

COVID-19 Update

For more information:
Canada.ca/coronavirus

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



INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – Ontario Region – June 2, 2021

This week has been extraordinarily heavy. We are profoundly saddened by the news of the unmarked gravesite around the Kamloops Residential School, and our thoughts are with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation and all Indigenous communities across Canada as we grieve this immense loss.

We are reminded that the impacts of the residential school system are still being felt today. The legacy of Canada's shameful history of colonialism and the mistreatment of Indigenous peoples remains rooted in the present. We know that the finding in Kamloops is not an isolated event, and that more burial sites will likely be identified in the coming weeks and months. We remain committed to advancing reconciliation and support the renewed calls for accountability. By understanding and acknowledging the past, we encourage all Canadians to be part of the solution moving forward.

This tragedy has undoubtedly triggered the resurfacing of many dark and painful emotions for Survivors, their families, and communities. Resources are available to support the emotional and psychological needs of First Nations communities. The Hope for Wellness Help Line is available 24/7 at 1-855-242-3310 or [via online chat](#). The National Indian Residential School Crisis Line is also available 24 hours a day at 1-866-925-4419. No one has to face these feelings alone.

Garry Best, Regional Executive and Anne Scotton, Regional Director General

Operation Remote Immunity (ORI) 2.0

ORI 2.0 offers the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to approximately 6,000 youths aged 12 to 17 in the 31 fly-in First Nation communities and Moosonee. Clinics began this week with vaccination teams scheduled to be in communities for multiple days.

Ornge will be leading the operations, and Thunder Bay will be the hub city for the teams and to store the vaccines. The Ministry of Health; Indigenous Affairs Ontario; the Solicitor General; Northern Public Health Units; and First Nations health authorities collaborated with Ornge to co-develop the plan in partnership with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.

It is anticipated that both doses for youth will to be completed by the end of July.

[The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has been tested and proven safe and effective for kids as young as 12 years old.](#)

Along with youth vaccinations, adults who have not yet been vaccinated can also receive the Pfizer vaccine at these clinics.

Criteria for easing certain public health measures

[Restrictive public health measures](#) have been implemented throughout the pandemic to control the spread of COVID-19. Instating, maintaining, easing, adjusting these measures are decisions based on a data-driven approach that support public health professionals and government decision makers. Several factors are considered when making decisions about the public health measures, including the risk of the COVID-19 variants and the number of people getting vaccinated.

Life After Vaccination infographic

The Public Health Agency of Canada has produced a printable PDF titled [Vaccinated against COVID-19? Here's what happens next](#) to outline what to expect in the spring, summer, and fall once more people are vaccinated and less people are getting sick with COVID-19.

COVID-19 Vaccines for Ontario

- **139,901** Daily doses administered
- **9,342,121** Total doses administered
- **781,163** People fully vaccinated
- * All data reflects total from 6 p.m. the previous day

In a [June 2 news release](#), the Government of Canada provided updated information regarding COVID-19 and First Nations communities. This information included the latest statistics as of June 1 as well as relevant information regarding COVID-19 vaccinations, assistance from the Canadian Armed Forces and Canadian Rangers to help communities cope with outbreaks, and a list of associated links on information and resources.

Updated Recommendations on COVID-19 vaccines

On May 28, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommended that eligible individuals who have an autoimmune condition, are immunosuppressed, or are pregnant or breast feeding be offered the two-dose series of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna). [mRNA vaccines](#) do not use live cells to trigger an immune response but instead, teach the body's immune system how to produce the spike proteins to trigger an immune response

If they are not able to receive an mRNA vaccine, for example because of an allergy, another authorized COVID-19 vaccine should be offered.

On June 1, [NACI provided its recommendations on the interchangeability of COVID-19 vaccines](#) following studies from Germany, U.K, and Spain. Interchangeability means you can receive one vaccine product for your first dose and a different product for your second. This is also referred to as mixed vaccine schedule.

For people who have received an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna), NACI recommends that the same mRNA vaccine administered for the first dose should be offered for the second dose if it is readily available. If the same mRNA vaccine is not readily available or unknown, another mRNA vaccine can be considered interchangeable and should be offered for the second dose.

[Information unrelated to COVID-19](#)

Auditor General's report on health resources for Indigenous communities

Marc Miller, the Minister of Indigenous Services, issued a statement following the release of the Auditor General's [Report 11—Health Resources for Indigenous Communities—Indigenous Services Canada](#).

The Minister welcomed the report's focus and recommendations on direct operations on PPE distribution and health human resources to First Nations communities. He is committed to working in full collaboration with First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners and supporting Indigenous communities and organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional support available through the Indigenous Community Support Fund

On April 19, 2021, Budget 2021 proposed an additional \$760.8 million for the Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF). The ICSF helps First Nations, Inuit, Métis Nation communities and urban and off-reserve Indigenous organizations prevent, prepare, and respond to COVID-19.

Of this amount, approximately \$200 million is being sent to communities as direct allocations in early June. A further \$200 million will be sent to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation communities in Fall 2021. These funds will provide Indigenous communities with the flexibility they need to continue to address the specific needs identified by communities and their members. In addition, \$360 million in needs-based funding will support Indigenous communities and organizations, including \$150 million to support Indigenous peoples living in urban centres and First Nations living off reserve. Please note, the request process to access needs-based funding has been reopened.

To date, over \$1.8 billion in support has been announced through the Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF) for First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities and organizations. These funds are providing Indigenous communities and organizations with resources to implement their own solutions, informed by public health guidance, related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information and details on the request process, please visit the ICSF [webpage](#).

COVID-19 Cases

*As of June 2, 2021, @ 4:30 p.m.

- **1,855** confirmed in-community
- **125** active cases on reserve
- **23** deaths
- **1730** resolved (94.5%)



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.