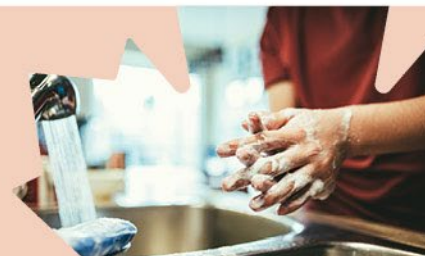


Ontario Region Update

For more information:
Canada.ca/coronavirus

Information for Indigenous communities:
Canada.ca/coronavirus-info-indigenous



INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – Ontario Region – February 9, 2023

COVID-19 Boosters: Initial considerations for 2023

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has released their initial considerations for 2023 COVID-19 vaccine booster doses. At this time, NACI continues their booster dose recommendations from fall 2022. If they have not already done so, anyone who was recommended to receive a booster in the fall of 2022 is encouraged to receive the dose now.

NACI continues to strongly recommend that at least one booster dose should be offered to all adults 18 years of age and over, and all adolescents 12 to 17 years old who are at increased risk of severe illness. They also strongly recommend that adults 65 years of age and older, and individuals 5 to 64 years of age who are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, should have received a booster dose since the start of fall 2022. For individuals who have not yet received a fall 2022 booster, it should be offered, as per the recommended interval.

For more information, please read [NACI's full statement here](#).

First Nations COVID-19 Cases in Ontario

*Week of January 29 - February 4, 2023

- **82** reported cases in communities
- **18** First Nations reported cases
- **0** new deaths
- **0** new hospitalizations

Ontario COVID-19 Vaccines

[*As of January 29, 2023](#)

- **80.8%** completed a primary series
- **50.9%** received a primary series at 1 booster dose
- **23.5%** received a primary series and 2 booster doses

A Message from the Minister of Health: Heart Month

February marks Heart Month and provides us with an opportunity to focus on the efforts we can make to improve our heart health. Due to advance in research, drug therapies and prevention efforts, rates of heart disease in Canada have been declining. However, there are still many risk factors that contribute to heart disease. Lifestyle changes, small and big, can help reduce your risk. These include eating healthier, getting enough sleep, being physically active, managing stress, and limiting your alcohol intake.

To read the Minister of Health's full statement about Heart Month, [please click here](#).

Ontario expanding child & youth mental health services

On January 25, 2023, Ontario announced it is investing \$4.75 million to expand the "One Stop Talk" counselling program for children, youth and families. One Stop Talk is an electronic service that allows patients to connect with a clinician by phone, video, text or chat without an appointment. During the pilot phase, the service was connected to six mental health organizations. The new investment will allow the service to expand and include additional organizations and their waitlisted patients.

To further improve child and youth mental health services across the region, Ontario has also committed to the creation of eight new youth wellness hubs. The hubs provide individuals ages 12 to 25 with services related to substance abuse, education, housing, and wellness. These funding changes aim to reduce barriers to mental health counselling for children, youth and their families, no matter where they are in Ontario. To read the full news release, visit the [Ontario Newsroom](#).

For the most up-to-date national information on COVID-19, visit the [Indigenous Services Canada](#) website or the Government of Canada's Twitter and Facebook pages at @GCIndigenous and @GCIndigenousHealth.

Additional Updates

Emergency Management Assistance Program is open

The [Emergency Management Assistance Program](#) is now accepting applications for the 2023 to 2024 fiscal year. First Nations communities and Indigenous organizations can apply for funding for wildland fire prevention and preparedness initiatives offered through the FireSmart program. They can also apply for [natural hazard](#) prevention and preparedness projects through the Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness program.

To apply or to access more information, please visit the [Emergency Management FireSmart program](#) and the [Emergency Management Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness program](#) webpages.

2023 National First Nations Water Leadership Award

Do you know a community member or organization dedicated to ensuring that First Nations have access to clean and safe drinking water? You can nominate them for the National First Nations Water Leadership (NFWL) Award.

NFWL recognizes First Nations individuals or organizations that have demonstrated leadership and outstanding dedication to the advancement of clean and safe drinking water in First Nations communities. The winner receives a trophy and a \$500 art piece. In honour of the winner, \$10,000 in bursaries will be awarded in their name to First Nation applicants who are pursuing or furthering their career in the water and wastewater industry.

The nomination period for the 2023 NFWL Award is open until **March 31, 2023**. A nomination form will be distributed with this Update. If you would like to nominate a candidate, complete the form and send it by email to prixdeau-wateraward@sac-isc.gc.ca.

For more information on the NFWL Award and last year's nominees, please visit the [National First Nations Water Leadership Award](#) webpage.

Help spread the news: More people are now entitled to register under the *Indian Act*

In 2019, Bill S-3 eliminated known sex-based inequities from the registration provisions in the *Indian Act*. Before Bill S-3, First Nations women could not pass on the right to registration to their descendants to the same extent as First Nations men.




Now, with the removal of sex-based inequities, more people are entitled to register under the *Indian Act*.

Please share this poster (shown below) with your community to help us increase awareness of the changes.


[Click here to download the full colour poster.](#)
[Click here to download the black & white poster.](#)

Are you entitled to register under the *Indian Act*?


Bill S-3 changed the *Indian Act* to remove known sex-based inequities from the registration provisions. **More people are now entitled to register.**

Why was the <i>Indian Act</i> changed?	You may now be entitled to register:
 When an entitled woman married a non-entitled man before 1985, she lost her right to registration. That loss also affected her descendants' rights to registration. Bill S-3 was introduced to fix the impacts of this loss of status for all affected descendants.	 If you have a parent, grandparent or ancestor who was affected by sex-based inequities in the <i>Indian Act</i> .  If anyone from your immediate or extended family is registered or entitled to be registered.

Find out more about registration and how to apply:
Call Indigenous Services Canada at **1-800-567-9604** and select option 1, Monday to Friday from 9 am to 6 pm Eastern time
Visit canada.ca/indian-status



Indigenous Services Canada / Services aux Autochtones Canada



If you have questions about registration, please email: aadnc.engagementinscriptionpn-fnregistrationengagement.aandc@canada.ca.

Help is available whenever you need it.

Immediate support is available 24/7 for all Indigenous people in Canada.

Hope for Wellness Help Line and Chat
1-855-242-3310 or www.hopeforwellness.ca

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line
1-866-925-4419

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line
1-844-413-6649



Please feel free to contact the FNIHB Ontario COVID-19 generic inbox: sac.covid-19fnihbontario.isc@canada.ca if you or your community members have any information needs.