

# Ontario Region Update

For more information:  
[Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus)

Information for Indigenous communities:  
[Canada.ca/coronavirus-info-indigenous](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus-info-indigenous)



## INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – Ontario Region – March 9, 2023

### World Tuberculosis Day

March 24<sup>th</sup> marks World [Tuberculosis \(TB\)](#) Day. Collaboration between public health and community can prevent new TB infections. The foundation of a good TB control strategy is finding people with previous TB exposure and those with disease, both of which are treatable. Without treatment, people with TB can become very ill and pass it on to others. While TB is contagious, TB transmission mainly occurs among people who live together or share rooms at school or work.

While rates of TB in [Ontario are low](#), there have been recent outbreaks in Indigenous communities, who are at a higher risk of contracting TB. In a report from 2017, First Nations individuals were found to be [40 times more likely](#) to develop active TB than other populations in Canada.

Improving housing, nutrition, education, and access to culturally safe healthcare are important actions in reducing the spread of illnesses like TB. Whether it is World TB Day, or any other day, Indigenous Services Canada remains committed to bettering these conditions and limit the spread of TB in Indigenous communities. For information on how to prevent TB, please visit [Tuberculosis: Prevention and risks](#).

### First Nations COVID-19 Cases in Ontario

\*Week of February 26 to March 4, 2023

- **131** reported cases in communities
- **17** First Nations reported cases
- **0** new deaths
- **0** new hospitalizations

### Ontario COVID-19 Vaccines

\*As of February 26, 2023

- **80.8%** completed a primary series
- **50.9%** received a primary series at 1 booster dose
- **23.7%** received a primary series and 2 booster doses

### With gratitude

A few months ago, we shared a questionnaire to get your thoughts about the products that Communications creates, including the Ontario Region Update. On behalf of the Ontario Region Communications Team, thank you for participating. We are reviewing the results and exploring options to improve our products moving forward. Your feedback and perspectives make this possible. Thank you.

### Where to get naloxone kits

Community members can help their neighbours and loved ones with substance use issues. As toxic drug supplies continue to spread across Canada, one of the most effective ways that individuals can help is by having a naloxone kit and knowing how to use it in case of an opioid poisoning emergency, more commonly known as an overdose.

In Ontario, individuals can pick up a **free naloxone kit** at [different locations including](#): pharmacies, public health units, health centres, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) nursing stations and other health facilities. If an individual or community is having trouble finding naloxone kits, or has questions about access, they can contact the ISC Community Programs Team at [communityprograms-programmescommunautaires@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:communityprograms-programmescommunautaires@sac-isc.gc.ca).

When picking up a naloxone kit, individuals will get a short lesson on how to use it. For a more in-depth look at using naloxone and feeling confident in using it, the [Canadian Red Cross](#) is offering their free online First Aid course about opioid poisoning emergencies. The course is self-paced and gives basic information needed to help someone in crisis (e.g., how to spot an opioid overdose). After finishing the course, participants may be eligible for a nasal naloxone kit from the Canadian Red Cross. To take the course and get a free naloxone kit, visit [First Aid for Opioid Poisoning Emergencies | Canadian Red Cross](#).

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 @GCIIndigenous and @GCIIndigenousHealth.

# Additional Updates

## Supporting Indigenous healthcare priorities

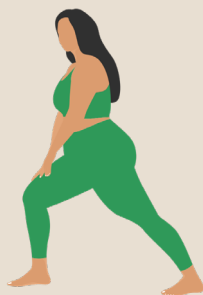
Last month, the Government of Canada [announced a \\$196.1 billion investment in health care](#), including [support for Indigenous health priorities](#). Approximately \$2 billion of the investment will be used to address the specific challenges First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples face when trying to access high-quality and culturally safe health care services. The Indigenous-specific funding stream will be distributed on a distinctions basis through a health equity fund. The Minister of Indigenous Services, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, and the Minister of Northern Affairs will work with Indigenous partners to prioritize investments.

Please read [the full backgrounder](#) to learn more about the federal funding plan, including future collaborative work with provinces and territories on shared health priorities.

## Sports funding for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people

The [Sport for Social Development in Indigenous Communities](#) program launched [a funding opportunity for the 2023-2024 fiscal year](#). This program supports Indigenous efforts to stay active in their communities, and connects participants with culturally relevant physical activity. Through the program's third stream, \$3.75 million is currently available for projects serving First Nations, Inuit and Métis women, girls, and 2SLGBTQI+ people.

The deadline to [submit applications](#) is **Wednesday, March 22, 2023**. Funded projects must be designed and led by Indigenous people. Projects must also address social development goals identified by the community, which can focus on topics including: physical and mental health, suicide prevention, sexual trafficking awareness and prevention, safe and healthy relationships, and/or sexuality positivity (2SLGBTQI+). Any questions about applying can be directed to [sportcanada.ssdscs-ssdic.sportcanada@pch.gc.ca](mailto:sportcanada.ssdscs-ssdic.sportcanada@pch.gc.ca).



## Opportunity to review: Clean drinking water legislation



On February 17, 2023, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) shared a draft legislative proposal titled "An Act respecting drinking water, wastewater and related infrastructure on First Nation lands" with First Nations for review. The Legislation, Engagement and Regulations Directorate (LERD) at ISC **would like to hear from First Nations on the draft proposal** to ensure the Bill is as strong as it can be when proposed to Parliament. [Click here for an online version of the draft](#).

**The deadline for feedback is Sunday, March 19, 2023.** If you and/or your community is interested in sharing feedback, advice and insights, please contact the LERD team at [proprepnh2o-cleanfnh2o@sac-isc.gc.ca](mailto:proprepnh2o-cleanfnh2o@sac-isc.gc.ca). **LERD can set up a one-on-one or group session about the proposal** for a direct discussion with ISC. **Virtual drop-in sessions to discuss the proposal are also available until March 17.** They run Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1:00 - 2:00pm (Eastern Standard Time), and Thursdays and Fridays from 12:00-1:00pm (Eastern Standard Time).

The proposed legislation would require that drinking water and wastewater treatment in First Nations communities matches the quality to other communities in present-day Canada. The proposed legislation would also require the Minister of Indigenous Services to make all reasonable efforts to provide safe drinking water in all buildings on First Nation lands. More details can be [found here](#). Lastly, the proposed legislation is aligned with commitments in the [Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Class Action Settlement Agreement](#).

This is a historic opportunity to recognize and protect the inherent rights of First Nations. ISC is committed to ongoing engagement with First Nations and First Nation organizations on this initiative. For any questions or concerns, please reach out to the [LERD team](#).

## 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](http://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](mailto:sac.covid-19fnihbontario.isc@canada.ca) if you or your community members have any information needs.