

AFN Alberta COVID-19 Bulletin



Tuesday, July 7

AFN Alberta is summarizing updates and information we are receiving on our website. All our previous bulletins can be found on this page as well: <http://www.afnab.ca/News-and-Events/Coronavirus>.

AFN Alberta will be issuing its COVID-19 updates twice per week going forward.

The next bulletin will be sent Thursday, July 9

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

AB Testing Results	July 2	July 7	Change
Tests Completed	464,070	493,935	+29,865
Total Positive	8,202	8,436	+234
Active	542	620	+72
Fatalities	155	157	+7,659
Recoveries	7,505	7,659	+154
COVID-19 Regional Data for Alberta Calgary zone - 5,380 Edmonton zone - 1,068 Central zone - 92 South zone - 1,333 North zone - 315 Unidentified zone - 14		COVID-19 in Alberta First Nations* (As of July 7) Calgary Zone - 26 North Zone - 5 South Zone - 30 Unidentified Zone - 32	

New Measures

- Alberta is now in phase 2 of its COVID-19 relaunch. [Click here](#) for relaunch guidance documents.
- Canada created a web hub for buying and supplying PPE. [Click here](#) to access it.
- Alberta is now allowing anyone in the province to get tested for COVID-19, even if they don't have symptoms. Asymptomatic testing can be scheduled through the online AHS COVID-19 self-assessment tool [here](#).

First Nation-specific Updates .

- Last week Alberta announced a new fund to help Indigenous community-owned businesses. [Click here](#) for more information.
- Alberta Health is available on request to support First Nations in developing guidelines around ceremonies.

National and Regional Updates

- *No notable national and regional updates*

INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS FOR FIRST NATIONS

****NEW* Guidance on Re-Opening Northern, Remote, Isolated Indigenous Communities***

ISC has released a final version of their guidance document on re-opening Indigenous communities in northern and remote settings. Please find it attached to this update.

****RECAP* [Alberta Fund to help Indigenous community-owned businesses](#)***

As of Monday (June 29), community-owned businesses can apply to the Aboriginal Business Investment fund (ABIF) for initiatives that “demonstrate social and economic benefits for their communities.” Alberta is providing up to \$500,000 in investments through this call for proposals. [Click here](#) for more information.

Communities must own and control 51 per cent or more of the proposed business or joint venture to be eligible. Eligible projects must demonstrate how they will increase:

- employment opportunities for Indigenous people
- local revenue streams for Indigenous communities
- the economies of Indigenous communities

Updates from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

ISC All Chiefs Call FNIHB HQ Schedule

During the summer months, ISC will host All Chiefs calls once a month (scheduling TBD).

Request for Proposals for Indigenous Businesses

Canada released a new request for proposals (RFO) for cloth face masks. This RFP is strictly limited to Aboriginal Businesses. Information on this RFP is available at <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/procurement-data/tender-notice/PW-20-00918955>.

CALL & MEETING SUMMARIES

July 7 | AFN Chiefs Committee on Health

The Chiefs Committee on Health (CCoH) met today to receive their regular update from FNIHB and, at the request of Regional Chief Poitras, received a presentation from Health Canada about drug shortages. Please find attached the meeting materials. **Key highlights:**

- Updates were provided from the AFN COVID-19 task force working groups as they continue to developing a discussion paper:
 - The pandemic plan working group is working on language about food security, and is focusing on developing guidelines that will have longevity beyond COVID-19.
 - The reopening working group is reflecting on lessons learned to develop guidance on re-opening for FNs.

- The data group is working with FNIGC to make the case for a national health First Nations data strategy. There's a commitment from Canada to present the data views of the task force at a Federal-Provincial-Territorial government table.
- At the recommendation of RC Poitras, Health Canada gave a presentation on drug shortages during the pandemic.
- Health Canada now requires the pharmaceutical industry to report drug shortages. These can be viewed publicly on drugshortagescanada.ca
- Health Canada, together with the Province of Alberta, launched a Multi Stakeholder Steering Committee on Drug Shortages (MSSC) made up of government, industry and health care representatives, to work towards a more rigorous and coordinated approach to drug shortages.
- Actions taken during COVID-19:
 - Health Canada has been proactively securing a domestic drug supply through engagement with industry and provincial territorial governments.
 - The Minister of Health signed an Interim Order on March 30 th to help prevent and alleviate shortages of drugs, medical devices, and foods for a special dietary purpose resulting directly or indirectly from the COVID 19 pandemic
 - This order facilitated importation of drugs not approved for use in Canada but that meet comparable manufacturing standards while labelled for other countries (e.g. UK, US English only labelling)
- Canada is now developing an allocation framework to determine how drugs that are in high-demand can be best distributed based on needs. Canada is also exploring creating a national stockpile of drugs.
- Officials were pressed on having more direct communications with First Nations on drug shortages, not just through ISC or provinces and territories, especially as they work on these new policy measures.
- In spite of an increase in COVID-19 cases on-reserve, First Nations continue to have an infection rate four times lower than Canadians, a fatality rate three times lower than Canadians, and a higher recovery rate than Canadians.
- The epidemiological data for First Nations shows that the 20-39 age group is contracting COVID-19 at a higher rate than Canadians. This may explain why the recovery and fatality outcomes are better for First Nations.

****RECAP* July 2 | Health Co-Management Committee Meeting***

Regional Chief Poitras was scheduled to provide an update on the National and Regional actions of AFN during this meeting, unfortunately, prior to the allocated time on the agenda, quorum was lost as there were conflicting commitments - The update has been rescheduled to next Friday. **Below are some other highlights from the meeting:**

- Updates were provided by FNIHB Dr. Wong and Dr. Adam which mirrored the ISC National update with Alberta chiefs last week. For Alberta Dr. Yacoub and Dr. Sarin provided an update:

- Of note was the information about the recent surge of cases in NZ and Calgary Zone, which was attributed to: Increased asymptomatic and symptomatic testing as requested by communities; mass social gatherings in community; and non-essential travel to another community.
- It was stressed that it is important to continue to physically distance and follow other public health measures.
- Also stressed was the importance for the elderly and those with pre-existing or chronic conditions to take additional precautions with their health such as getting the flu vaccine in the fall, and cutting back on smoking.
- Dr. Hinshaw reiterated that Alberta Health Services is available to provide guidance on ceremony. They also had a conversation with public health physicians from Manitoba.
 - Of note: Manitoba has no cases on reserve. They have developed a guidance document on ceremonial practices and COVID protections. They are happy to get copies of this document to chiefs who request it.
- It was further noted that singing will project the virus farther than talking.
- Concern was expressed for elders in long term care facilities. Families are not advised in a timely manner of serious health crisis for elders. In one example an elder was not treated or sent to hospital until the family intervened. AHS is going to look into the two facilities that were mentioned during the call

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES

Summaries and information of the following can be found in the update below.

- ***Canada's COVID-19 Update - July 3rd***
- ****RECAP* Alberta's COVID-19 Update - July 2nd***
- ****RECAP* Alberta Announces Recovery Plan***

Canada's COVID-19 Update - July 3rd

The Prime Minister did not provide a COVID-19 briefing today (July 7) as he continues with his virtual cabinet retreat. Speaking from the road on July 3, he highlighted several measures his government introduced to help people during the pandemic. Dr. Tam then provided a brief update. **Key highlights:**

- There have been 104,772 cases including 8,642 deaths. 65% of people have now recovered. Labs nationwide have tested 2.8+ million people for COVID-19. An average of 37,000 people are tested daily, with 1% returning positive.
- Prime Minister Trudeau highlighted investments and measures like the \$100 M in funding for Canada's food banks, infrastructure investments in BC, the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, which has helped retain 2.8 million employees across the country,
- **Tomorrow**, finance minister Bill Morneau will release Canada's economic and financial snapshot. This will give Canadians a picture of where the economy is right now, how our

response compares to that of other countries, and what we can expect in the months to come.

- Dr. Tham recommends people avoid “the 3 Cs”:
 - Close spaces with poor ventilation
 - Crowded places with larger numbers of people gathered
 - Close contacts where you can’t practice physical distancing

****RECAP* Alberta’s COVID-19 Update***

[Chief Medical Officer Update - June 30th](#)

[Chief Medical Officer Update - July 2nd](#)

Dr.Hinshaw will not be providing any updates on COVID-19 next week (*July 6-10*). Statistics will continue to be available online through Alberta.ca, and should there be any changes that affect public health, the Deputy Chief Medical Officer will step in to inform the public.

- There are now 7,500+ recoveries from COVID-19. On June 30th, the province identified 30 new cases, and yesterday, 64 new cases. There are currently 44 individuals in hospital, with 8 of these in the ICU. 1 additional individual has passed away due to COVID-19.
- Dr.Hinshaw reassured Albertans that should Edmonton be chosen as an NHL Hub city that safety will remain the Provinces’ number 1 priority. Health officials will work with partners on guidance to protect the public and those involved in the tournament while assuring public testing will not be impacted.
- **Effective June 30th** - Outdoor gathering limits have been expanded to up to 200 people, allowing for audience events like fireworks, festivals, rodeos, sporting events and other outdoor performances.
 - All public health measures are still in effect (2m distancing, mask recommendations, frequent hand washing etc.)

****RECAP* Premier Kenney Announces Alberta’s Economic Recovery Plan***

[News Release: Alberta’s Recovery Plan](#)

[Premier’s Press Conference](#)

Premier Kenney and Finance Minister Toews announced Alberta’s economic recovery plan.

Key highlights:

- The government will make a \$10 billion investment into infrastructure projects. It estimates this will create 50,000 jobs in Alberta.
 - A total of \$612 million will be invested in large-scale infrastructure projects this summer, which will include the twinning of highways, projects that support growth in the agricultural sector, gas line extensions for northern residents, treatment facilities for Albertans recovering from addictions, and other important projects.
- On July 1, the corporate income tax rate will drop to 8%.
- An Innovation Employment Grant is being created for smaller companies and to encourage investment in technology. According to the government, the grant will provide

a refundable tax credit to companies that invest in research and development, so they have more money to create jobs.

- Alberta will also reduce its immigration admissions under the nominee program by at least one-third of its annual targets. It will also ask Canada to remove most occupational categories under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program for Alberta.
- Alberta will create a Cultural Event Relaunch Program.
- Alberta has found up to \$500 million in further funding for municipalities. They expect this to be matched by Ottawa.
- The province is establishing the Invest Alberta Corporation -- a new investment agency to help restore economic growth, create jobs, and diversify our economy.

IMPORTANT/USEFUL LINKS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Alberta is providing \$25 million for projects and services that will improve community mental health and addiction recovery supports and services. **First Nations are eligible and encouraged to apply.** The second call for proposals closes on **August 21, 2020**. [Click here](#) for more information.
- The Red Cross is operating a help desk for First Nations to get dedicated, personalized support on pandemic planning. It is available 7 days a week from 7 am to 7 pm MT. Call 1-833-937-1597.
- First Nation health directors, leaders, and technicians can contact “[InfoPoint](#)” to request information about their COVID-19-related questions at 1-855-446-2719 or InfoPoint@fnhma.ca from Monday to Friday, 6 am to 6 pm MT
- ISC is tracking the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 on First Nations on their website. Data is updated Monday to Friday. [Click here](#) to view the webpage.
 - [Click here](#) to view national demographic data and epidemic curves.
- Service Canada has a dedicated toll-free phone line for First Nations members needing help with their CERB applications. Call 1-877-631-2657
- Applications for the [Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance \(CECRA\)](#) are available through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The CECRA consists of forgivable loans for landlords to subsidize lost rent from small businesses, nonprofits and charitable organizations.
- The [Business Resilience Services Hotline](#) is available to small businesses for the next month to provide free, customized financial guidance from navigating tax regulations and government support to planning a path to recovery.
- Canada created a new web tool to help connect people with COVID-19 aid by asking questions and outlining programs people may be eligible for. [Click here](#) to access it.
- Canada created a web portal to help businesses find a wide range of COVID-19 support and other programs and services. [Click here](#) to access it.
- Canada created a web hub for buying and supplying PPE. [Click here](#) to access it.
- Canada launched the P-O-S-T Promise campaign aimed at encouraging businesses to fill out a voluntary declaration to its customers and employees that they will be

diligent in their combat of COVID-19. The details of the initiative can be found at postpromise.com