

ONTARIO REGION UPDATE



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une version française, please email
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COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance for Fall 2024

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has released the National Advisory Committee on Immunization's (NACI) [Guidance on the use of COVID-19 vaccines during the fall of 2024](#). For Fall 2024, NACI strongly recommends vaccination against COVID-19 for people with a higher risk of infection and/or severe COVID-19 disease. Individuals with a higher risk of infection and/or severe disease include:

- Individuals 6 months and older who are from or in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities
- Residents of congregate living settings, such as long-term care and elder lodges
- Seniors who are 65 years of age and older
- Pregnant people
- People who provide essential community services
- People with underlying, high-risk medical conditions. Talk to a health care provider for more information.

Everyone else 6 months of age and older may receive the most recently updated vaccine. For previously vaccinated individuals, the recommended timeline is 6 months from the last COVID-19 dose, with a minimum interval of 3 months from the last dose. Following this timeline ensures that people who receive a spring 2024 dose will be eligible for an updated fall 2024 vaccine, when it becomes available.

For the full statement, please see [NACI's Guidance on the use of COVID-19 vaccines during the fall of 2024](#).



Sexual Health and Summer Events

The summer events season is an exciting time when your community members may be meeting new people, travelling to other areas, and having gatherings. As cases of sexually transmitted infections rise across the country, we encourage you to remind your community members to practice safer sex with any current or new partners. Visit OneHealth.ca/ON or [click here to download a package of social media graphics](#) promoting safer sex, as well as **text for social media posts**, and a **list of resources** where more information can be found.



Be Dog Aware: Practice dog safety

Did you know that 350 dog bites were reported in First Nations across Ontario last year?



What can you do?

Remember & share these dog safety tips.

Last year, 350 dog bites were reported in Ontario First Nations. Animal bites tend to increase in the spring and summer months as animals go into heat and more puppies are born. People also spend more time outside during the summer which means more dog encounters. With the weather warming up, it's a great time to spread the word about dog safety. We've created a social media package to help. It includes safety tips and what to do if an unfamiliar dog approaches, attacks, or scratches or bites you. It's important to have the right information to help make safe, quick decisions when you find yourself in an unexpected situation with a dog. [Click here to download the shareable Be Dog Aware - Social Media Package.](#)

Preventing Tick Bites: Resources for educators and children

Ticks can pass on germs that cause infections in humans, as outlined in May's [refresher on tick season](#). Below, there are a few more resources that teachers, childcare providers, and other adults may find helpful when they talk to children about keeping safe. Please consider sharing them with your networks before the new school year in the fall.



Health Canada Experiences

- A recent list of educational games, learning activities, videos, and other awareness resources. [Learning activities](#) have been organized by age, group size and type. Examples: [dances](#), [crafts](#), [comic strip](#), [Battleship-style game](#).
- Link: [Health Canada Experiences](#)

[Click here for a list of more tick education resources.](#)

Call for Proposals: Projects that Increase Accessibility

The Government of Canada [announced a new call for proposals](#) under the small projects component of the [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#). Under this new call for proposals, \$14.7 million has been allocated to fund approximately 150 small scale construction projects across the country. Each project could receive up to \$125,000. Priority will be given to accessibility projects led by Indigenous organizations and projects led by organizations that deliver services to support persons with disabilities living in poverty. **The deadline for proposals is July 23, 2024 at 3 pm ET.** For more information, please visit the [Enabling Accessibility Fund - Small Projects Component webpage](#).

Call for Applications: 2024-2025 Price McIntosh Bursary

For the fourth year in a row, [Library and Archives Canada](#) (LAC) will provide financial aid to Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities through the [Price McIntosh Bursary](#), to encourage them to enrol or pursue studies in fields related to libraries and archives. For the 2024-2025 academic year, **eligible students are encouraged to submit their application by September 20, 2024, at 11:59 pm PT.** This bursary is for students enrolled in an eligible Canadian college or university program. It provides \$5,000 for full-time students and \$2,500 for part-time students. Visit the [Price McIntosh Bursary webpage](#) for full details, including [eligibility criteria](#), the [application form](#), and [assistance in completing an application](#).



Canadian Council for Indigenous Business Accelerator Program



The Canadian Council for Indigenous Business (CCIB) has announced the [Indigenous Business Defence Sector Accelerator](#) program is open to new applicants. The program creates opportunities for Indigenous businesses in Canada to engage with defence suppliers. The program pairs Indigenous businesses with organizational sponsors who provide opportunities to leverage connections in their global supply chains, learn regulatory requirements and acquire knowledge and skills to work within the defence industry. **Applications for the program will close on July 12, 2024.** For more information, including project timelines and candidate selection, please visit the [Indigenous Business Defence Sector Accelerator program website](#).

Call for Contribution Program Applications: Support of the Wellbeing of Families and Survivors of MMIWG2S+

The 2024 call for applications is now open for the contribution program, Support of the Wellbeing of Families and Survivors of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ (MMIWG2S+) People. This program funds projects that provide assistance and services for the healing journeys of Indigenous survivors of the MMIWG2S+ crisis and impacted families.

If your organization plans to work on projects like therapeutic and cultural supports, healing gatherings, sharing and caring circles, mental health and emotional supports with an Elder, peer network supports, or any other initiative that provides support to survivors or families who have lost loved ones to the crisis, you could be eligible for funding.

The deadline to apply is July 26, 2024. A total of \$2.5 million is available to fund selected projects across Canada. For more information on how to apply, please visit the [contribution program webpage](#).



Help is here whenever you need it

Support is available 24/7 for all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Please find a list of mental health helplines below, able to provide culturally relevant support. To find more services and resources, [click here to go to the Indigenous mental health page](#).



Hope for Wellness Helpline

Phone: 1-855-242-3310

Online chat: www.hopeforwellness.ca

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line

Phone: 1-844-413-6649

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line

Phone: 1-866-925-4419

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Services

Phone: 9-8-8 (call or text)



Commemorating National Indigenous Peoples Day



On June 21, Indigenous Services Canada staff across Ontario commemorated National Indigenous Peoples Day (NIPD) both in and out of the office as part of National Indigenous History Month (NIHM). Staff connected with their local communities, participating in celebrations like summer solstice festivals and watching films by Indigenous creators. At work, staff joined several activities, including:

- Potluck and barbeque in Fort William First Nation territory. At the Anemki Business Centre, staff feasted together as a way to reflect upon and celebrate the important contributions of Indigenous peoples throughout history. This celebration was a great way to connect and nourish a space for dialogue about the many ways Indigenous people have shaped our present day. Photos from the event are included above.
- Online treaty trivia. Some staff led trivia throughout NIPD, with a special focus on treaties. This activity helped improve the staff's understanding of treaties and their role and responsibilities as treaty people. For example, staff learned more about the 1905 James Bay Treaty through the virtual game [Promises, Promises](#). Created by the Ojibway & Cree Cultural Centre, the game tests players knowledge and emphasizes the rights, responsibilities, and influences Treaty No.9 has on the Nishnawbe Aski Nation today.
- Iskoteew Lodge and Dodem Kanosha. Both centres provide a peaceful space for teaching and healing throughout the year, including on NIPD and through NIHM. They offer education about Indigenous cultures, values and practices from Indigenous perspectives, and provide support for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff.

While NIPD and NIHM come to a close for 2024, our responsibility to Indigenous peoples and histories do not. These commemorations each summer—both joyous and somber— give us a chance to reflect about the seasons ahead: How are we meeting our words and celebrations with concrete actions? How do we support future Indigenous histories and youth? What power do each one of us have to act in partnership with the communities we serve? What are we doing to support Indigenous colleagues? These are just some of the questions many of us will try to walk with in the coming months as new histories unfold.