

# Canada shuts Parliament, Trudeau in quarantine, no travel

March 13 2020, by Rob Gillies

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In this Oct. 22, 2019, file photo, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau celebrates with his wife, Sophie Gregoire Trudeau, in Montreal after winning a minority government. Trudeau's office says Sophie Gregoire Trudeau has tested positive for the coronavirus. (Ryan Remiorz/The Canadian Press via AP)

Canada shut down Parliament and advised against all nonessential travel outside the country Friday while Prime Minister Justin Trudeau governed remotely from his home, in self-imposed quarantine after his wife tested positive for the new coronavirus.

Dr. Theresa Tam, the chief public health officer, also advised more social distancing, no handshakes and kisses, while the Canadian government advised cancelling large events like concerts and Transport Minister Marc Garneau said cruise ships with more than 500 people will not be able to dock in Canada until July 1.

Overseas flights returning to Canada will also be restricted to a small number of airports.

Canada's House of Commons voted to shut down for at least five weeks to help ensure lawmakers do not contribute to the spread of the virus.

The moves came a day after Trudeau's wife tested positive. The prime minister himself has been in self-imposed quarantine.

"I will remain in self isolation for 14 days. I want to be clear. I have no symptoms and I feel very well," Trudeau said at a news conference outside his residence in Ottawa.

"Technology allows me to work from home."

All parties in Parliament agreed to the suspension, which means lawmakers will miss two weeks of sessions since they had previously planned to be away next week and two weeks in April. The House is scheduled to next meet on Monday, April 20.

"This just shows you how seriously our government and members of the house are taking this," Government House leader Pablo Rodriguez said.



Minister of Health Patty Hajdu looks on as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks during a news conference in Ottawa, Wednesday March 11, 2020. Canada is announcing \$1 billion (\$730 million) in funding to help health-care workers cope with the increasing number of new cases of coronavirus and to help Canadian workers who are forced to isolate themselves. (Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press via AP)

Part of the deal for closing Parliament for five weeks was ratifying the new replacement for the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Rodriguez said lawmakers have passed legislation to ratify the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, and the Senate was expected to follow suit later Friday.

The suspension of the House of Commons means the [federal budget](#) won't be presented March 30 as Finance Minister Bill Morneau had promised, but would come at a later date.

Trudeau was quarantining himself at home because his wife, Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, tested positive for the new [coronavirus](#) after returning from Britain. He said Friday his wife has mild flu-like symptoms but is doing fine. He said neither he nor their three children are showing symptoms.

Trudeau said significant stimulus will be announced soon.

"I know that you are worried," Trudeau said.

"Nobody should have to worry about paying rent, buying groceries."

Trudeau was spending the day in briefings, [phone calls](#) and virtual meetings from home, including speaking with other world leaders and joining a special Cabinet committee discussion on the coronavirus. Trudeau spoke with U.S. President Donald Trump and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday.

He said his kids are also in self isolation and have been playing with LEGOs. He said his wife has been talking to family and friends on the phone.

Trudeau himself had not been tested because he was not showing symptoms, his office said. The doctor's advice to the [prime minister](#) is to continue daily activities while self-monitoring.



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