



COVID-19 BULLETIN

MAY 28, 2020

Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) COVID-19 Update

Thunder Bay District Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Tests (May 28): 81 • Resolved Cases: 79 • Active Cases: 1 • Total Deceased: 1
Porcupine Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Cases (May 28): 65 • Resolved Cases: 55 • Active Cases: 3 • Deceased: 7
Northwestern Health Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Tests (May 28): 21 • Active cases: 3 • Resolved:18

- The province of Ontario has extended the public health emergency orders until June 9, 2020.
- NAN is moving to weekly calls (once a week on Thursdays).
 - Next call: **Thursday, June 4, 2020 | 1p.m. EST | 12p.m. CST**
 - Minister Greg Rickford has confirmed to join the call next Thursday, we are still trying to confirm ISC Minister Marc Miller to join the call as well.

Funding

- NAN continues to advocate for additional resources to flow to communities to support the continuation of their COVID-19 response and operations into the Fall.
- NAN continues to reiterate that the unique work required to respond to COVID-19 is putting exceptional strain on First Nation resources.
- At the Trilateral Table, we shared with our federal and provincial partners that NAN communities have consistently raised concerns about the sustainability of operations in the COVID-19 environment, especially given that we do not know how long this situation will last.
- In order to best support your community needs, if Chiefs could send specific information to emergency@nan.ca – bullets points on what community funding needs are right now and if your community is facing a deficit due to this pandemic.



Send all inquiries regarding COVID-19 to emergency@nan.ca

www.nancovid19.ca

Funding Opportunities

- Community-based organizations from across the country will be able to apply for funding to support a variety of activities that address a pressing social inclusion or well-being need caused by COVID-19.
- As of May 19, 2020, eligible community organizations, will be able to apply for funds through the national partners or their local entities. Interested community organizations are encouraged to visit intermediary partner websites regularly to learn more about how to apply.
 - [The Canadian Red Cross](#)
 - [Community Foundations of Canada](#)
 - [United Way Centraide Canada](#)

\$75 Million Federal Funding

- We anticipated on the 2 pm ISC Ontario Region call this afternoon we would have more information about this funding. Unfortunately, we did not get the clarity that we had hoped for.
- What we do understand is that Ontario Region will be provided with approximately \$15 million of the \$75 million commitment.
- ISC stated that further information will be released this week, however, we do not have any sense of the criteria that the applications will be assessed by.
- We know that funding may be available to '*eligible applicants*' (ie) those proposals kept on file by ISC that received a funding denial letter but with an indication that the funding request was 'eligible', or in scope. This does not include proposals that were deemed ineligible in the denial letter). These eligible applicants **will be asked to provide a two-page update regarding any changes to their originally proposed activities, funding and/or proposed partnerships.**
- We would suggest that you review your response letter from ISC to determine next steps for your proposal.
- NAN has been advocating that proposals that were previously denied and have been brought to our attention are put on the top of the list for consideration, and if there is anything specific you would like us to advocate for, please contact us at emergency@nan.ca.

Pandemic Pay

- NAN continues to advocate at the Trilateral Table for a more inclusive definition of essential workers for the purposes of pandemic pay.
- The province indicated that updated information on eligibility will be provided either later this week or early next week.
 - This update is expected to confirm whether our advocacy to include child welfare workers as eligible for pandemic pay has been successful.

Evacuation Sites (PEOC Process)

- After many, many attempts at working collaboratively with the staff at Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PEOC), the NAN Executive Council is very unhappy with their progress around site selection and general planning for evacuations.



- This has led NAN to request an urgent meeting with the Deputy Minister of Indigenous Affairs Ontario (Shawn Batise) and the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of the Solicitor General (Mario DiTommaso).
- NAN will ask the federal government to join this meeting, as they fund PEOC for First Nations evacuation planning and coordination.
- NAN has advocated for this work to be treated as urgent, as there are already numerous active fires throughout Ontario and NAN territory. And yet, there are no concrete plans established if a community, or multiple communities, need to evacuate.
- NAN has further conveyed that communities **must** be engaged in this process.

- NAN has raised the issue of some First Nations wishing to continue some form of education over the summer months at the Trilateral Table.
 - Concern given the communique sent by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) explaining that First Nation schools are to remain closed until September.
- NAN has been repeatedly assured that our First Nations' re-opening plans will be respected by both levels of government, so we are asking the province and federal governments how this communique fits with their promise to respect our plans. NAN awaits a response.
- A NAN Chiefs and education directors conference call will take place June 17 & 18 (2 hours each day) to plan for the fall.

Testing Strategy

- Liz Walker discussed her concerns with community-wide testing which include:
 - If a person has not been exposed to a case and has no symptoms, their likelihood of having COVID-19 is extremely low;
 - Negative tests need to be interpreted cautiously; they can provide a false sense of security and cause people to ease of necessary public health measures;
 - There is a small risk of both false positives and false negatives; the implication of either on a community would be huge;
 - **MOH recommendation at this time is not to have community-wide testing;**
 - Instead, focus on risk-based testing, which would include symptomatic people or people who do not have symptoms but have been in contact with a case; and
 - Travellers returning from urban areas to remote communities may be considered for testing, but that would depend on whether the person wants to be tested, conversations with public health, and the person's ability to self-isolate.
- Both Liz and Susy would be happy to continue these conversations, including what the province could offer to support self-isolation and testing infrastructure.
- If you would like further information or to be put in contact with the MOH directly, please contact us at emergency@nan.ca.

Other Updates on Testing Supplies & Strategies

- The NAN COVID-19 Task Team continues to monitor testing across NAN territory but would like to highlight the need to maintain and follow public health guidelines.
- If your community is experiencing a testing shortage or other barrier to testing, please email emergency@nan.ca.
- **Mental Health and Substance Use Working Group** met yesterday and circulated the updated mental health proposal. A 24/7 crisis line and a central intake with a strong connection to community-based mental health services is the core of the proposal. The partner in the proposal is Keewaytinook Okimakanak (KO) eHealth who has agreed to use their infrastructure to roll out the virtual care that is required they are in 40/49 communities and where there is no infrastructure we have budgeted to get all communities on board.
 - Planning for a surge in mental health cases in the coming months.

Nishnawbe Aski Police Services (NAPS)

- Preparing for Ontario Police College beginning the week of June 15, 2020– this has been confirmed.
- NAPS is beginning to prepare as their funding agreement ends March 31, 2021, and is beginning to put together all the information to be well prepared for those negotiations.

Communications

- Members of the NAN Executive Council will continue to appear on Wawatay Radio on Tuesday at 12 pm EST and on Friday at 1:05 pm EST.
- COVID-19 Tools and Resources are being translated into Oji-Cree, Ojibway, and Cree to assist the communities in spreading awareness and public health messaging on COVID-19. They are posted on the NAN website under COVID-19 Tools and Resources.

Urban Communities

- NAN has posted specific information on the NAN website for members living off-reserve in urban centres across northwestern and northeastern Ontario.



- This includes how to find shelters, food banks, social and mental health services, as well as Indigenous organizations that can assist.
- Please continue to access our website as we are updating it daily with the most up to date information: **www.nancovid19.ca**

NEXT CALL: Thursday, June 4, 2020 | 1p.m. EST | 12p.m. CST, and will continue weekly thereafter.



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