

ISC - Alberta Region COVID-19 Update for Chiefs: March 16, 2022



Easing of Public Health Restrictions in Alberta

The province of Alberta is still in Step 2 of the 3-step plan for removal of restrictions. However, masks are still required in settings as required by the [Government of Alberta](#), including public transit, AHS-operated and contracted facilities, and all continuing care settings. Individuals are also still currently required to isolate if they test positive for COVID-19. Further information is available [here](#). This is a time of transition as we determine how to best live with COVID-19. As such, the approach of many communities with mask use and measures continues to evolve. The City of Edmonton's Temporary Mandatory Face Coverings bylaw has been repealed.

2022 First Nations Water Leadership Award

Nominations for the National First Nations Water Leadership Award are open until March 31, 2022. Eligible candidates are First Nations individuals, community members or leaders; First Nations organizations; and First Nations communities. Nominees demonstrate leadership and make outstanding contributions to the advancement of clean and safe drinking water in First Nations communities. For more information on the Award, selection criteria, how to submit a nomination and last year's nominees, please visit the [National First Nations Water Leadership Award webpage](#).

Call for Proposals – 2022 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

On March 9th, Canadian Heritage launched a call for proposals for community-based commemoration activities for the National day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR) on September 30, 2022. Eligible organizations, from coast to coast, are encouraged to submit proposals. Canadian Heritage will help support initiatives with funding up to a maximum of \$10,000 per project. The application period will close on April 11, 2022. For application guidelines and additional information, click [here](#).

Question of the Day

Q: What is Omicron BA.2 and how is impacting the province of Alberta?

A: Omicron BA.2, also called 'Stealth Omicron' is the most recent sub-lineage of Omicron to emerge. While the BA.1 sub-lineage of the Omicron variant is still dominant in most provinces and territories, there is an increasing presence of the BA.2 sub-lineage in positive lab-confirmed cases. Based on preliminary data, BA.2 does not appear to be associated with more severe illness. There also seems to be no indication of a difference in immune escape or vaccine effectiveness, compared to Omicron BA.1. However, there is evidence that Omicron BA.2 appears to be even more transmissible than Omicron BA.1. At last reporting Omicron BA.2 accounts for 23% of positive cases and appears to double every week because it spreads much more easily than the original Omicron strain, leaving the vulnerable at risk. As with the original Omicron, vaccines remain the most effective form of protection against BA.2.

Alberta Cases:

as of March 15th , 3:30 p.m. MST

AB Total Confirmed (March 14 - 459 new cases)	532,571
AB Recovered Cases	522,124
Confirmed First Nations On-reserve Cases	19,252
On-reserve Recovered Cases	18,855
On-Reserve Active Cases	226
Calgary Zone Current Active Cases	2,177
Central Zone Current Active Cases	952
Edmonton Zone Current Active Cases	1,937
North Zone Current Active Cases	722
South Zone Current Active Cases	624
Unknown Confirmed	233
Deaths due to COVID-19	4,025
On-reserve Deaths due to COVID-19	170
Omicron Variants of Concern Confirmed in Alberta	50,439

Deadline April 7th – Rural Transit Solutions Fund – Capital Projects Stream

The **Rural Transit Solutions Fund** targets the development of transit solutions in rural and remote communities. It is making \$250 million in federal funding available over 5 years, beginning in 2021, to support the development of locally-driven transit solutions. Eligible applicants can seek grants of up to \$50,000 in support of planning and design projects; up to \$3 million to help cover capital; and up to \$5 million to support zero-emission transit solutions. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Alberta Snapshot



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

Useful Links

Medical Officer of Health COVID-19 Bulletin

- March 10th available [here](#).

Windspeaker Radio

- The next Mental Wellness Townhall is scheduled for Wednesday, March 23rd at noon talking about nutrition and mental wellness.

Rewind! Windspeaker Mental Wellness Town Hall programs can be found at the following links:

[Mental Wellness from an Indigenous Perspective](#)

[Coping with Grief and Loss](#)

[Checking in with Indigenous Youth](#)

[Let's Talk Self-Care](#)

[Racism in Healthcare](#)

Resource:

[ISC COVID-19 Communications Resources – Update 12](#)

Vaccine Update



Vaccine Snapshot

*as of March 14, 2022

All youth aged 12-17 now eligible for boosters

Since February 15th, First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth aged 12 to 17 have been eligible for a third dose of vaccine, provided 5 months had passed from their second dose at their community health centres. As of March 14th, all youth in the province of Alberta aged 12 to 17 can receive a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine, as long as it's a minimum of five months since their second dose. Appointments for this group can now be booked for March 14 onward at AHS clinics and participating pharmacies through the [Alberta Vaccine Booking system](#) or by calling 811. While the rate of severe outcomes for youth aged 12 to 17 remains low compared with those in older age categories or for youth with risk factors, third doses have shown to offer better protection against the Omicron variant, which is increasingly important with the growing number of cases of Omicron BA.2 in the province. For more information on vaccines for children and youth, visit alberta.ca/vaccine.

Managing COVID-19 at home

Most people recover from COVID-19 without special treatment and can manage mild symptoms at home. Resources are available to help you manage mild symptoms at home and take care of someone who has COVID-19. AHS has developed a [COVID-19 Self-Care Guide](#) if you need further information on how to manage COVID-19 at home. In addition, the Alberta Medical Association has [Patient Resources for COVID-19](#) available on their website that can help determine when you may need to talk to your doctor. It is not always necessary to get in touch with your doctor, as most people with mild symptoms can manage at home with no problems.

Sotrovimab and Paxlovid in First Nations Communities

ISC's Medical Officers of Health in Alberta continue to work with Nations to advocate for equitable access to Sotrovimab and Paxlovid on reserve. Currently, at least 18 members were treated with Sotrovimab and one with Paxlovid in First Nations communities across Alberta. Sotrovimab and Paxlovid significantly reduce the risk of hospitalization and death due to COVID-19, however these medications are not a substitute for immunization.



119,908 doses of vaccine have been administered in **46** Nations (bands) in Alberta.



At least **88.6%** of First Nations people 12+ living on-reserve or crown land have received their **first dose** of the vaccine.



At least **95.2%** of First Nations people aged 65 years and older living on-reserve or crown land have received **two doses** of the vaccine.



At least **17.3%** of First Nations people 12+ living on-reserve or crown land have received **three doses** of the vaccine.