

ISC - Alberta Region COVID-19 Update for Chiefs: *June 23rd, 2021*



Open For Summer – July 1st:

With 70.7 per cent of eligible Albertans having been vaccinated with at least one dose as of June 22, Alberta will move to [Stage 3](#) on July 1 and fully reopen, removing all mandatory restrictions. This includes:

- All remaining restrictions will be lifted, including the ban on indoor social gatherings.
- Isolation requirements for confirmed cases of COVID-19 and protective measures in continuing care settings may remain.
- The general indoor provincial mask mandate will be lifted, but masking may still be required in limited and specific settings.

In the letter from the MOHs you would have received yesterday, we recommended that First Nations in Alberta consider a more cautious approach to reopening compared to the rest of Alberta. The most important consideration is your community's immunization rate. Even if your community immunization rate is 70%, it is likely that clusters of COVID-19 will continue to occur and spread amongst the under immunized. Here are some additional recommendations to assist with your decision making around community reopening:

- All communities should continue to prioritize immunization including second doses as the number one intervention to prevent further spread of COVID-19
- All communities should maintain their COVID-19 testing and contact tracing capacity
- All communities should reinforce hand hygiene, physical distancing, isolation of symptomatic individuals, and cooperation with public health investigations

Please continue to reach out to us if you need support on reopening and decisions around reopening; we are here to support you as you make these important decision about the safety of your communities. For general inquiries related to COVID and guidance on reopening contact sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca

Anxiety and Depression during COVID-19:

The COVID-19 pandemic has been [stressful for many individuals, families, and communities who have all been affected in several ways](#). When surveyed, almost seven out of 10 Canadians reported that they have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, and almost two of out five Canadians reported feeling some level of distress over the past month. As the pandemic continues, learning how to cope with stress can help minimize its effects on health and well-being. The Government of Canada supports Indigenous organizations and communities in developing mental wellness resources. Links to more information can be found on [Indigenous Services Canada's mental health information page](#). The Hope for Wellness Help line offers immediate, toll-free telephone and online-chat based support and crisis intervention to all Indigenous people across Canada. Help is available in English and French, and upon request in Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut. Call the Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 or chat online at www.hopeforwellness.ca.

Question of the Day

Q: Are there any updates on cross-border travel?

A: The Government of Canada is extending, until July 21, 2021, 11:59 p.m. EDT, the temporary travel restrictions on discretionary (non-essential) international travel and with the US. [Travellers who are currently eligible to enter Canada include Canadian citizens, permanent residents and persons registered under the Indian Act](#). However, beginning July 5th fully vaccinated travellers who are permitted to enter Canada will not be subject to the federal requirement to quarantine or take a COVID-19 test on day-8. In addition, fully vaccinated travellers arriving by air will not be required to stay at a government-authorized hotel. For these new measures to apply to them, fully vaccinated travellers must still meet all other mandatory requirements, including pre- and on-arrival testing. Continued testing will allow public health experts to keep monitoring positivity rates at the border, monitor for variants of concern, and make further adjustments to border measures as needed. Full details [here](#).

National Info

[National Indigenous History Month 2021](#)

[#MyWhy on getting the COVID-19 vaccine: Dr. Guillaume Poliquin](#)

Alberta Cases:

as of June 22nd, 3:30 p.m. MST

AB Total Confirmed (June 21 st – 57 new cases)	231,476
AB Recovered Cases	227,413
Confirmed First Nations On-reserve Cases	8,860
On-reserve Recovered Cases	8,519
On-Reserve Active Cases	255
Calgary Zone Confirmed	94,199
Central Zone Confirmed	20,740
Edmonton Zone Confirmed	77,627
North Zone Confirmed	26,421
South Zone Confirmed	12,478
Unknown Confirmed	11
Deaths due to COVID-19	2,290
On-reserve Deaths due to COVID-19	86
Variants of Concern Confirmed in Alberta	48,753

Indigenous Community Business Fund

Last week Minister Miller announced \$117 million to renew the [Indigenous Community Business Fund \(ICBF\)](#). The ICBF provides non-repayable financial contributions to Indigenous microbusinesses and community- or collectively owned businesses across the country that do not qualify for other existing business supports. The ICBF has two streams: **Stream 1** – Funding will be transferred directly to communities and collectives to immediately support their COVID-19 economic priorities. No applications are required for stream 1 funding. **Stream 2** – Funding will be proposal based. Applications must be submitted by the community or collectives on behalf of the business. Funding will be transferred directly to communities and collectives.

Regional Snapshot



More Alberta case data can be found [here](#)

Useful Links

COVID-19 Webinar TODAY:

This webinar will inform health care providers on national surveillance measures and effects of vaccines on variants internationally and in Canada. **Today at 2pm-3pm.** Key objectives:

- Identify the national surveillance systems that detect and track SARS-CoV2 variants, including variants of concern (VOCs), in Canada
- Discuss key findings on vaccine efficacy and effectiveness against VOCs, internationally and in Canada
- Summarize how predictive epidemiological models can inform Canadian forecasts and response to SARS-CoV2

Register [here](#)!

Windspeaker Town Hall Recording:

Please find below a link to the COVID Radio Town Hall co-presented by Windspeaker Radio and the Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council. This session features Dr. Parminder Thiara as the MOH. Please feel free to share with your network and partners.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IR5eGTAXRIY>

Vaccine Update



Changes to FNIHB Medical Officers of Health Team:

Effective **July 30th, 2021** – Dr. Wadieh Yacoub will be retiring from the Federal Public Service. Dr. Chris Sarin will take over the role of Alberta Region Senior Medical Officer of Health with support from Dr. Parminder Thiara. We sincerely thank Dr. Yacoub for his tireless work on supporting positive health outcomes for all First Nations in Alberta and he will be sorely missed in our office and we are certain among your Nations' staff as well.

Updates on Storage of Moderna:

NACI has updated the guidelines on the storage of Moderna. To summarize: The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine should be stored at temperatures of -25°C to -15°C and protected from light in the original packaging. Do not store on dry ice or below -40°C . If not punctured, the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine can be thawed and stored at $+2^{\circ}\text{C}$ to $+8^{\circ}\text{C}$ for up to 30 days, or at $+8^{\circ}\text{C}$ to $+25^{\circ}\text{C}$ for up to 24 hours. **Do not refreeze thawed vials.** The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine can be stored between $+2^{\circ}\text{C}$ to below $+25^{\circ}\text{C}$ but must be discarded **after 24 hours** from the time of first puncture. Full recommendations on the use of COVID-19 vaccines can be found [here](#).

All Albertans aged 12+ now eligible for second doses:

Any off reserve member who received a first mRNA (Pfizer or Moderna) dose in June can also now book their second dose once four weeks have passed since their first shot. This means that more than 983,000 Albertans can book second appointments through Alberta Health Services (AHS) and participating pharmacies and physician clinics. These individuals can book their second dose through the Alberta Health Services online booking tool, by calling Health Link at 811 or through participating physicians' offices or pharmacies. To find the closest pharmacy with the earliest available booking date, check the list at [Alberta Blue Cross](#). Albertans who received a first dose of AstraZeneca should continue to wait a minimum of eight weeks before booking their second dose to ensure best effectiveness. Appointments can be booked through Alberta Health Services by calling 811. First doses are being prioritized. Albertans who have not yet received their first dose of vaccine can still book an appointment and we urge them to do so. Plus, if you receive a first dose and register at www.alberta.ca/lottery before 11:59 p.m. on June 24, you're eligible to win \$1 million through Alberta's Open for Summer Lottery.

Vaccine Snapshot

*as of June 22nd *



55,045 doses of vaccine have been administered in **46** Nations (bands) in Alberta.



At least **32,477** First Nations people have received their first dose.



At least **4,021** First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on reserve or crown land have received their first dose.



At least **3,573** First Nations people aged 65 years and older have received two doses of the vaccine.



At least **22,568** First Nations people have received two doses of the vaccine.