

AFN Alberta COVID-19

Daily Bulletin



Friday, May 22

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>.

***We will not be publishing a bulletin over the weekend, our next bulletin will be issued on Monday, May 25.**

DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

AB Testing Results	May 21	May 22	Change
Tests Completed	225,588	228,793	+3,205
Total Positive	6,768	6,800	+32
Active	926	865	-61
Fatalities	132	134	+2
Recoveries	5,710	5,801	+91
<u>COVID-19 Regional Data for Alberta</u> Calgary zone - 4,698 Edmonton zone - 524 Central zone - 99 South zone - 1,223 North zone - 232 Unidentified zone - 24		<u>COVID-19 in Alberta First Nations* (as of May 22)</u> Calgary Zone - 19 North Zone - 4 South Zone - 6 Unidentified zone - 9	

New Measures

- Restaurants, bars and cafes in Calgary and Brooks are set to open May 25. The remainder of Stage 1 reopenings in these cities, including day camps, summer schools, post-secondary institutions and places of worship, would be allowed to proceed June 1 at earliest.

First Nation-specific Updates

- **Yesterday**, Canada [announced](#) an additional \$75 million in new funding for organizations that address the critical needs of Indigenous peoples in urban centres and off-reserve.
- A **First Nations toolkit for food security** during COVID-19 was published by the BC First Nations Health Authority. [Click here](#) to view it.
- 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.
 - ***Updated*** [Click here](#) to view national demographic data and epidemic curves.

- The UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous rights is calling for input into a global report about how COVID-19 is impacting Indigenous peoples. [Click here](#) for the full details of the request. Deadline for submissions is June 15.
- **Service Canada has a dedicated toll-free phone line for First Nations members needing help with their CERB applications. Call 1-877-631-2657**

National and Regional Updates

- 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.

INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS FOR FIRST NATIONS

NEW AFN Fact Sheets on CERB and Student Financial Aid Eligibility

The AFN published two new fact sheets with details First Nations people should know about the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) before applying, and guidance for students on benefits available to them.

Details You Should Know About the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) Before You Apply!

This Fact Sheet further outlines CERB eligibility stipulations and requirements. More information can be found at www.afn.ca and in the *Information for First Nations on eligibility and applying for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit* document. If you access the CERB, there may be important financial implications for you and your family. Individuals and families must be fully informed of the benefit, eligibility criteria, and responsibilities before accessing the CERB.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the CERB:

- You must be:
 - experiencing involuntary loss of income due to COVID-19,
 - or be eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) since March 15, 2020,
 - or have run out of all of your EI regular or fishing benefits between December 29, 2019 and October 3, 2020.
- You also must have made a minimum of \$5,000 (before tax) in employment or self-employment income in 2019 or the past 12 months.
- Finally, you must have made less than \$1,000 (before tax) of income in the two weeks before applying for the CERB, and make less than \$1,000 (before tax) of income each month when renewing the CERB.
- You should only apply through one of the following: the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) or Service Canada – not both!

Important Notes

- If you are eligible to receive the CERB but are now a client of a First Nation's On-Reserve Income Assistance (IA) Program, the CERB may be deducted from your IA payments. Check with your First Nation's IA Administrator or case manager before applying for the CERB.
- If you are a First Nations person living off-reserve and eligible to receive the CERB, but are a client of your provincial or territorial social assistance program, the CERB may be deducted from your payments. You should contact your caseworker for more information.
- It is important for you to make sure you are eligible for the CERB, since the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) will require ineligible individuals to pay back the CERB. This is a substantial amount of money! Call the CERB's toll free number at 1-833-966-2092 to discuss your eligibility and your application. You should also check the CRA's CERB eligibility information or Service Canada's CERB Q&A for the most up-to-date eligibility information.
- The CERB is taxable but the taxes are not automatically deducted from the CERB payment. If you receive the CERB you should set aside an appropriate amount to cover your 2020 taxes. In circumstances where the CERB is replacing income exempt from Income tax under Section 87 of the Indian Act - for example if you have status and worked on reserve - then the CERB will be tax-exempt.
- If you are a student and meet the CERB's eligibility criteria, you can apply for the CERB. However, many students may not meet the CERB's eligibility criteria. If you are a student that does not meet the CERB's eligibility criteria, you should look into the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB).

[/services/benefits/ei/cerb-application/questions.html](https://services/benefits/ei/cerb-application/questions.html)

Are you a First Nations Student in College or University?

YOU MIGHT QUALIFY FOR THE FOLLOWING FINANCIAL AID:

CANADA EMERGENCY STUDENT BENEFIT (CESB)

The CESB provides **\$1,250/month** for eligible students from May through August 2020, and **\$1,750** for students with dependents and those with permanent disabilities.

Online applications are expected to be available in the coming weeks. Payments will be administered through the **Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)**. For more details on the program visit canada.ca/coronavirus

MORE FUNDING FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The **Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP)** is administered through local First Nations.

Additional funding was announced including a one year **\$75 million** investment in Indigenous post-secondary education, with **\$65 million** going to support First Nations post-secondary education students.

Contact your local band office to find out if you qualify.

LOANS & GRANTS FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

New updates to Canada Student Service Grant:

\$5,000 for students volunteering over the summer to help with COVID-19

Increase 2020-2021 grants for full time students up to **\$6,000** and part-time students up to **\$3,600**

Loans and scholarships:

Increase weekly loan amounts for students from **\$210 to \$350/week**

Additional grants and scholarships available through universities and colleges

[Click here](#) to download the CERB fact sheet. [Click here](#) to view the student aid fact sheet.

NEW Online Tool to Help Find Financial Help During COVID-19

Relevant Links: [Canada.ca Questionnaire for Financial Assistance](#)
[Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)

An online questionnaire is now live on Canada.ca that will help people find financial help during COVID-19 by answering a couple of questions. [Click here](#) to access the new tool. As a reminder, Canada has a complete listing of all the programs and benefits available [here](#). First Nation individuals are eligible for the same benefits available to Canadians.

Updates from Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

NEW [List of PPE suppliers from FNIHB \(two documents attached\)](#)

1. The **PPE Suppliers Spreadsheet** is a list of suppliers who have reached out to ISC directly, note that in some cases products have not yet been approved for sale in Canada, as we understand. *FNIHB works to cross reference our list with the asset review table regularly.*
2. **Asset Review Table** shows approved products and vendors.
 - **Green coloured cells** represent **authorized vendors**
 - **Red coloured cells** indicate **NON-authorized vendors**

NEW [Guidance on Use of Non-medical Masks in the Community](#)

Linked above is guidance on use of non-medical masks or face coverings in the community. It includes advice on making, cleaning, putting on, and taking off a non-medical mask, as well as content on use in workplace settings.

NEW [Weekly Bulletin from Dr. Yacoub \(attached\)](#)

Dr. Yacoub, Alberta's Senior Medical Officer of Health at FNIHB, sends a weekly bulletin to all First Nations. These bulletins provide updates to First Nations on COVID-19 from a public health perspective. This week's bulletin is attached.

COVID-19 ISC-AB and Treaty-Area Chiefs Call Schedule for May

ISC-AB will be hosting the following Chiefs call for the remainder of the month:

3:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 27 –Treaty 6, 7 and 8 All-Chiefs Call

Chiefs are encouraged to continue sending requests to Dean Janvier and ISC-AB will structure these calls to make sure they are providing the information that is most important to leadership.

May 21 Bulletin (attached):

ISC Alberta Region is sending updates twice weekly to leadership on the current COVID-19 situation and response. Yesterday's bulletin (May 21) is attached. It includes the following information:

- Updated Indigenous Awareness Resources on ISC Website
- Health Canada Approves Trial for Potential COVID Vaccine
- Scheduled Immunization procedures during COVID-19
- Canada Child Benefit Payment Increase

Also attached is a one page flowchart to help determine individual eligibility for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) that was previously distributed by ISC but is being circulated again after feedback from communities.

Canada's \$350 million Emergency Community Support Fund Opens.

The Emergency Community Support Fund supports community organizations helping vulnerable people during the COVID-19 crisis. Community organizations may apply for funds through either the Canadian Red Cross, Community Foundations of Canada or the United Way Centraide network.

- Non-profit organizations may apply to the Canadian Red Cross' national portal [here](#).
- Registered charities and other qualified donees may apply to Community Foundations of Canada's national portal [here](#) or to their local United Way Centraide (check the United Way Centraide Canada's website [here](#) for information on how to apply).

Community organizations of both types can apply to the Canadian Red Cross for training and equipment to help their staff and volunteers prevent disease transmission.

You can find more information on the Emergency Community Support Fund's [website](#). If you would like to learn more, you can register to join one of three webinars:

- 12:00 pm MT, May 21, 2020. English. [Register here](#).
- 9:00 am MT, May 22, 2020. French. [Register here](#).
- 9:00 am MT, May 25, 2020. English. [Register here](#).

CALL & MEETING SUMMARIES

****RECAP* May 21 | AFN National Executive Meeting***

The National Executive met with Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister Carolyn Bennett, Indigenous Services Minister Marc Miller, and Fisheries and Oceans Minister Bernadette Jordan. Regional Chief Poitras asked leadership in the region for input on the issues she should raise. As she only had 3 minutes, she did her best to summarize common issues Chiefs raised. AFN Alberta will endeavour to seek a response from the Ministers' Office to the questions Chiefs submitted this week. **Key highlights:**

Meeting with Ministers Bennett and Miller

- National Chief Bellegarde pressed for updates on priorities identified in the Speech From the Throne including the planned UNDRIP legislation, establishing a National Treaty Commissioner's Office, full implementation of the *Indigenous Languages Act* and the child welfare legislation, the MMIWG national action plan that was supposed to be tabled this summer, day scholars' settlement, and Canada's goal to close the infrastructure gaps by 2030.
- The Regional Chiefs touched on the following issues.
 - **Policing and law enforcement issues** that the pandemic has highlighted, particularly with the challenges First Nations' face in enforcing their bylaws, BCRs, and border closures. Many called for First Nations policing to be considered an essential service, immediate funding for security (related to COVID-19 measures), and direct funding to be provided for First Nations policing

- and law development.
- The need for **First Nations to be fully involved with provinces and Canada in discussions about economic relaunch and recovery plans.**
- The substantial loss of revenues First Nation-owned casinos are facing, and **the need for financial relief for First Nation-owned businesses.**
- **The famine and pestilence clauses of some numbered Treaties that guarantees full protection for First Nation during situations like this current pandemic from Canada.** RC Cameron called on the government to take responsibility and fully fund all aspects of Treaty Nations' pandemic planning and response.
- **The need for a strategy and funding on mental wellness post-COVID-19.**
- **The need to address outstanding infrastructure gaps,** especially housing, so that First Nations don't need to worry about not having adequate housing and infrastructure when emergency situations like a pandemic arise.
- Minister Miller said Canada can't replace revenue streams for **any** business, but can provide relief for employees and programs. **Their original corporate support Canada announced was not intended to exclude First Nation owned-businesses.** **Regulatory changes were required. They have now fixed it to make them eligible.**
- On policing, Minister Miller reminded the Executive that he is mandated to improve First Nations policing and make it an essential service. **He indicated a willingness to work with First Nations, policing authorities, and provincial solicitors/attorneys general to realize a way forward on policing and enforcement of First Nation laws, post-COVID.**
- The economic rebuild requires deeper thought and reflection of where we are going. First Nations should not have to face another pandemic under the current conditions. Miller recognized the need to develop and accelerate critical infrastructure like housing, hospitals, policing.
- **Progress on C-92 has slowed down because they don't yet have a budget to ensure adequate funding.** That said, if a community decides to chart their own, distinct path forward on CFS, outside of the proposed process in C92, they will engage with them on it. The legislation affirms a Nation's right to do this.

Meeting with Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Minister Jordan

- The Regional Chiefs touched on the following broad issues:
 - The **need for fisheries regulations to be applied in a way that truly respects First Nations' rights** to fish and care for their lands and waters.
 - The **need for First Nations to co-manage fisheries,** conservation solutions, and water habitats, and be active participants in policy-making that impacts their rights.
 - **Ensuring First Nation commercial fishers are eligible for the suite of financial aid programs Canada announced last week for fisheries.**

- Minister Jordan stated that they do not want to compromise First Nation rights to fish. They have been granted to you and are legally enshrined. The Minister wants to support the exercise of those rights.
- **First Nation inland commercial fishers are eligible for the fisheries supports announced last week.** DFO will do what they can to get these supports out quickly. They can work directly with communities on applications.
 - If fishers' EI runs out, they can apply to CERB. Recognizing that there will be a decline in income for fisheries this year, fishers will be able to apply for EI based on last season's earnings instead of this year's.
 - A dedicated call centre will answer questions regarding aid for fishers.

RC Poitras' comments to Ministers Bennett and Miller:

- RC Poitras highlighted the **jurisdictional issues around health**, and how the interplay between FNIHB and AHS caused a lot of response delays early on. **Canada has a responsibility to address these issues because First Nations in Alberta have a Treaty right to Health.**
- **Chiefs in Treaty 7 are requesting an urgent meeting with the Ministers** to address their needs as they continue to deal with outbreaks.
- **Nations want to know if there's funding to support them in creating solutions for food security and sovereignty.**
- She also pressed for an **overhaul of the First Nations emergency management regime**, and the need to fund First Nations directly for their own emergency management.
- She **asked Minister Miller if he and Minister Blair connected with him to find additional funds to support the community's security and checkpoint costs.** Minister Blair committed to following-up with Minister Miller on this during the Regional Chief's meeting with Blair.
- The Regional Chief noted that a big reason for Nations feeling unprepared when this pandemic first began is due to the infrastructure issues many communities face. She pressed for support in addressing the need for more housing, health care facilities, and other critical infrastructure.

RC Poitras' Comments to Minister Jordan (the Minister committed to having an official follow-up on these questions directly. AFN Alberta will forward the region responses once they are received).

- A recent Transport Canada report for the Athabasca River forecasted major changes for the Athabasca River from climate change and industrial activities. ***Will you task an official to start working with Transport Canada and Indigenous communities to get ahead of these impacts and identify co-management and monitoring options?***
- The oil sands region has unique challenges for fish and fish habitat. The updates to the *Fisheries Act* create or improve tools for co-management of fish and fish habitat with Indigenous groups and confirm the importance of Treaty-based approaches. ***Will DFO support a region-specific approach to co-management under the updated Act?***

- The Indigenous communities in Fort Chipewyan are developing a new research and monitoring institution that will have created a lot of opportunities for coordination with DFO research projects and other activities under the Act. ***Can you task an official to work with the communities to develop a partnership approach?***
- The Alberta Energy Regulator unilaterally suspended monitoring requirements indefinitely in response to industry concerns about Covid-19 and contactor safety. This includes monitoring for toxic materials that can have chronic health effects on fish and fish habitat. ***Have you been briefed on these changes, and what steps will you take to fill the gaps in monitoring and protection of fish and fish habitat that Alberta has now created?***
- There is work ongoing in Environment and Climate Change Canada to develop effluent regulations under the Fisheries Act. This has the potential to adversely impact Treaty rights, which would trigger the Duty to Consult. However, there is no clear process for co-development or consultation for developing these regulations. ***How will you ensure that Canada meets its fiduciary duty to consult, in a way that reflects the new co-management provisions of the Fisheries Act? How will you ensure that impacts to Treaty rights are fully considered, mitigated and accommodated?***

REGIONAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES

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

- ***Canada's COVID-19 Update - May 22***
- ***Premier Kenney Announces Re-Opening Strategy for Calgary and Brooks***
- ****RECAP* Alberta's COVID-19 Update - May 21***

Canada's COVID-19 Update - May 22

Relevant Links: [*PM's Daily Briefing*](#)

[*Federal Health Officials' Briefing*](#)

PM Trudeau gave his daily address to Canadians today from outside his home in Ottawa.

Following this, Dr. Howard Njoo, Deputy Chief Public Health Officer, gave the Health Officials' COVID-19 update. **Key Highlights:**

- Canada's COVID-19 totals 81,765 cases, 6180 deaths. 41,986 or 51% of all cases have now recovered. 1,401,000 people have been tested with 5% of people testing positive 26-28,000 people are being tested daily.
- The Prime Minister and the Premiers held their 10th weekly call last night, focussed on reopening the economy.
- Canada can support provinces and territories with contact tracing and can make 3.600 contact tracking calls a day, 7 days a week. Additionally, Statistics Canada can make up to 20,000 calls a day if needed. Ontario is already receiving this kind of support.
- There is now a new tool at www.canada.ca/coronavirusbenefits that asks questions and then outlines programs that people may be eligible for.

- Dr. Njoo says it is still too early to say if the country or hard-hit regions like Ontario are experiencing a second wave. However, Canada is anticipating and planning for a second wave in the fall, as people move indoors and flu season increases risk.
- For homemade masks, Canada recommends using material thick enough to prevent the transmission of respiratory droplets. Dr. Njoo reminded people that the use of masks by the public is not to protect oneself but others, and mask use does not replace other public health measures.

Additional Information

- When asked if Canada will impose a national mobile app for contact tracing, the Prime Minister says they are working with a number of potential partners, including Apple and Google on possible apps. He says they hope to have something in place by June.
- The Prime Minister says Canada has the ability to conduct 60,000 tests a day but that many of the regions across the country do not need to scale up their testing to this amount because of low case counts. Canada is working with provincial and territorial governments to figure out what they need and how the federal government can support.
- Based on studies to date, it has been shown that the virus can exist on surfaces up to several days.

Premier Kenney Announces Re-Opening Strategy for Calgary and Brooks

Relevant Link: [Calgary Herald: Kenney confirms restaurants, bars and cafes in Calgary, Brooks set to open May 25](#)

While most of Alberta began stage 1 of the COVID-19 relaunch on May 14, reopening efforts in Calgary and Brooks have been delayed because COVID-19 case counts and transmission remained high in these areas. Today, Premier Kenney announced plans to reopen businesses in these zones. **Key Highlights:**

- Restaurants, bars and cafes in Calgary, Brooks are set to open May 25.
- The remainder of Stage 1 reopenings, including day camps, summer schools, post-secondary institutions and places of worship, would be allowed to proceed June 1 at earliest.
- Calgary retail businesses, farmers' markets, museums and art galleries were permitted to reopen last week

***RECAP* Alberta's COVID-19 Update - May 21**

Relevant Link: [Alberta Update on COVID-19](#)

Dr. Deena Hinshaw gave the Thursday update on COVID-19 statistics in the province of Alberta. The Chief Medical Officer is now only providing briefings every other day. Case numbers and data continue to be updated daily.

Key Highlights:

- 5,710 cases of COVID-19 have now recovered. As of May 21, there are 926 active cases in the province. 59 individuals are hospitalized with 6 of these in the ICU. 4 additional deaths were reported yesterday, all were residents of Calgary Continuing Care Facilities.
 - The average age of those deceased from COVID-19 is 82.
 - Cargill now has only 5 active cases, and JBS has only 10.
- Progress on Alberta's relaunch plan will still rely on Alberta's ability to keep infection rates low as public health measures are relaxed.