

AFN Alberta COVID-19 Daily Bulletin



Thursday, April 2

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

Day-to-Day COVID-19 Test Results

ALBERTA	March 31	April 1	Change
Negative (#s of Tests)	53,141	57,096	(+3,955)
Positive	871	968	(+97)
Fatalities	11	13	(+2)
Recoveries	142	174	(+32)

COVID-19 Regional Data for Alberta

Calgary zone - 589 Edmonton zone - 247 Central zone - 59 South zone - 14 North zone - 55
Unidentified zone - 5

New Restrictions and Measures

- **New provincial measures to keep people in long-term care homes, shelters, and other centres as safe as physically possible:**
 - Centres must notify public health as soon as a case is suspected, and if two or more residents exhibit COVID-like symptoms
 - Staff must notify their manager if they work or have worked at an affected facility.
- As of **Monday**, anyone in mandatory self-isolation or quarantine **must** stay on their property, and cannot go outside for short walks.
 - This includes international travellers, people who test positive for COVID-19, people in close contact with a person who tested positive, or anyone feeling any symptoms.
- Passengers showing COVID-19 symptoms will now be denied boarding on domestic flights and trains.

First Nation-specific Updates

- Minister Miller confirmed that for the next six months (minimum) Canada will continue to provide care to vulnerable Indigenous youth that would have otherwise aged out of the child care system.

- Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) published an information sheet with details on how First Nations financial support during the COVID-19 break. Please find it attached.
- No confirmed cases in Alberta First Nations - the province has been working with FNIHB since the start of preparations in January to ensure good coordination.
 - Dr. Hinshaw has been in 2 video conferences with First Nations health leaders and made clear that FNs will have access to what they need to keep themselves safe.
 - Coordination of access to PPE and lab testing is in place. Dr. Hinshaw re-emphasized Siksika's mobile health unit supported by AHS. Similar coordination is happening in other nations and the specific health partner depends on proximity to an urban centre.
- On April 1 at 11 am, AFN Alberta and Treaty 7 Chiefs called all Nations to come together in prayer for COVID-19. Today, the Regional Chief shared a message of thanks on social media to all who participated. We've included it below.
- ISC is working with communities on solutions surrounding elections to ensure there are no gaps in governance. If a First Nation decides to move ahead with an election as is their right, ISC will provide guidance on how to protect members.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Communities can request PPE from ISC/FNIHB through the communicable disease inbox: 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.
- AHS Indigenous-specific questions/concerns/requests can be emailed to ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca.

National and Regional Updates

- **Canada Emergency Response Benefit** applications will be live on April 6. To speed up the application process. People should start setting-up a My CRA account [online](#) or over the phone now. ***New* Once live, the Canadian government has requested that applicants stagger their applications based on birth month in accordance with the schedule below.**
 - January to March: Apply on April 6
 - April to June: Apply on April 7
 - July to Sept: Apply on April 8
 - Oct to Dec: Apply on April 9
- Transport Canada will be announcing that all leisure and tourist vehicles (tour buses, cruises, tour boats, etc.) will not be able to operate until at least June 30.

INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS FOR FIRST NATIONS

How to access financial benefits and support during the COVID-19 outbreak

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) published an information sheet with details on how First Nations financial support during the COVID-19 break. Please find it attached. This provides information on:

- Support for individuals and families
- Support for people facing unemployment, who are sick, quarantined, impacted by self-isolation or unable to work.
- Support for seniors
- Support for students and recent graduates
- Support for Indigenous communities and people who are vulnerable
- Support for people facing unemployment, who are sick, quarantined, impacted by self-isolation, or are unable to work.

Canada is encouraging people to file their 2018 income tax returns so they can have easy access to all the benefits they are providing during this time.

Provincial Response Information for Indigenous Communities

Alberta published a two-page document summarizing their COVID-19 response measures to Indigenous communities. The document does not provide any new information, but does include an overview about service changes in registries, courthouses, provincial parks, road tests, child-care, schools, seniors care and cultural centres. Information is also included about financial aid and funding like the income assistance program available to all Albertans, utility deferrals, and rental support that the province announced over the last few weeks.

Additional Updates from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

April 2 Daily Bulletin:

ISC Alberta Region is sending daily updates to leadership on the current COVID-19 situation and response. Please find attached Today's update, which includes information on:

- Funding to date for COVID-19
- Methodology for distributing the \$305M Indigenous Community Support Fund
- How Canada is responding to issues of overcrowding
- AHS recommendations on self-isolation.

Funding Administration:

Recognizing that Nations and organizations have had to prioritize their COVID-19 response above many different matters, ISC has been sending correspondence noting they are relaxing and providing flexibility around reporting requirements and funding administration. Please find attached a message from ISC about reporting.

New Video Resources:

ISC has uploaded the following new videos:

- [Questions from a community perspective with Chief Leroy Denny](#)
- [How Indigenous people can access services and new benefits](#)
- [Testing and care in First Nations communities](#)

COVID-19 Hour of Prayer | Message from the Regional Chief

On behalf of myself, AFN Alberta, and the Treaty 7 Chiefs, I would like to thank everyone who took the time yesterday at 11 am to pause, reflect, and pray in your own way for our collective health and well-being, during this time of crisis.

We are a people of incredible strength and resiliency. Our ancestors overcame countless hardships and struggles so that we could all be here today. They sacrificed and prayed for our collective health and the future of our nations. Their blood runs through us, and we have been called upon to do the same for our next generations.

There are many people struggling who need our prayers. They may be in hospitals, jails, on the streets, in homeless shelters, or alone in self-isolation. There are many parents that fear for their children, children that fear for their parents, the elderly. That is why we pray. We pray to give thanks for what we have and pray for the health and well-being of our own families and those less fortunate.

So for that I say thank you to the Elders and knowledge-keepers who lifted their Pipes. Thank you to the grandparents, parents, children and youth, and everyone else who participated.

Thank you to those that perhaps did not know how to pray but provided good thoughts and energy.

I would like to thank everyone that is doing their part to protect themselves, their families, and their communities by heeding the advice of public health experts and our leaders.

Finally, I would like to thank our health care providers, front line workers, and essential service providers. You are all putting ourselves at risk to provide the incredible help, support and resources we need to be able to stay safe and stay healthy. Thank you for your selfless dedication and service!

Nanaskomin

Regional Chief Poitras

Alberta First Nations COVID-19 Testing Protocols and Testing Sites

AFN Alberta is promoting the following:

- If you have symptoms including fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat or runny nose, you **MUST** self-isolate for 10 days, as required by law, after the onset of symptoms and until your symptoms have resolved (whichever is longer). Under no circumstance should you leave your property during self-isolation.
 - Complete the COVID-19 [online self-assessment](#) for more information. **DO NOT** visit a hospital, physician's office, lab or healthcare facility without consulting Health Link 811 first.
 - A health-care worker self-assessment can also be found [here](#).
- If Nations are requiring test kits, they should connect with zone lead in AHS who are helping secure testing supplies.
 - AHS contact for requesting PPE -- ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca - they will forward to appropriate contact.
- Drive-Thru testing is available. These sites are not advertised due to privacy concerns. Your family doctor or 811 operator will determine if testing is necessary, then the individual will receive a call to go to a medical facility or drive thru testing site with the location.

FN Testing Sites by Alberta Health Services Zone

South Zone

- **Siksika** – Nation has mobile testing capabilities in home
- **Blood** – Nation has mobile testing and self-isolation support

North Zone

- **Kapawe'no** -- FNIHB/AHS is providing mobile testing
- Next week, FNIHB/AHS will conduct testing in the three communities in **Little Red River Cree First Nation**
- They are also finalizing scheduling to go up to **Fort Chipewyan** to set up and review their assessment/ testing processes.

Central Zone

- **Maskwacis** Health Services is conducting testing at its health unit
- **Alexander, Enoch, Saddle Lake** -- FNIHB/AHS has provided mobile testing

CALL & MEETING SUMMARIES

Transport Canada COVID-19 Response Measures

Transport Canada hosted a call today to provide an update on new restrictions for recreational and tourist passenger vehicles, particularly they are developing to slow down the COVID-19 outbreak. Regional Chief Poitras and AFN Alberta staff participated. Key highlights:

- Transport Canada will be announcing that all leisure and tourist vehicles (tour buses, cruises, tour boats, etc.) will not be able to operate until at least June 30.

- Non-essential vessels will not be able to travel through or stop in Canadian waters until at least June 30, and cruises cannot stop until September 30.
- Essential vessels like ferries and water taxis will continue to operate and be required to implement physical distancing measures.
- This will not apply to fishing vessels.
- Operators will have the authority to deny people from getting on board if they are sick, unless it is in an emergency situation.
- Requirements to come into force as early as next week.

Action Items:

- An Information sheet will be done and distributed in the next few days to interested parties in the region. Transport Canada will also provide a direct line for any further questions.

Question from Regional Chief Poitras: If someone goes from point A to B, but at point B they fall ill, will they be prevented from going back home?

- People will not be stopped from getting to where they need to get. If the operator is providing health checks, passengers will inform the operator that they are boarding ill.
- Transport Canada will ensure that this question is noted, and conversations are had going forward. We hope operators are making decisions that are helping communities. We will ensure this question is raised. The point is not stopping people from where they need to get to.

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES

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

- **Canada's April 2 COVID-19 Update**
- **Alberta's April 2 COVID-19 Update**

Canada's April 2 Update

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

[Ministers' and Health Officials daily briefing \(10:30 am MT\)](#)

In today's update, Prime Minister Trudeau announced he will be chairing a first ministers meeting with the Premiers tonight, on how to best protect and keep Canadians safe. He then provided other general updates on COVID-19 response. Several ministers, including Indigenous Services Marc Miller, took part in the health officials and government briefing later in the morning.

Key Highlights:

- Last night a shipment of over 1 million masks was received, in addition to the 10 million received over previous days which is being distributed to provinces ASAP.

- In his conversation with Premiers tonight, PM Trudeau will continue to discuss coordination, data, and modelling. He noted that provinces are making good progress on testing backlogs as well.
- Canada breaches 10,000 cases nationwide. Testing continues at one of the highest levels in the modern world with over 260,000 Canadians tested to date.
 - Laboratory capacity continues to increase, but most deaths (over half) are concerning related to high-risk facilities (seniors residences, hospitals etc.)
- Over the last week ISC has sent out significant personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies and is continuing to respond to asks with urgency
 - ISC is in the midst of transferring \$305 million to Indigenous Communities in Canada. Some earlier emergency funding not tied to the \$305 has already been disbursed.
 - The focus is on flexible and rapid response to meet individual needs. Mainly by distributing food, and materials to those in most need.
 - There are a total of 15 confirmed cases in Indigenous communities right now.
- ISC is working with communities on solutions surrounding elections to ensure there are no gaps in governance. If they decide to move ahead with an election as is their right, ISC will provide guidance on how to protect members.
- For the next six months (minimum) Canada will continue to provide care to vulnerable Indigenous youth that would have otherwise aged out of the child care system.

Additional Information

- Governments of all orders are organizing the biggest civil mobilizations since WWII, we are scaling things up to levels not seen in our history.
 - “It’s your turn to contribute to the general effort, serve your country by staying home and following the rules”
 - PM made mention of Bauer switching from hockey gear production to masks for healthcare professionals as an example of innovations in industry.
- Minister Miller confirmed that for the next six months (minimum) Canada will continue to provide care to vulnerable Indigenous youth that would have otherwise aged out of the child care system.
- Miller also acknowledged COVID is not the only challenge coming for FNs, as fire and flood season approaches. ISC will work with regional health and provincial partners to ensure there is adequate health support during this difficult time.
- Ministers called on social media influencers to spread the message “#stayhome” through all channels - Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Facebook etc.
- *Minister of Foreign Affairs:* Two weeks ago Canada began it’s largest repatriation effort in Candian history. As of today in cooperation with various airlines, we have facilitated the return of thousands of Canadians, on over 40 flights from over 30 countries.

- In coming days flights from Peru, Colombia, India, Pakistan, Poland, Trinidad and Tobago as well as various African countries
- Cruise ships are beginning to port to allow Canadians to return home.
- Canada.ca/coronavirus is the most reliable source for national information about cases, growth and spread. The biggest variable in shaping projections on case counts and deaths is individual behaviour, listening to expert knowledge, and advice.

Alberta's April 2 COVID-19 Update

Relevant Links:

Chief Medical Officer Update (3:30pm)

Dr. Hinshaw provided today's update. Dr. Mark Joffe was unavailable to answer specific questions for AHS today, and those were taken back for consideration. Key highlights:

- 96 new cases in the province of Alberta for a total number of 968.
 - There's now 174 that have recovered. It is suspected that 108 of the total may be from community transmission (+14), more than 4000 tests were completed in the last 24 hours as the lab works at maximum capacity.
 - There are 2 additional fatalities, a male in his 80s and a male in his 90s.
- More is needed to protect those in long-term care facilities, shelters, and other congregate settings. **New measures to keep those in centres as safe as physically possible:**
 - Centres must notify public health as soon as a case is suspected, and if two or more residents exhibit COVID-like symptoms
 - Staff must notify their manager if they work or have worked at an affected facility.
- No confirmed cases in Alberta First Nations - the province has been working with FNIHB since the start of preparations in January to ensure good coordination.
 - Dr. Hinshaw has been in 2 video conferences with First Nations health leaders and made clear that FNs will have access to what they need to keep themselves safe.
 - Coordination of access to PPE and lab testing is in place. Dr. Hinshaw re-emphasized Siksika's mobile health unit supported by AHS. Similar coordination is happening in other nations and the specific health partner depends on proximity to an urban centre.

Additional Information

- 98% of tests are coming back negative.
- 74 cases are in continuing care facilities which include 65 at the Mackenzie town centre.
- 9 outbreaks at care facilities across the province. Some outbreak cases were opened due to staff working at multiple locations when staff have been confirmed

as a case. (Outbreaks are being declared as a precautionary measure based on staff positive testing).

- Outbreaks include Cedars Villa Extendicare, AgeCare Seton, and Carewest Sarcee facilities in Calgary. Dr.Hinshaw emphasized that these are precautionary measures as there is staff positive testing.
- Also a case confirmed at the Sheriff King Home Women's Shelter in Calgary.
- Clarification, when a worker is working at multiple locations and informs their supervisor - what happens? And the other is, why now?
 - This set of standards is the first step. In BC workers are required to work in only one long term care facility. AB is still assessing this feasibility - looking at potential workforce shortages if this is put in place.
 - Residents of these facilities need safe care. If a site has a confirmed case, any staff in that site ideally only work in that specific facility.
 - Have been working on these orders for some time and making sure they are not initiating unintended consequences with negative outcomes. This is why the implementation of additional measures is happening today.