

# AFN Alberta COVID-19

## Daily Bulletin



### **Wednesday, April 29**

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>.

### **DAILY HIGHLIGHTS**

<b>AB Testing Results</b>	<b>April 28</b>	<b>April 29</b>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Negative (#s of Tests)</b>	138,681	143,886	5,205(+)
<b>Positive</b>	4,850	5,165	315(+)
<b>Fatalities</b>	80	87	7(+)
<b>Recoveries</b>	1,800	1,953	153(+)
<u>COVID-19 Regional Data for Alberta</u> Calgary zone - 3,520    Edmonton zone - 489 Central zone - 84    South zone - 833    North zone - 205 Unidentified zone - 34		<u>COVID-19 in Alberta First Nations</u> Calgary Zone - 17 North Zone - 2 South Zone - 1	

### **New Restrictions and Measures**

- To support mental wellness, Dr. Hinshaw issued a new order for long-term care residents allowing outdoor visits for those who aren't in isolation with a designated essential visitor and one other person.
  - All visitors will be required to wear a mask or face covering.
  - Visitors will still be restricted from entering facilities.
- Alberta also clarified that up to two visitors at a time will be allowed to visit a patient that is dying. Visitors will be required to maintain appropriate physical distancing.
- Due to flooding, people in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo are currently exempt from physical distancing and gathering restrictions. The province is shipping masks to Ft. McMurray to prevent the spread of the virus.
- **As of Monday**, applications for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy have opened, employer claims can be submitted at Canada.ca.

### **First Nation-specific Updates**

- The ISC - Alberta Region Daily held their call with all Chiefs this afternoon Wednesday April 29th. Highlights are below.

- **TOMORROW at 11 am**, Regional Chief Poitras will appear on the First Nation Health Managers' Association weekly COVID-19 town hall. The town hall will be streaming live [Indigenous Health Today](#).
- **On Tuesday, May 5 at 11 am** ISC is organizing a teleconference call between all Alberta Chiefs and Alberta's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Deena Hinshaw.
- **Service Canada has a dedicated toll-free phone line for First Nations members needing help with their CERB applications. Call 1-877-631-2657**
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Communities can request PPE from ISC/FNIHB through the communicable disease inbox:  
[sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca](mailto:sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca)
  - Alberta Health Services (AHS) is also helping fill supply gaps. Communities can put in weekly requests for PPE through AHS. Contact:  
[ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca](mailto:ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca).
- AHS Indigenous-specific questions/concerns/requests can be emailed to  
[ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca](mailto:ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca).

#### **National and Regional Updates**

- Canada released its aggregate COVID-19 data, comparing epidemic curves across provinces and with other countries.
- Alberta is finalizing a **voluntary** COVID-19 contact tracing app to help speed up information gathering that health officials do to trace contact of people who test positive for COVID-19.
  - Information collected will be stored on people's phones **not** with the government.
  - The app uses Bluetooth to figure out if someone has come into contact with a person that tested positive for COVID-19. It does not track people's location.

## **INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS FOR FIRST NATIONS**

### ***Updates from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)***

#### ***April 29 Daily Bulletin:***

ISC Alberta Region is sending daily updates during the week to leadership on the current COVID-19 situation and response. Today's bulletin (April 29) is attached. It includes the following information:

- Self-Isolation for Nurses
- Update to Registration for Status Cards
- Emergency Management Assistance Program and Indigenous Community Support Fund
- Information for Tomorrow's Telehealth Session (also in our daily bulletin below).

**\*NEW\*** Thursday, April 30 | 1:30 to 3:30 pm | Weekly COVID-19 Telehealth Call

A weekly telehealth call on COVID-19 is being held for First Nation health centre staff to talk through possible scenarios and ask FNIHB staff questions. Please note the details shared with us below:

To join by phone dial: 1 587 328 1099, code 94882403158#

To view the webinar: <https://fnfn.zoom.us/join>, enter Meeting ID: 94882403158

#### *Objectives*

1. Medical Officer of Health Update
3. Let's work through some scenarios
4. Community COVID-19 response Profile – Saddle Lake
5. Additional questions from communities

Questions can be submitted in advance or at the end of the presentation to [VChelp@FNTN.ca](mailto:VChelp@FNTN.ca)

#### Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) PPE Webpage

ISC has updated a webpage outlining the process for requesting PPE from the national stockpile, including for first responders, and providing a template form to submit requests for PPE and other assistance. [Click here](#) to view the webpage.

#### Numbers of Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 on First Nations

ISC is now tracking the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 on First Nations on their website. The numbers are updated Monday to Friday. [Click here](#) to view the webpage.

**Thursday, April 30 at 11 am | First Nation Health Managers Association (FNHMA) Town Hall.**

Relevant Link: [Indigenous Health Today](#)

**Covid-19 Info: Weekly Virtual Town Hall Sessions**  
Thursday April 30, 2020  
1:00pm EDT/ 10:00am PDT/ 11:00am MDT/ 12:00pm CDT  
2:00pm ADT/ 2:30pm NDT

The 1-hour live-stream can be viewed at [www.ihtoday.ca](http://www.ihtoday.ca) and on the FNHMA & APTN News Facebook pages.  
Questions may be emailed at anytime to: [fnhma@ihtoday.ca](mailto:fnhma@ihtoday.ca)

This week's guests include:

- Chief Kluane Adamek, Regional Chief, Yukon & Co-chair, AFN Chiefs Committee on Health
- Chief Marlene Poitras, Regional Chief, Alberta, AFN
- Chief Kevin Hart, Regional Chief, Manitoba, AFN
- Carol Hopkins, Executive Director, Thunderbird Partnership Foundation
- Dr. Brenda Restoule, CEO, First Peoples Wellness Circle

**Marion Crowe, CEO, FNHMA, will be hosting and moderating.**

The FNHMA is hosting a weekly virtual town hall on Thursdays to discuss how the current pandemic is impacting health managers, health care workers, and First Nation communities. This **Thursday at 11 am** Regional Chief Poitras, Regional Chief Adamek, chair of the Chiefs Committee on Health, and Regional Chief Hart, chair of the Chiefs Committee on Emergency Management, will be presenting and taking questions. They will be focussing on mental health and wellness.

The town hall will be streamed live on [Indigenous Health Today](#). You can also find previous town halls featuring youth leaders, National Chief Bellegarde, and Indigenous Services Assistant Deputy Minister Val Gideon on this website as well.

## **CALL & MEETING SUMMARIES**

### ***April 29 | Alberta Chiefs Call with Indigenous Services Canada Alberta (ISC-AB) and First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Alberta (FNIHB-AB).***

In light of the uptick in confirmed COVID-19 cases on-reserve in the North and South, all Chiefs were invited by ISC-AB/FNIHB-AB for a call focussed on public health and communicable disease operational practices. **Key Highlights:**

- **Alberta's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Deena Hinshaw, will address Chiefs directly on an ISC/FNIHB teleconference scheduled for Tuesday, May 5 at 11 am.**
- Dean Janvier will be surveying leadership for their information needs, so ISC/FNIHB can better understand and respond to what kinds of information and updates Chiefs need right now. ISC/FNIHB will adapt their communications approach based on his outreach.
- FNIHB Alberta Senior Medical Officer Dr. Yacoub said there are now 20 reported confirmed cases in FN communities in Alberta:
  - 17 in the Calgary Zone, 2 in the North Zone, 1 in the South Zone
- The process for reporting cases on-reserve was reviewed:
  - If the provincial lab or AHS confirmed a case on-reserve, client is first informed of the positive result
  - FNIHB communicable disease control teams will control case management, contact tracing, and control measures. The client's family doctor is informed at the same time as FNIHB.
  - Communicable disease team works with health centres and community nursing teams to coordinate isolation requirements.
  - ISC/FNIHB Executive Team contacts Chiefs directly to report the confirmed case. The Executive team does not have access to individual's personal information, and therefore, does not share that with leadership.
  - Nursing teams can share the number of cases on a Nation, but cannot share client-specific information.
  - Should anyone on reserve come in contact with a confirmed case, FNIHB will be notified, and follow-up appropriately with the community.

- Alberta has set up a website where people can report if they've observed breach of public health orders. Location does not matter. Authorities will take action on these complaints whether on or off reserve.
- Because of the strong confidentiality requirements of the health information act, it is tough for AHS and FNIHB to get information about off-reserve members who have contracted COVID-19.
  - FNIHB has asked for research and surveillance purposes if they can look into confirming if off-reserve members have contracted COVID-19.
- Governments are being careful and considerate about how geographic data is reported for smaller communities, including First Nations, to protect people's confidentiality and community's confidentiality.
- Chiefs raised concerns about the increased need for addictions and mental wellness services. The regional office is making a concerted effort to develop a mental wellness strategy that responds to the needs arising from this pandemic. They are working on this with health directors on their weekly call.

*Additional Information:*

- Dr. Yacoub acknowledged the difficulty in following mass gathering restrictions for funerals and wakes. He recognized that it is heartbreaking that people can't gather, support, and mourn as a community during this time. Their teams are available to support families and communities with respectful and safe ways to honour loved ones.
- As of April 13, anyone presenting symptoms is eligible for testing. Based on health risk, asymptomatic people are also being tested.
- They are still unclear when rapid point-of-care testing devices will be available and deployed.
- 38 First Nations are testing in their communities directly, and reporting their results.
- The FNIHB nursing team is available to train health care staff on-reserve on how to administer testing.
- Collaborative work continues to prepare for potential surge capacity:
  - Capital infrastructure reviews and repurposing.
  - Reviewing isolation plans and possibility of setting-up new structures.
  - Making PPE available through various channels.

***April 28 | AFN National Executive Meeting***

The AFN National Executive held its weekly meeting yesterday. The Executive moved to cancel the 2020 AFN Annual General Assembly scheduled for July in Halifax, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Formal notification will be forthcoming.

**Key Highlights:**

- Next week, the Executive will meet with Public Safety Minister Bill Blair to discuss issues being experienced by Indigenous inmates during COVID-19. ([Click here](#) for more)

background), as well as issues identified with First Nations across Canada with RCMP enforcement of First Nations bylaws on-reserve.

*Regional Updates:*

- **Alberta (RC Poitras):** The situation in Alberta is dynamic and changing. We've had major outbreaks in two meat packing facilities. Cargill (High River) and JBS (Brooks).
  - There are now 14 cases in Bears paw, 1 in Morley (Stoney Nakoda), and 1 in Sucker Creek.
  - Stoney Nakoda was informed of the confirmed case by the meat packing plant through contact tracing. There may be more that FNs aren't aware of.
- Currently only symptomatic individuals are getting tested. RC is pressing for asymptomatic testing on communities.
- ISC-AB will be having a call with all Chiefs in the region tomorrow to discuss the sudden surge in cases.
- Jurisdictions are starting to announce their reopening plans. What does that mean for FNs?
- Flooding in Northwestern Alberta is stressful for Nations to deal with this, while trying to maintain social and physical distancing. Sucker Creek has partially evacuated. Ft. McKay and Ft. McMurray First Nations are notably impacted.
- ISC-AB now has two distinct emergency response teams -- one for COVID and one for flooding and other emergencies.
- Health and mental wellness continues to be a concern. ISC's mental wellness teams are back online and looking for support specific for FN leaders. ISC is also recommending online webinars but, of course, there are issues with technology and access to the internet.
- Ceremonies aren't happening and people aren't gathering -- encouraging people to utilize our Elders and to find ways people can utilize them to get through this crisis.
- The Presidents and CEOs of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Businesses and First Nations Bank of Canada -- recently wrote to Minister Morneau's Chief of Staff and policy director advocating for changes to Bill C-14 to include Indigenous corporations and their partnerships as a "prescribed organization."
  - FN Businesses are the backbone of our economies. We have to advocate for and support them through this time. If they cannot access that pot of funding, we need to continue pursuing our AFN executive motion requesting a minimum \$9B economic stimulus package for FNs.
- Because the \$15M envelope Canada set aside for regional organizations was specifically dedicated for urban and off-reserve services, many Chiefs are asking who will be receiving funding. They want to know which organizations will be serving their off-reserves, members so people needing help can be pointed in the right direction.
  - ISC does not widely disclose who receives funding from their department. We need to find a way around this so First Nations are able to know who they can specifically connect off-reserve and urban members with for support.
- **BC (RC Teegee):** 56 nations have declared states of local emergency.

- **Yukon (RC Adamek):** FNs there are meeting more than twice a week. They are looking at developing a joint framework between FNs and the territorial government on COVID-19.
- **Manitoba (RC Hart):** Manitoba is still under state of emergency. There are no FN infections to date. Communities north of the 53rd parallel are still on lockdown, including FNs.
- **Ontario (RC Archibald):** In terms of our activities and those of the secretariat. In our region we have 3 letters going out, to PM, Premier and NC. Chiefs are concerned about their ability to respond to ongoing policy and lawmaking initiatives tied to government and inability to respond. The letters will ask for the processes to be slowed or halted so they are in a better place to respond.
- **Quebec (RC Picard):** There are concerns with QC's plans to reset the economy and lack of details. Our chiefs do not feel adequately consulted.

## **REGIONAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES**

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

- ***Canada's April 29 COVID-19 Update***
- ***Alberta's April 29 COVID-19 Update***

### ***Canada's April 29 Update***

*Relevant Links:* [\*PM's daily briefing \(9:15 am MT\)\*](#)

[\*Ministers' and Health Officials briefing \(10:00 am MT\)\*](#)

This morning PM Trudeau gave his daily address from outside his home in Ottawa, followed by the chief public health officer update by Dr. Theresa Tam on COVID-19. **Key Highlights:**

- There are now 50,373 confirmed cases including 2,904 deaths. To date testing has been done on over 758,000 people, with about 7% returning positive.
- **Yesterday**, Federal health officials provided updated projections on the number of potential cases and deaths in Canada from COVID-19
  - The new model predicts up to 66,835 cases and 3,883 fatalities by May 5.
- While public health practices remain in place, regions that are showing low/no new cases are beginning to look at taking steps towards reopening their economies. The plans are based on public health criteria and balance that with the risks inherent in reopening.

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#### ***Additional Information***

- The Prime Minister reiterated some of the support being offered to students including the Canada Emergency Student Subsidy, volunteer programs, and creation of 76,000 student jobs.
- Also reiterated were other economic measures that have been put in place such as income tax deferrals and boosting of the Canada Child Benefit.



## ***Alberta's April 29 COVID-19 Update***

**Relevant Links:** [CMO Provincial Update \(3:30 pm MT\)](#)

Dr. Hinshaw gave her daily update on the COVID-19 situation in Alberta. **Key Highlights:**

- An additional 315 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in the last 24 hours, bringing the total of confirmed cases to 5,165
  - 7 additional deaths were reported, all from long-term care facilities in Calgary.
- There are 503 cases in continuing care facilities across the provinces. 821 confirmed cases are from the Cargill meat plant outbreak. 267 cases confirmed from the JBS plant in Brooks.
- To support mental wellness, Dr. Hinshaw issued a new order for long-term care residents allowing outdoor visits for those who aren't in isolation with a designated essential visitor and one other person.
  - All visitors will be required to wear a mask or face covering.
  - Visitors will still be restricted from entering facilities.
- Dr. Hinshaw also clarified that up to two visitors at a time will be allowed to visit a patient that is dying. Visitors will be required to maintain appropriate physical distancing. The government is defining "end of life" as approximately two weeks before death.
- Effective today, all residential addiction facilities must follow their own unique public health guidelines to prevent risk of infection, while allowing people to receive treatment.
- Responding to a question about summer events, Dr. Hinshaw said people will need to think about how we will live with COVID-19 for the foreseeable future. Measures like keeping a 2 m distance from people and staying home if you are sick will likely be in place for many months.

### ***Additional Information***

- Dr. Hinshaw gave an overview of Alberta's process for dealing with COVID-19 outbreaks.
- She explained that every year, Alberta updates its outbreaks control principles for high-risk settings, such as homeless shelters, work camps, long-term care facilities, to deal with influenza and virus pandemics.
- Alberta Health and AHS are working with these facilities to ensure practices are changed in light of COVID-19, and that organizations can respond well should an outbreak occur.
- The first element of their outbreak coordination is prevention and preparedness, ensuring these facilities are able to respond if a case is confirmed.
- The second element is rapid and timely response. When an individual in these settings has symptoms related to COVID, even before the case is confirmed, they are implementing prompt testing and implementing outbreak measures to prevent any further possible spread.



- The element is rapid, outbreak management — making sure confirmed cases and people with symptoms are isolated, aggressive contact tracing happens, testing takes place, etc.
- All residents in the same long-term care units are being tested, even if they don't have COVID-19 symptoms. This has been the testing protocol for long-term care facilities for a number of weeks to help identify cases before symptoms start, allowing for facilities to better control an outbreak.