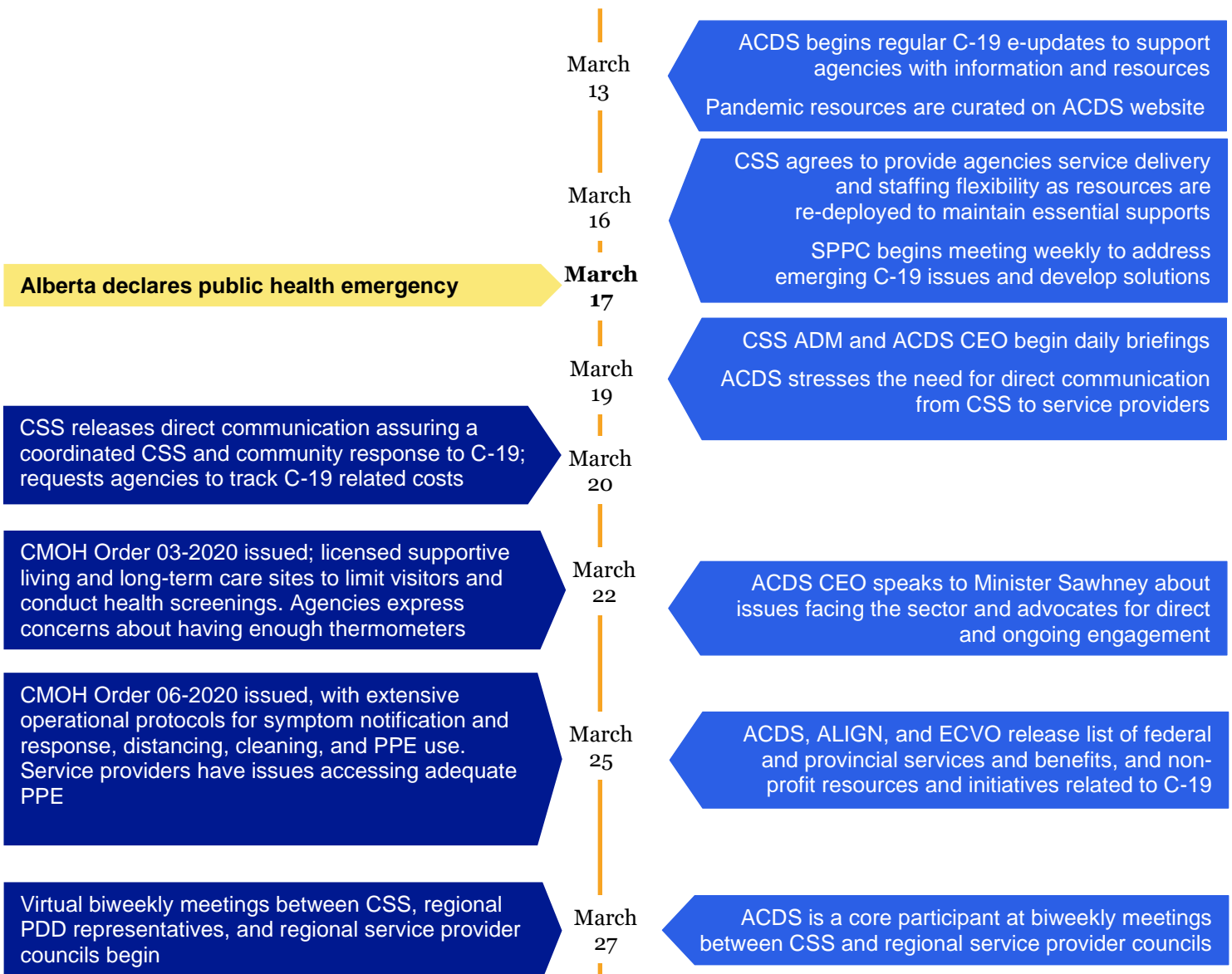
## MARCH 2020

Provincial public health emergency issued. Public health orders guide operations at care sites.

**ACDS advocates CSS to enhance direct communication with service providers, allow service delivery and staffing flexibility, recognise COVID costs, and support agencies to interpret health guidelines and access PPE.**

### Events and Developments

### ACDS Activities and Responses



# ACDS COVID-19 Advocacy Activities

## APRIL 2020

Health orders restrict staff movement across care facilities, and there is confusion in how these apply to community disability residences; staffing challenges and access to PPE are exacerbated.

**ACDS advocates for CSS to coordinate access to PPE, provide written communication to help clarify health orders, and raises concerns about staffing challenges. Through SPPC, ACDS supports CSS to develop revised C-19 invoicing for greater contract flexibility.**

### Events and Developments

### ACDS Activities and Responses

Telephone Town Hall with Minister Sawhney, Minister Schulz and Dr. Hinshaw to provide clarity on health guidelines for licensed sites

AHS C-19 Coordinated Response Line is available to support congregate living site operators with symptom reporting, questions or concerns

CMOH 08-2020 issued; movement of staff across sites is restricted and strict guidelines are in place for reporting C-19 outbreak

CMOH Order 09-2020 issued; visits to mandated facilities restricted only to provide essential care or if resident is near death

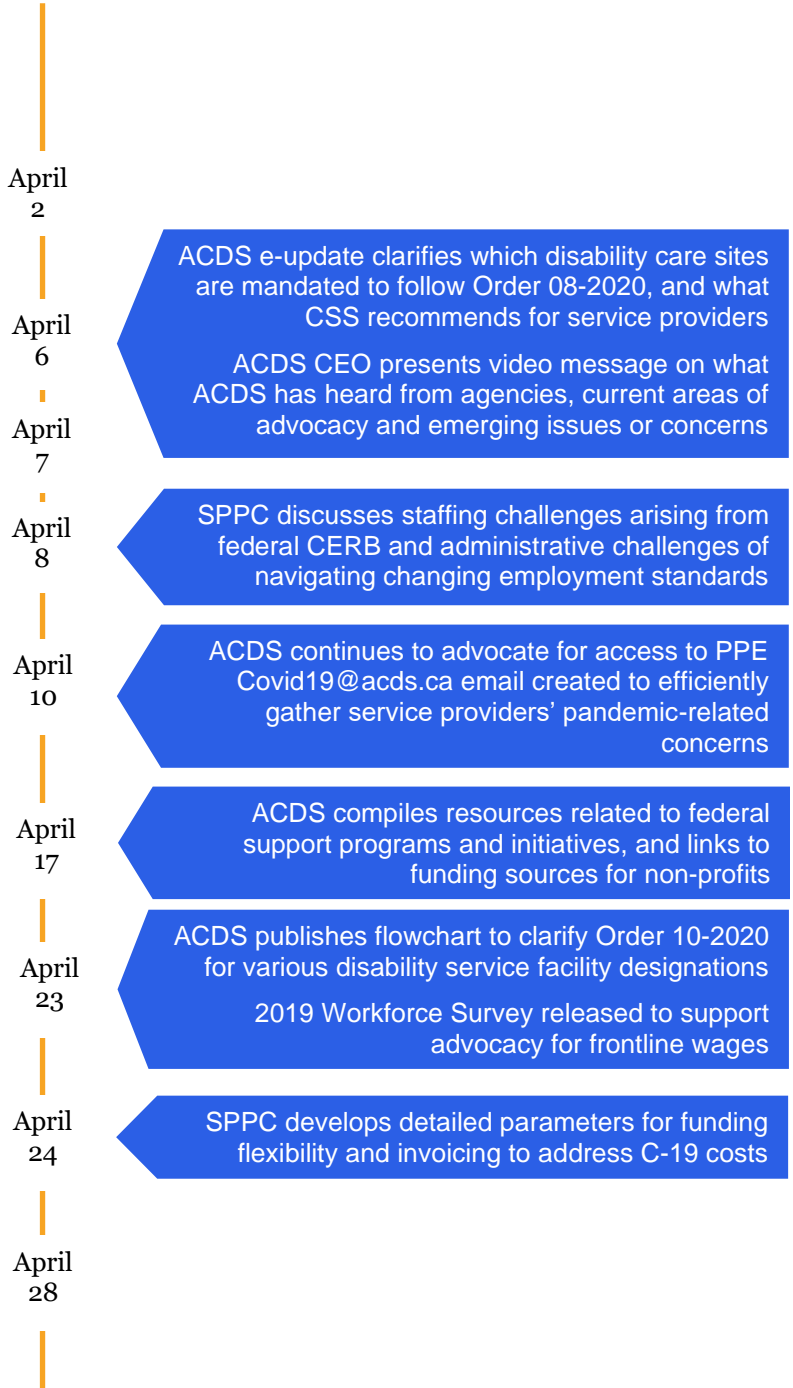
CMOH Order 10-2020 issued. Part 1 restricts staff to single care facility effective April 23, causing concerns of loss of staff to better-paying facilities. Continuous masking mandated for direct care work causes concerns arising from inadequate PPE supplies. Part 2 updates operational and outbreak standards. Complexity of order causes widespread confusion for disability sector home operators.

CSS responds to ACDS pressure for: (i) increased clarity and communication, by launching weekly Q&A for disability sector based on questions brought to ACDS and regional councils; (ii) PPE supplies, by temporarily coordinating orders via regional PDD offices

CSS releases C-19 invoicing process giving greater contract flexibility and recognising C-19 costs

CMOH Order 12-2020 issued, providing guidelines to support quality of life, testing directives and expanded list of C-19 symptoms

CMOH Order 14-2020 issued, allowing temporary replacement for designated essential visitor and allowing outdoor visits with some restrictions



# **COVID-19 Advocacy Activities**

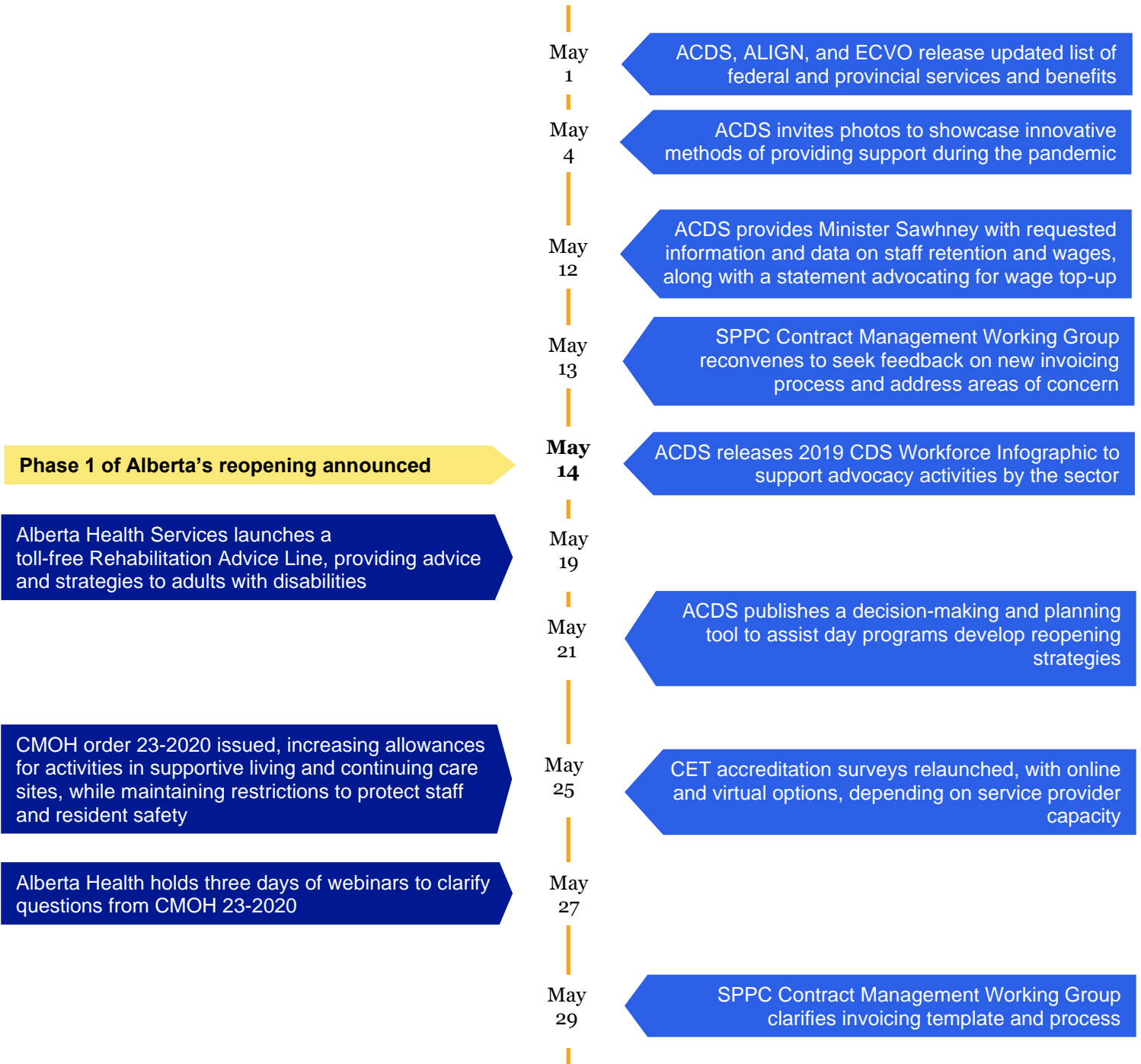
## **MAY 2020**

Phase 1 of Alberta's reopening begins May 14. Health orders gradually and cautiously relax restrictions.

**ACDS advocates for clear guidance from CSS for the reopening of community access programs and prepares a tool to assist service providers develop their reopening plans. ACDS also provides workforce information to the Minister and a statement advocating for wage top-up. A one-pager on workforce data is also released to support sector advocacy.**

### **Events and Developments**

### **ACDS Activities and Responses**





# ACDS COVID-19 Advocacy Activities

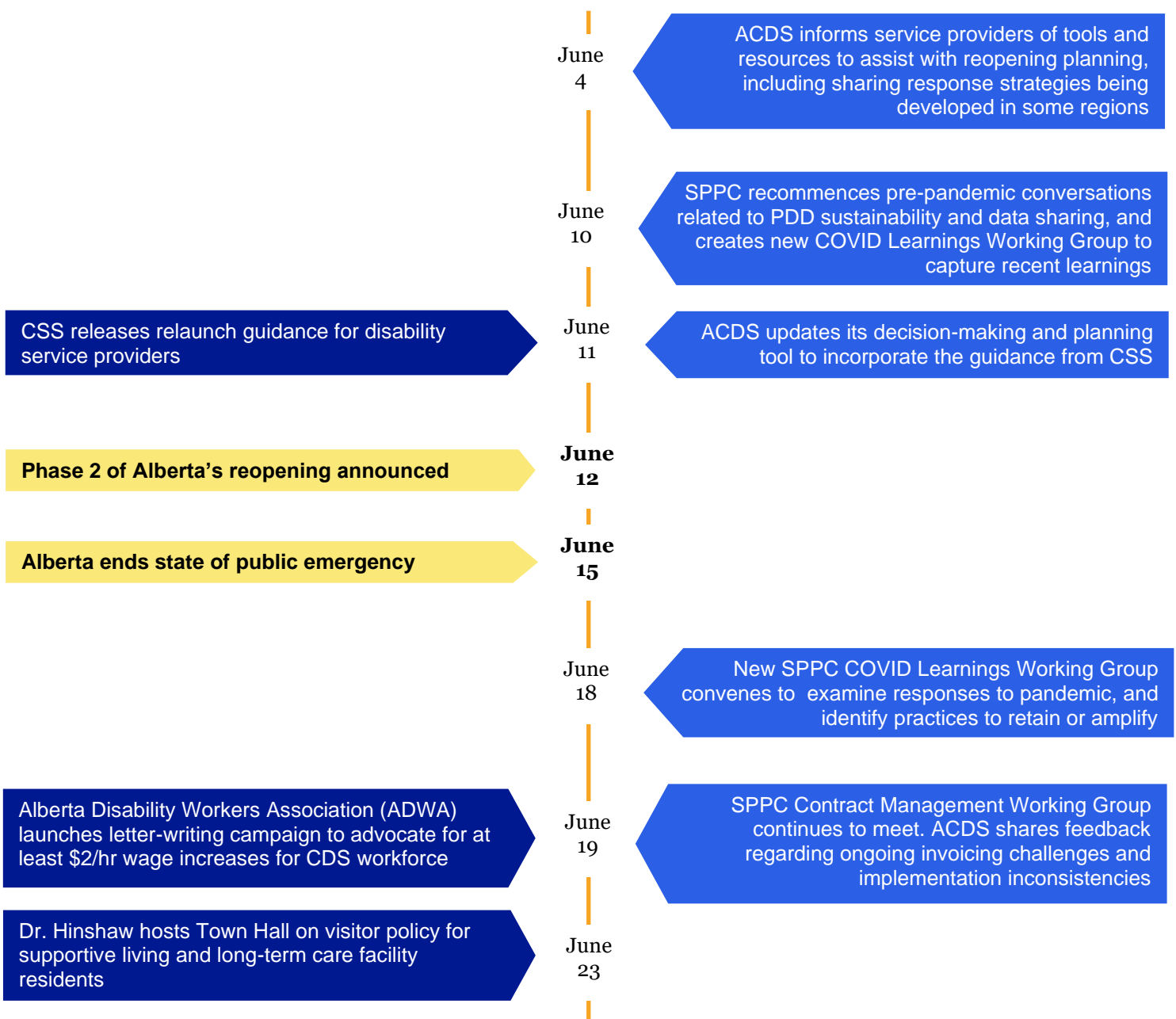
## JUNE 2020

Phase 2 of Alberta’s reopening begins June 12; public health emergency is lifted June 15. Health guidelines increasing some allowances while restricting other create confusion and conflicting pressures. Reopening of non-essential services creates new staffing deployment issues.

**ACDS advocates for CSS to engage with Health to make appropriate adjustments and exemptions to mandatory regulations to reflect differences in risks between sites, and to provide services with information and tools to make reasoned risk assessments in their reopening approach. Invoicing process is clarified and SPPC launches COVID Learnings Working Group to assess responses and identify key learnings from the pandemic.**

### Events and Developments

### ACDS Activities and Responses





# COVID-19 Advocacy Activities

## JULY 2020

Visitation restrictions relax in long-term care facilities and school re-entry plan is announced.

**ACDS supports CDS sector relaunch, SPPC resumes discussions on systemic issues, and ACDS submits formal response to Premier’s Council on Charities and Civil Society.**

### Events and Developments

### ACDS Activities and Responses

Minister Sawhney and senior CSS staff consult with academics and researchers to discuss opportunities and challenges in PDD, FSCD, AISH, and Income Supports

July 6

ACDS Director of Strategic Services and Stakeholder Engagement is invited to participate in Minister Sawhney’s Disability Advisory Forum

Bill 32, the Restoring Balance in Alberta’s Workplaces Act, is introduced in the Legislature

July 7

SPPC COVID Learnings Working Group summarizes key learnings and provides recommendations to support governance, flexibility, collaboration, and innovation in the sector

July 9

ACDS makes their return to office guidelines publicly available as an example for any organization planning their own return to office

July 10

CMOH order 29-2020 issued, giving long-term care facilities greater visitation flexibility  
Alberta Health releases an updated Q&A for CMOH 23-2020, answering questions on health screenings, testing and isolation

July 16

ACDS is invited to participate in Premier’s Council on Charities and Civil Society consultation on what Alberta’s civil society needs to to guide recovery

July 20

Alberta Education announces schools re-entry plan for September under scenario 1 (near normal operations with health measures in place)

July 21

ACDS submits formal response to Premier’s Council on Charities and Civil Society consultation, advocating for: sustainable and flexible funding; reduced regulatory burdens; supports to enhance overall organizational capacity (not just service delivery); better understanding of cross-system impacts; and stronger collaboration mechanisms

July 31

# ACDS COVID-19 Advocacy Activities

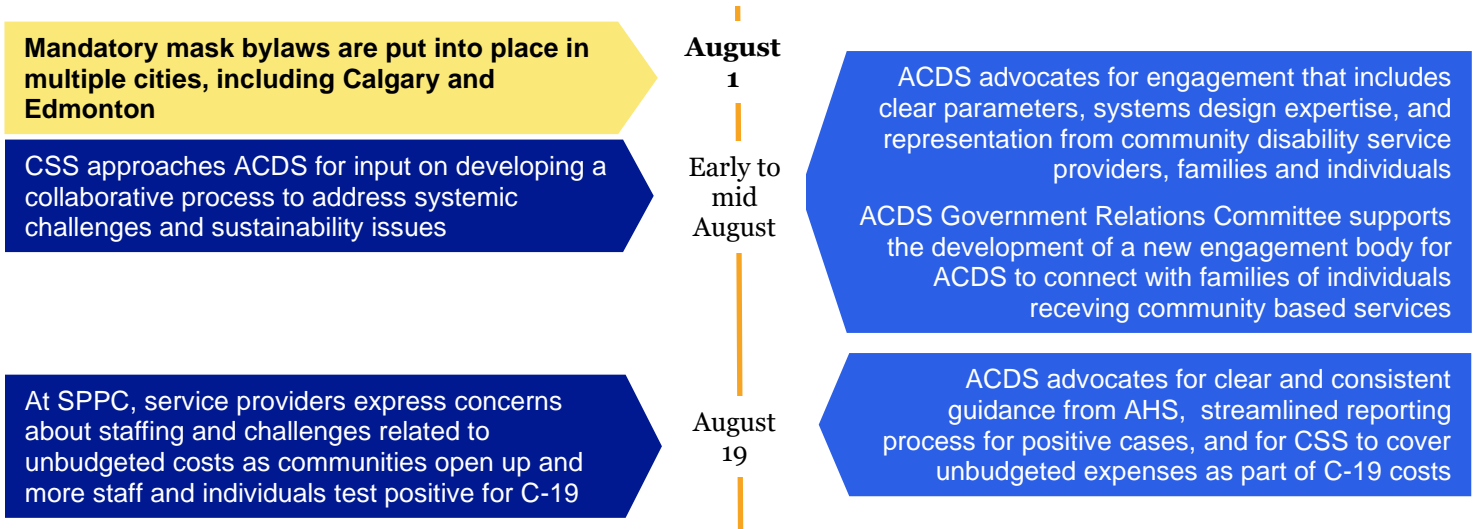
## AUGUST 2020

Masking bylaws are implemented in various communities across the province. Increasing numbers of staff and individuals begin testing positive for C-19. Staff coverage costs start exceeding budgeted amounts; some staff express reluctance to work in homes where positive C-19 cases are reported.

**ACDS advocates for clear guidance from AHS, and for CSS to allow unbudgeted coverage costs to be claimed under C-19 expenses. CSS invites input from ACDS on developing a collaborative process to address sustainability challenges through system transformation.**

### Events and Developments

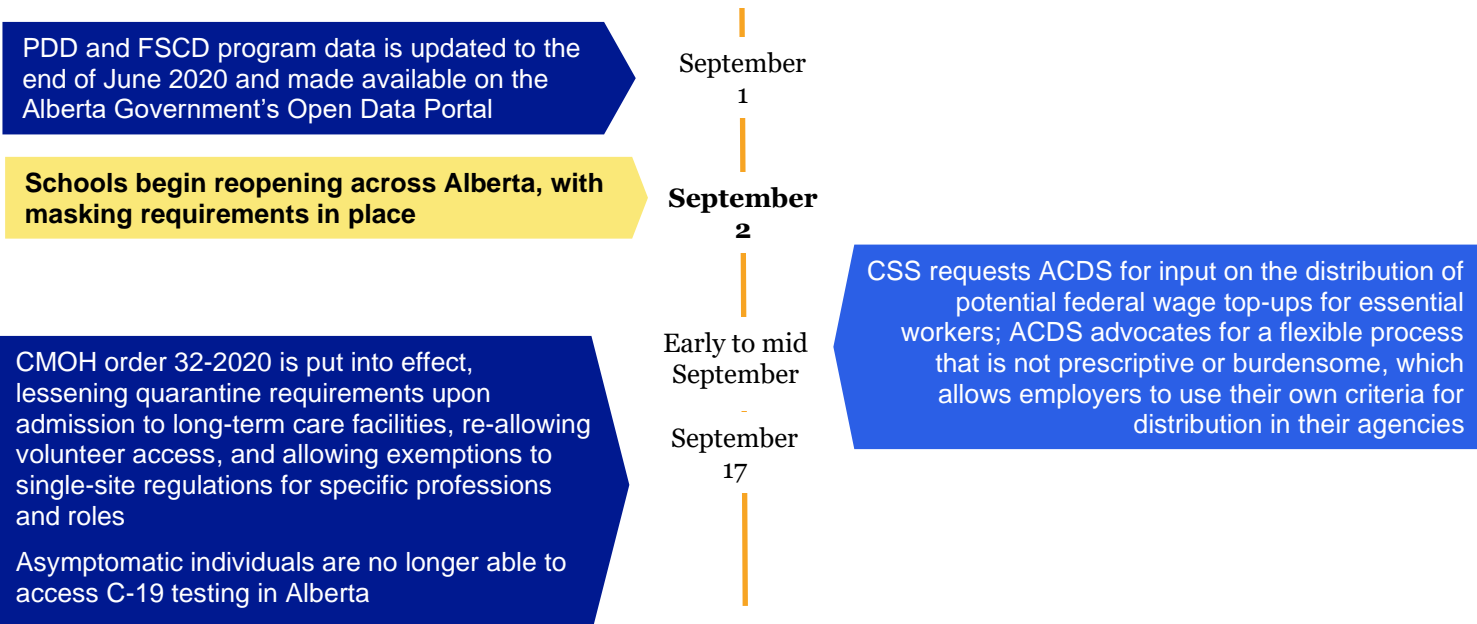
### ACDS Activities and Responses



## September 2020

Schools reopen in Alberta, a broader range of PDD data becomes publicly available, some public health restrictions are relaxed for care facilities, and new federal programs are announced.

**ACDS supports the sector with information on federal programs, and provides input to CSS on distribution of federal wage top-ups if these were to become available to workers in the CDS sector.**





# COVID-19 Advocacy Activities

## October 2020

As federal CERB comes to an end, workers are transitioned to an expanded version of Employment Insurance and a new sickness and caregiving benefit (CRSB and CRCB). C-19 cases begin to rise in mid-October, resulting in a 15-person limit on social gatherings in Calgary and Edmonton.

**ACDS resumes committees that had been paused due to C-19, and launches the #QualityCDS campaign to celebrate and share facts about the CDS sector. A report detailing impacts and learnings from the first 6 months of C-19 is produced to help inform improvements to PDD program sustainability and supports.**

### Events and Developments

### ACDS Activities and Responses

