

# COVID-19 Update

For more information:  
Canada.ca/coronavirus

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



## INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – Ontario Region September 2020

*Welcome to Fall! Now is a good time to reflect on everything that has happened over the past six months during the COVID-19 pandemic and to look forward to what we can expect in the coming months. This Bulletin has been prepared to provide you with the latest information about the current situation and updates on new Indigenous Services Canada programs and services that are available to assist you with managing the pandemic in your community. We would also like to acknowledge all the hard work that you and your communities have done over the past six months to keep your members healthy and safe, and to thank you for working in partnership with us to accomplish that.*

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

### Primary Health Care

All ISC-operated nursing stations have remained open during the COVID-19 pandemic and ISC has adapted to address the challenges and opportunities presented. Nursing rotations have moved to a four-week schedule with nurses self-isolating for two weeks prior to, as well as during deployment, and chartering nurses from their homes to their communities of work. ISC has also taken advantage of an opportunity to expand health care provider staffing mix to include Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, Registered Practical Nurses, and Paramedics. Our goal remains to provide the best possible care to First Nations residents.

### Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB)

If individuals are out of their community for medical reasons (e.g. for a medical appointment), NIHB can extend meals and accommodation coverage for an additional two weeks to enable them to self-isolate before returning to their community. If individuals are out of their community for non-health-related reasons (i.e. work-related travel, meetings, vacation) when the community goes into lock-down, they should contact their community leadership and/or Health Director to confirm what actions they should take to self-isolate. Click [here](#) for more information.

### Mental Wellness

On August 25, 2020, the Government of Canada announced \$82.5M in 2020-2021 to adapt Indigenous mental health and wellness services and to provide surge capacity to address mental wellness needs in Indigenous communities related to COVID-19. Click [here](#) to view the news release.

Ontario's 19 mental wellness teams remain active across the Region responding to crisis situations in the communities they serve and assisting other mental wellness teams with surge capacity. Click [here](#) for a list of the 19 teams, their Indigenous Representative Organization (IRO) and the communities they serve.

### COVID-19 and Child and Family Funding Allocation Summary

Since March 1, 2020, \$294.1M has been made available to First Nations and Indigenous organizations to support COVID-19 response efforts, and \$248.5M to provide additional supports for children and families, for a total of \$542.6M. For a detailed breakdown of this funding, please see the attached table in the September 10, 2020, meeting scheduler.

In total, including regular annual funding to First Nations, nearly \$2B has already been allocated to Ontario recipients this fiscal year.

On August 12, 2020, Minister Miller announced \$305M in additional funding for the Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF) for First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities and Indigenous Representative Organizations. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Safe Return to Schools On Reserve

Since March 2020, ISC has provided funding to support and continue to build momentum for the health and safety of students, including the interim funding formula, Indigenous Community Support Fund, Safe Return to Class Fund and other public health funding.

On August 27, 2020, Anne Scotton, Regional Director General, and Garry Best, Regional Executive, ISC, advised all partners who manage First Nation schools and transportation for schools of their funding allocation to support the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE)/cleaning supplies for the safe return to school for the first semester. Recipients of these funds will determine which providers they will order their supplies from to meet their community needs. The total funding allocation of \$5.7M is for the immediate PPE/cleaning supplies for Ontario Region band-operated schools/transportation providers.

In addition, on August 25, 2020, the Ontario Indigenous Education Office provided an option for some of the PPE needs of First Nation schools. Click [here](#) for the request form.

The recently announced \$112M national education funding will be allocated directly to First Nations, designated First Nations organizations and self-governing First Nations to help keep First Nation children safe, based on community priorities and decisions – be it a safe return to classrooms, a transition to an online education model, or a combination of both. The funds could support the hiring of additional teachers and cleaning staff or meet IT needs that schools and students may have (i.e. purchase of additional laptops). From this announcement, approximately \$17M will be allocated for Ontario Region First Nation band-operated schools for education-related needs and an additional amount of \$2.3M will be for minor capital infrastructure. Details on individual allocations to be shared shortly.

## Flu Season

Canada's influenza (flu) season typically starts in the fall, a time when many viral and respiratory illnesses are circulating.

This year, we also have the COVID-19 pandemic to consider, as we could see more cases in the fall and winter. Older adults and people with medical conditions, like diabetes and heart or lung disease, are at higher risk from influenza and COVID-19. Getting a flu shot protects not only you, but your family, your friends and your community from influenza. The flu shot is recommended for everyone in Ontario who is six months old and older, and especially those who are at higher risk.

Flu shots are expected to arrive by October. Check with your local health care facility to find out where and when you and your family can get your shot.

Click [here](#) for more information on the flu and flu shots.

## Public Health Response Funding Supports

First Nations and Inuit communities can continue to access additional public health support to respond to COVID-19 until September 30, 2020. This includes community perimeter security specific to public health funding as of April 1, 2020. See the community guide, [Accessing additional public health support for First Nations and Inuit communities during COVID-19](#), for more information.

To submit a request for public health support, email the FNIHB Ontario COVID-19 generic inbox no later than September 18, 2020.

### Covid-19 Cases

\*As of September 8, 2020, @ 11:00 a.m.

<b>64</b> confirmed on-reserve	<b>2</b> deaths
<b>0</b> active cases	<b>62</b> resolved (97%)

\*no new cases since August 8

