

AFN Alberta COVID-19 Daily Bulletin



Tuesday, March 31

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 30	March 31	Change
Negative (#s of Tests)	46,057	48,692	(+2,635)
Positive	690	754	(+64)
Fatalities	8	9	(+1)
Recoveries	94	120	(+26)

COVID-19 Regional Data for Alberta

Calgary zone - 453 (+31) Edmonton zone - 187 (+23) Central zone - 51 (+5) South zone - 12 (+0) North zone - 50 (+5)
Unidentified zone - 1

New Restrictions and Measures

- As of **yesterday**, 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

- TOMORROW at 11 am** AFN Alberta and Treaty 7 Chiefs are calling all Nations to **come together in prayer for COVID-19**.
- Ministers Bennett and Miller met with Alberta Chiefs on a teleconference today. (*summary below*)
- The AFN National Executive held its weekly call with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) Val Gideon (*summary below*)
- Canada is [recommending](#) that First Nations do not hold upcoming elections during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **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

- Canadians needing financial aid are recommended to sign up for a CRA [My Account](#) so they can complete a Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) application more quickly, once the online portal opens on April 6.
 - **On Thursday**, The Prime Minister confirmed income assistance provided through CERB **will be taxable**, just as EI benefits are taxable.
- Canada launched a [new website](#) tracking national COVID-19 data, statistics, demographics, and trends in real-time.

INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS FOR FIRST NATIONS

*Hour of Prayer for COVID-19 | **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1st at 11 A.M.***

TREATY 7 FIRST NATION CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION

TOGETHER IN PRAYER

Calling on all Nations to come together and pray on **April 1st at 11AM.**

We are calling on all pipeholders to lift their pipes and for all faiths and denominations to stop and pray at this point in time. Please join us in prayer for our Nations and for all people to be protected from the COVID-19 Virus.

Together we are stronger.

Message brought to you by AFN Alberta and Treaty 7 Chiefs

AFN Alberta and Treaty 7 Chiefs are calling on all Nations to come together for an hour of prayer on **Wednesday, April 1 at 11 am** to bring an end to this virus and request protection for our people. Elders, youth, Chiefs, pipe holders, and community members of all faiths denominations are welcome to offer prayers together at this time.

Additional Updates from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

Daily Bulletin:

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

- Education program funding
- Disclosure of personal health information
- Food security concerns
- Case and contact management

Conference Calls with Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8 (Alberta) Chiefs:

ISC Alberta Region is hosting weekly calls with Chiefs to provide updates on COVID-19 response and answer questions. Summaries of the discussion are also being sent to leadership.

- Tuesdays | 4:15 pm | Treaty 6 Chiefs
- Wednesdays | 4:15 pm | Treaty 7 Chiefs
- Thursdays | 4:15 pm | Treaty 8 Chiefs

CALL AND MEETING SUMMARIES

Tuesday, March 31 | Ministers Bennett and Miller Call with Alberta Chiefs

Key Highlights:

- Minister Miller committed to having additional discussions at Treaty and Chief and Council levels if needed.
 - Miller said he and his team can be best reached by email or text. He does not advise sending letters as response won't be immediate.
- Across the region, Chiefs expressed similar concerns that the Indigenous Community Fund will not provide enough money to address their Nations' needs.
- Chiefs are also concerned about members in urban centres off-reserve.
- Many also asked for details on how ISC will respond if there's a major outbreak in the community that exhausts their existing health system capacity.
- Community liaison officers are being hired to support the flow of information and determine all community needs.

Additional information:

- Minister Miller and Minister Bennett are happy to discuss matters on a Treaty or Chief and Council level. Current call was the fastest way to get initial engagement with regional leadership.

- Minister Miller recognised the criticism that the Indigenous Community Support fund won't be enough to address all needs in the community but, from the onset, the focus has been responding to needs. There are many human and other resources, not tied to money, that they can action to respond to those needs.
 - Both he and Minister Bennett also noted that all other supports announced that are part of the \$82B COVID-19 financial aid package, including EI expansion, Canada Emergency Response Benefit, business wage subsidies, funding for PPE supplies -- are all available to First Nations.
- Chiefs expressed some of the following concerns and questions:
 - The Indigenous Community Support fund allocation does not provide enough funding to address needs in responding to the pandemic.
 - The lack of dedicated support and coordination for Nations who are at an increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 because they are near urban centres.
 - The lack of details on how Nations using own-source revenue to respond to the pandemic will be reimbursed.
 - How will funding be provided to support off-reserve members and the urban Indigenous population?
 - What kind of plans are in place to support surge capacity, particularly in communities with no road access and limited health resources?
- Miller and Bennett both noted that \$55B of the \$82B financial aid package is **not** direct funding, but tax deferrals.
- The best way to communicate with their respective offices is by email or text, not by letter.
- Minister Miller re-iterated that if Chiefs are experiencing any issues with response, to contact him or his team immediately. He recognized that a timely response is the best way to deal with the current pandemic.
- Minister Bennett asked leadership for support in communicating public health orders and messages.

Tuesday, March 31 | AFN National Executive Call with ISC ADM Valerie Gideon

The presentation deck provided by ISC is included in the attachments. It provides information on national communications, funding, preparations for surge capacity, testing kit supply, and shipping PPE (full presentation attached).

Key Highlights:

- ISC will develop a one-pager outlining their general response, responsibilities, and roles when there is a major pandemic outbreak in a community.
- National Chief to meet National Defence for more information on support available to FNs
- Concerns expressed nationally about the capacity of First Nations to enforce their laws and public health orders -- NC suggesting having a conversation with Public Safety Minister Bill Blair.

- RCs Adamek (health lead), Hart (emergency management lead), and Poitras will discuss how AFN can better coordinate to respond to the pandemic.

Additional information:

Regional Updates

- AB - (Ann Gladue Buffalo, proxy for RC Poitras) -- highlighted the passing of a young Indigenous man from COVID-19, and also the two gentleman killed while hunting to provide for their families during the pandemic.
 - Over ½ of FNs in Alberta have declared SOLES at this point. Many FNs are restricting access to their communities to band members and essential service providers only.
 - Testing for frontline workers, accessing PPE and other essential supplies, and planning for surge capacity are major concerns in the region.
 - RC has been in frequent contact with FNHIB and ISC-AB, who are sending daily updates to FNs. AFN Alberta also sends daily rollups.
 - Call for an hour of prayer April 1 at 11AM - Chiefs in ceremony to come together in prayer for the pandemic to end.
 - ***How do we balance the need to inform people of confirmed/probable COVID-19 cases in FNs communities with protecting family and, possibly, community privacy?***
- BC (RC Teegee) -- ongoing issues with people gathering and not following public health orders. RC had a call with the Chief of Defence staff to make sure they're available when flood and fire season hits. This is on the military's radar.
- YK (RC Adamek) -- a QC couple showed up in their northernmost community to seek refuge from the pandemic. Concerned that this will occur in other northern FN communities.
- NWT (RC Chief of Staff Proxy) - \$2.5 million federal funding for on-the-land activities. Dene Nation working on developing programs, and a traditional medicine guide.
- SK (RC Cameron) -- Introduced 4 motions for the Executive around funding, which NCO and CEO staff will work with FSIN on wording to bring back to the next meeting.
- MB (RC Hart) -- pressed to see a written plan from the federal government on what their response will be if there is an outbreak in a FN community. Also asked for a response on off-reserve support.
- ON (RC Archibald) -- reiterate some of RC's Hart's comments, emphasizing the need for planning measures and guidelines to be clearly laid out.
- QC (RC Picard)-- regular calls b/w regional office, ISC/FNIHB, regional organizations, and Chiefs are happening.
- NS (Chief Leroy) -- highlighted that there seems to be a disconnect between provinces, ISC, and Mi'kmaq. Highlighted issues with RCMP not being able to enforce FNs bylaws they only enforce laws within the criminal code.

- NB (RC Augustine) -- communities are trying to communicate what they're experiencing. There's concerns about long-term impacts of physical distancing, including PTSD.

ISC Updates

- ADM Val Gideon went through the attached presentation. Notable points raised:
 - On March 26th an email sent to all Nations about simplification of funding agreements and year-end reporting.
 - There's a specific FN pandemic plan that is part of the overall Canadian plan that's existed since 2009. It spells out roles and responsibilities, and what needs to be in place to implement the plan.
 - That said, there isn't one plan, as things need to be adapted per community and circumstances, but ISC will work on a fact sheet summarizing the general approach.
 - **RC Poitras recommended that ISC consider using the 'famine and pestilence' of the Medicine Chest Clause in Treaty 6 (which in effect applies to all numbered Treaties) and, expand it to develop a National Pandemic Plan moving forward.**

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES

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

- **Canada's March 31 COVID-19 Update**
- **Alberta's March 31 COVID-19 Update**

Canada's March 31 Update

Relevant Links:

[*PM's Daily Briefing \(March 31, 9:15 AM MDT\)*](#)

[*Health Officials and Ministers Daily Briefing \(March 31, 10:00 AM MDT\)*](#)

Today, the Prime Minister again spoke on the response measures to COVID-19. He opened by sharing an update about the Ukrainian International Airlines tragedy earlier this year. Indicating that Canada is still working hard to get accountability and justice as we fight this pandemic and working with other international partners.

Key Highlights:

- Ralph Goodale appointed special advisor for Canada's response to the downing of Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752
- In a newly announced measure, Canada committed a \$2-billion investment in testing and production of supplies such as ventilators and personal protective equipment through partnerships with several companies.
 - The existing manufacturing 'supercluster' will be assisting in testing, scaling and expedition of some of these new resources.

- When asked about Canada's incremental approach to wage subsidy, which is now available to businesses of all sizes, the PM responded that the situation has been evolving rapidly and these measures are unprecedented, adding It's about how we are able to get through this together, but also be able to pick up the economy when we are through this crisis.

Alberta's March 31 COVID-19 Update

Relevant Links:

[Chief Medical Officer Update \(3:30pm\)](#)

Dr. Deena Hinshaw and Dr. Mark Joffe provided Alberta's Tuesday update on the province's response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Key Highlights:

- 64 new cases have been confirmed in the last 24 hours. Total confirmed cases now total 754.
 - This includes 77 cases involving healthcare workers and staff at continuing care facilities.
 - The majority of these healthcare workers are from the previous bonspiel event.
- An additional death has occurred at the McKenzie Towne long term care facility.
- Alberta estimates 75 cases are from community transmission. There are now 120 recoveries.
- Blood donations are urgently needed. Canada Blood Services has taken measures to ensure staff and donors are protected during this time.
- In the coming days the province will be issuing guidance on how volunteers and charities can continue to work while keeping their staff safe.
- Message to younger people from Dr. Hinshaw: Even if you don't have a chronic health condition you need to protect yourself from COVID-19. Even if you have a mild reaction, you could be a link to giving other people a severe outcome or illness.

Additional Information

- Prior to an update on today's cases, Dr. Hinshaw clarified that the individual she mentioned died in Edmonton's Rosedale during yesterday's update actually passed in the hospital.
 - This person was under independent care and no others from that facility are at risk. He had not been in the facility since March 17th.
- Last week Dr. Hinshaw joined Premier Kenney on a telephone town hall for faith leaders
 - They're working through virtual solutions like webcast, social media, teleconference to offer support and fellowship as important religious holidays begin.
- What is the strategy to stop the outbreak at the McKenzie Town Centre?

- There are outbreak control measures. For example, anyone showing symptoms as a worker cannot work, any resident would be immediately isolated to their room.
- Outbreak protocol was not implemented immediately in this case, so there has been more significant exposure than would normally be expected.
- In regards to testing, a shipment of kits was delayed last week, it arrived today. Alberta should be back at full testing capacity again by tomorrow.

Alberta's Update on Keystone XL Investment

Relevant Links:

[Alberta Premier on Keystone XL](#)

In his announcement to Albertans in Calgary today, Premier Kenney stated that the Province finalized an agreement to finish the Keystone pipeline expansion by providing \$1.5 B in equity and a \$6 B loan guarantee. Key highlights;

- Agreement is meant to “kickstart delivery.” The pipeline will be completed by Summer 2023, transporting 830,000bbl/day.
- The agreement is a result of 6 months of negotiations and vetting that the province undertook with TC energy and other partners.
- Shovels will be on the ground starting tomorrow (April 1), and hiring will begin immediately.
 - 12,000 indirect jobs, including 5,400 in AB. 1,400 direct in AB and more in other provinces.
- Goal to sell equity stake at a profit.
- Generate \$30 billion in royalties over 20 years.
- Following the pandemic, Alberta will launch a bold economic recovery package that “ensures a future for our largest industry (energy).”
- Premier stated risks are obvious - COVID impacts on labour and material supply. Announcement is not a distraction on the fight of COVID-19. Construction season starts now, cannot afford to lose season and not act right now.