

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19):

Bulletin to First Nations in Alberta: October 30, 2020

Office of the Senior Medical Officer of Health

Please email questions about COVID-19 to: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca

COVID-19 cases in Alberta, both on and off reserve, continue to rise at troubling rates. Many cases have been linked to gatherings, and exposure from those outside of communities. While keeping physically apart is difficult, particularly when we want to mark life's important moments like weddings and funerals, now is not the time for hosting large in-person gatherings. Doing the best thing to keep our family, friends and community safer means keeping safely apart, and finding safer ways to care and support each other. We are in a crucial phase right now and need to take steps to reduce the increase of cases that we are seeing. It is only through our collective efforts in taking public health advice seriously that we can stop the surge in cases to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe and healthy.

Status Update

Additional First Nations on-reserve data (Alberta) is provided at the end of this document (*Appendix A*).

Number of Cases Reported*as of Oct 30, 2020:

**numbers are changing rapidly and may change after this bulletin is released*

Alberta: There are **4,921 Active Cases** of COVID-19 in Alberta.

	Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada)	First Nations On Reserve in Canada (Indigenous Services Canada)	Alberta (Alberta Health)
Confirmed Cases	228,542	1360	27,042
Deaths	10,074	15	318
Recovered	191,209	997	21,803

First Nations living on and off reserve (Alberta): There are **1,086** confirmed cases of COVID-19 to date and **14** deaths in First Nations living on and off reserve in Alberta. Confirmed cases are: **222** in Calgary Zone; **289** in Edmonton Zone; **96** in South Zone; **359** in North Zone; **118** in Central zone and **2** unknown. *Further Information:* Aggregate data on COVID-19 First Nations cases in Alberta is available at: <http://www.afnigc.ca/main/index.php?id=home> and <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-alberta-data.aspx>

First Nations living on reserve in Alberta:



Location (By Zone)	Confirmed Cases	Active Cases	Recovered
Calgary Zone	61	7	67
South Zone	50	-	50
Central Zone	43	33	88
Edmonton Zone	11	-	11
North Zone	185	40	239
TOTAL	455	80	370



Testing in Alberta – Update

- As of Oct 30, 2020, the total number of reported swab samples collected to date in First Nation communities in Alberta is **41,754**.
- **Testing continues to be a powerful tool to help limit the spread.** If you have symptoms, please stay home and book a testing appointment.
- **[New]** Alberta has revised its targeted COVID-19 testing, pausing general asymptomatic testing, to further reduce testing wait times and speed access to results. Priority testing is now available to:
 - Any person exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19
 - All close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases
 - Anyone linked to a known outbreak
- **Reminder:** Testing outside of the provincial testing criteria must be reviewed and supported by the ISC-AB MOH. Please send testing enquiries to the ISC-AB MOH by: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca
- **[New]** On Nov. 2, 2020, a [joint pilot program](#) from the Governments' of Alberta and Canada will safely test an alternative to the current 14-day mandatory quarantine requirement for participating **international travellers** entering Canada through Alberta's Calgary International Airport and the Coutts land border crossing.
- Parents/guardians in Alberta can access COVID-19 results for their children through *MyHealth Records*. Albertans aged 14 and up can also access results. [Join today](#).

Vaccine Watch

- **Reminder:** Influenza immunizations for this flu season continue to be a priority in the midst of COVID-19. ISC-AB is working with First Nation health centers and communities to support influenza and pneumococcal **immunization programs**. Please contact your local health staff or FNIHB-AB for more information.
- **Reminder:** To address potential increased demand for the influenza vaccine, First Nations might consider partnering with a local pharmacist to support vaccination clinics. If interested, please contact your local pharmacist.
- A list of current COVID-19 treatment and vaccine trials in progress, as authorized by Health Canada, can be viewed [here](#). CBC is also providing an updated [vaccine tracker](#).
- ISC-AB MOH's are **actively monitoring** the national **COVID-19 vaccine trial** stages and results taking place and will provide updates as they become available.

Alberta's Relaunch- Update

- Alberta remains in stage two of the provincial relaunch strategy.



Reminder: Alberta has released guidance for Halloween celebrations [here](#), including door hangings to let trick-or-treaters know if a house is actively participating or not due to COVID-19.

- **[New]** Effective October 26th, Alberta has implemented additional mandatory public health measures in the **Edmonton/Calgary Zones** to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 due to the increase of cases in these locations. For more information on these additional measures please [click here](#).
- **[New]** AHS has revised its **contact tracing process** and will be notifying organizers of public/private events of which a confirmed COVID-19 case was present and providing written notification to organizers to be directly emailed to attendees within 24 hours of being contacted. AHS will continue to directly notify close contacts of cases exposed outside of a public/private events, as well as anyone who tests positive for COVID-19.
- **Reminder:** ISC-AB COVID-19 **guidance for funerals, wakes and memorials** to prevent the spread of infection can be [found here](#). Additional provincial guidance can be [found here](#). For current gathering restrictions, including funerals, please [click here](#). ISC-AB Medical Officers of Health (MOHs) and Environmental Public Health Officers (EPHOs) continue to be available to provide

public health support for funerals etc. Please contact your local EPHO or email:


sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca

- **[New]** AHS resources and precautions for event planning during COVID-19 can be [found here](#). ISC-AB MOHs and EPHOs remain available to provide public health support for general event planning. Please contact your local EPHO or email: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca
- **[New]** On Oct. 28, 2020, the Alberta Indigenous Virtual Care Clinic (AIVCC), a joint initiative between ISC, TSAG, and AHS, opened its virtual doors, providing same day, primary care services to rural and urban First Nations, Métis and Inuit patients and families through a secure telephone and/or video system. To book a same day appointment, please call 1.888.342.4822. For more information please see: <https://aivcc.ca/> or email info@aivcc.ca
- Alberta continues to update guidance for school re-entry [here](#), including [guidance for parents](#) of children attending school and/or childcare.
- **Reminder:** ISC-AB has developed several resources to support communities with in-person school programming, which are available on [OneHealth](#). ISC-AB Medical Officers of Health (MOHs) and Environmental Public Health Officers (EPHOs) continue to be available to provide public health support for school re-entry and general relaunch.

What the Government of Canada and ISC/FNIHB-AB Are Doing

- **[New]** PHAC has developed COVID-19 resources including, [How to care for a child with COVID-19 at home](#), and [People who are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19](#).
- **[New]** The next ISC-Alberta COVID-19 **First Nations MOH Telehealth session** will be held **Nov 19**, featuring Dr. Deena Hinshaw. Previous telehealth sessions are recorded and are available at: <https://fntn.ca/>.
- **[New]** ISC-Alberta's COVID-19 **First Nations Funding Telehealth mini-series** will begin on **Nov 3** and run Tuesdays, 1-3pm, throughout Nov. For registration information, please see: <https://fntn.ca/>.
- **Reminder:** ISC continues to provide funding to [access additional public health measures during COVID-19](#), including increased surge health staffing capacity required to support immunizations, testing etc. For more information, please contact your Community Liaison Team member or email: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca

Mental Health and Wellness- Update

-  **[New]** Alberta, [Jack.Org](#), and Kids Help Phone have partnered to bring the [Alberta COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub](#)
- **[New]** We acknowledge the significant impact COVID-19 has had on all those working to support communities during this time. Planning is underway for an Alberta COVID-19 **First Nations Telehealth session** dedicated to mental health and burnout in the workplace, particularly front-line workers during COVID-19. Details will be provided as it becomes available.
- **Reminder:** AHS, in partnership with Togetherall, has launched a free, anonymous, [virtual mental health network](#), offering various mental health services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [Register Here](#)
- **Reminder:** Mental Wellness remains a priority for all of us during the pandemic. Non-Insured Health Benefits- Mental Health Counselling Services are available by calling NIHB (AB) at **1-800-232-7301**.

Additional Updates

- **Reminder:** Blood Tribe, along with DerRic Starlight's *Nuppets*, has launched their first video in a series called "[Listen to Granny](#)", of COVID-19 safety outreach information. This premier video focuses on mask wearing for children.
- The next version of this bulletin will be distributed on **Friday, Nov 13, 2020**.

Additional information

If you have general questions about COVID-19 or require current information, please refer to the following websites which are trusted information sources and are being regularly maintained and updated. **Should you have questions about COVID-19, please do not hesitate to email: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca**

OneHealth - <https://www.onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19>

InfoPoint (First Nations Health Manager Association)- This site is designed for First Nation health managers to access credible sources of information related to COVID-19. To access this service, call the toll-free number at **1-855-446-2719**, or email InfoPoint@fnhma.ca

Alberta Health

- Coronavirus info for Albertans: <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

Alberta Health Services

- Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>
- Indigenous Peoples & Communities (COVID-19):
https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17101.aspx?fbclid=IwAR1hzie9aLgDLr0K7Qi80mb9ozNby5dK6VZO3CFhhKgLrALUpo6_wGmSxUc

Indigenous Services Canada COVID-19 (Updates available in several Indigenous languages)

- COVID-19 & Indigenous Communities: <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1581964230816/1581964277298>

Mental health and coping resources are available for individuals who are struggling or need a little extra support.

- The Mental Health Help Line [1-877-303-2642](tel:1-877-303-2642) is available 24/7 to provide advice and referrals to community supports near you.
- Hope for Wellness Help Line [1-855-242-3310](tel:1-855-242-3310), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Kids and teens can call the Kids Help Phone: [1-800-668-6868](tel:1-800-668-6868).
- Text COVID19HOPE to [393939](tel:393939) to subscribe to a free service supporting mental health and wellness in a time of stress and isolation.
- Family Violence Resources: <https://www.alberta.ca/family-violence-prevention-resources.aspx>
- **Text4Hope-Addiction Support** is designed to help Albertans dealing with psychological issues related to addiction. Text "Open2Change" to [393939](tel:393939) to subscribe.

Anyone with specific questions or concerns about their health is encouraged to call Health Link at 811 for health advice.

Appendix A: Additional COVID-19 Data in First Nations On-Reserve in Alberta

Fig 1.

*Onset date is the earliest of the “date of onset of symptoms” and “specimen collection date”

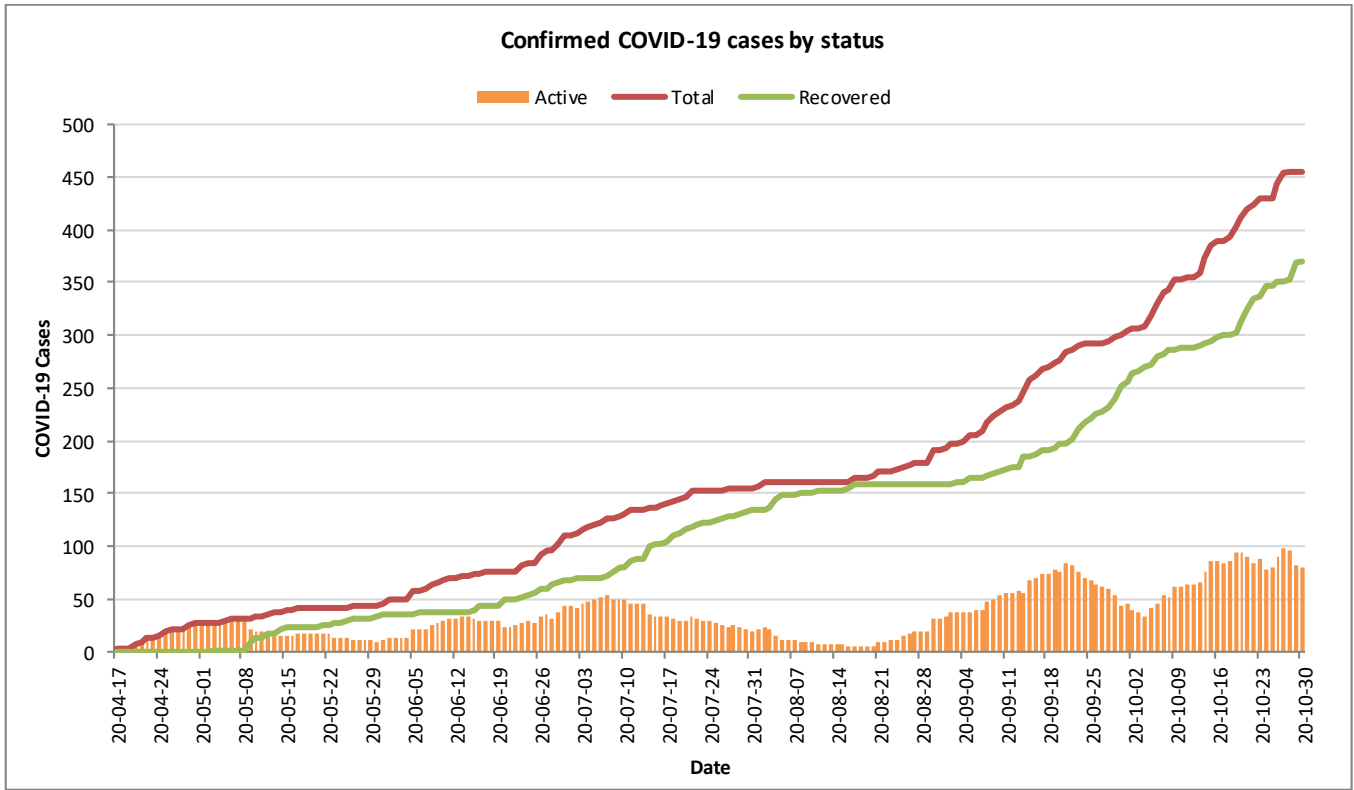


Fig 2.

