

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19):

Weekly Bulletin to First Nations in Alberta: June 12, 2020

Office of the Senior Medical Officer of Health

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

As the province moves into Stage 2 of its relaunch strategy and more activities resume, it is important for everyone to remember that the pandemic is not over. It is critical that we continue to maintain prevention measures to protect our communities and stop the spread of COVID-19.

Status Update

Number of cases reported*, as of June 12, 2020:

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

	Alberta (Alberta Health)	Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada)
Cases	7,316	97,530
Deaths	149	7,994
Recovered	6,788	57,658

- There are **379 active cases** of COVID 19 in Alberta.
- There are **57** cases of COVID-19 recorded in First Nations people **living on reserve** in Alberta; **25** in Calgary Zone; **27** in South Zone; and **5** in North Zone. **37** cases have recovered. We are saddened to announce **one** death from COVID-19 in First Nations people living on reserve.
- There are **188** confirmed cases of COVID-19 and **4** deaths in First Nations people **living on and off reserve** in Alberta; **77** in Calgary Zone; **25** in Edmonton Zone; **46** in South Zone; **38** in North Zone; **1** in Central zone and **1** unknown.
- We all grieve for the individuals who have passed, and send our prayers to their family, and their communities.
- Aggregate data on COVID-19 cases in Alberta is available at <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-alberta-data.aspx>.

Disclosure of Personal Health Information

- The collection, use and disclosure of personal health information is governed under Alberta's Health Information Act. This Act identifies the very specific parameters under which health information can be shared and with whom. Unless otherwise identified in the Act, **community health nurses only share personally identifiable health information with other health providers providing direct care to the specific client**. This is referred to as the "circle of care" and only those in it should have access to personal health information.
- All information related to an individual who is or was infected with a communicable disease shall be treated as **private and confidential**, and no information shall be published, released or disclosed in any manner that would be detrimental to the personal interest, reputation or privacy of that individual.

Testing in Alberta – update

- Alberta Health Epidemiology and Surveillance reporting team is tracking all cases of COVID-19 among First Nations individuals in Alberta on and off reserve.
- As of June 10, 2020, 13,351 tests have been performed on First Nations individuals in Alberta. First Nations have a testing rate of 7.75%, a higher rate than the rest of the population at 6.03%.
- Strategic and widespread testing is crucial to discover cases before they spread.



- **Testing is available to any person with or without symptoms who wants to be tested.**
- All individuals living on First Nation reserves are encouraged to get tested.

Masks

- All staff in congregate care facilities providing direct resident care **must wear a surgical mask continuously, at all times and in all areas of the workplace** if they are in direct contact with a resident or cannot maintain adequate physical distancing.
- Individuals are **encouraged** to wear non-medical masks when out in public places where keeping a distance of two metres is difficult.
- Starting June 8, the Government of Alberta began distributing 4 free non-medical masks per person at any Alberta A&W, McDonald's Canada and Tim Hortons drive-thru locations. These are available while supplies last with no purchase necessary. Masks will also be provided to First Nations communities, to distribute to community members.

Alberta's Relaunch Strategy

- On June 9th, the Government of Alberta announced that the province will enter stage two of its **relaunch strategy today Friday, June 12**. Stage 2 means further relaxing of restrictions and will allow additional businesses and services to reopen and resume operations with physical distancing requirements and other public health guidelines in place.
- Restrictions on public events and gatherings in stage 2 have relaxed, and gatherings can now have larger groups:
 - 50 people maximum: indoor social gatherings, including wedding and funeral receptions, and birthday parties.
 - 100 people maximum: outdoor events and indoor seated/audience events, including wedding and funeral ceremonies.
 - No cap on the number of people (**with public health measures in place**):
 - Worship gatherings.
 - Restaurant, cafes, lounges and bars.
 - Casinos and bingo halls.
 - More flexibility for 'cohort' groups – small groups of people whose members do not always keep 2 metres apart:
 - A household can increase its close interactions with other households to a maximum of 15 people.
 - Performers can have a cohort of up to 50 people (cast members or performers).
 - Sports teams can play in region-only cohorts of up to 50 players (mini leagues).
 - People could be part of a sports/performing and household cohort.
- Individuals are encouraged to wear non-medical masks in public when it is difficult to maintain physical distancing of 2 meters at all times.
- There are public health restrictions that will remain in stage 2, some of which include:
 - Social gatherings that exceed above listed maximums.
 - Regular in-school classes for kindergarten to Grade 12. Classes will resume September 2020.
 - Major festivals and concerts, large conferences, trade shows and events (as these are non-seated social events and/or vocal concerts).
 - Major sporting events and tournaments.
 - Non-essential travel outside the province is not recommended – this won't be lifted until stage 3 of the relaunch strategy.
- A list of businesses and sectors permitted to open or restricted from providing services at locations accessible to the public will be updated on June 12 and can be found at [here](#).
- Business operators, sport and recreation services on the non-restricted services and permitted to reopen lists can determine if they are ready to open in stage 2 and ensure all guidance for workplaces is met.

- The Province has released a number of new [Relaunch Guidance documents](#) to prepare businesses and sectors reopening under stage two.
- Businesses are encouraged to continue to check the [Alberta.ca/BizConnect](#) web page for new and updated guidance documents.
- First Nations communities in Alberta will reopen or relaunch in different ways at different times, in accordance with decisions made by community leadership. ISC-AB is committed to supporting community relaunch plans by providing advice and considerations for lifting restrictions under the current public health guidance.
- More information on the phases of the Alberta's relaunch and key public health measures can be found at [Alberta's relaunch strategy](#) and [Alberta's Safely Staged COVID-19 Relaunch](#).

What the Government of Alberta, Canada and ISC/FNIHB-AB are doing – an update

- FNIHB-AB previous telehealth sessions were recorded and are available at <http://www.fntn.ca>. The next telehealth session will be held on **Thursday June 18, 2020**. Information on how to register will be sent shortly.
- Relaunch stages include an evaluation and monitoring period to determine if restrictions should be adjusted. Decisions will be applied at both provincial and local levels, where necessary. The Government of Alberta is using these metrics to monitor the situation:
 - Hospitalizations.
 - ICU admissions.
 - Testing rates.
 - Active cases, with a threshold of 50 active cases per 100, 000 population; if exceeded, it triggers a conversation between Alberta Health and local Public Health authority.
- A new interactive [COVID-19 status map](#) has been developed to help Albertans understand the level of risk in their community and learn about any enhanced health measures at the local level, giving additional information on what they need to do to keep themselves and their loved ones safe and protected. Currently, no communities in Alberta need locally targeted enhanced measures.

Additional updates

- Effective June 6, Alberta Health Services implemented enhanced visitation for all patients in both acute outpatient and inpatient settings. The enhanced visitation guidelines expand the allowance of some visitation, while maintaining specific criteria intended to protect patients, residents, volunteers and staff. Existing visitation guidelines for continuing care environments will be maintained.
- The Government of Alberta **Mental Health and Addiction COVID-19 Community Funding** grant is in its second phase. The second call for proposals will provide up to \$10 million to fund community initiatives that engage community members and aim to improve coping skills and support social connection and healing activities that build whole population mental wellness and resilience. Approved projects are eligible for up to \$500,000. Applications are open from now until August 21st, 2020. More information on eligibility and the application process can be found at [here](#).
- Breakfast Clubs of Canada continues to fund special COVID related applications to fund emergency food programs. The application process takes 5-10 minutes and you are able to submit a second application even if you have already received initial funds. Please visit <https://www.breakfastclubcanada.org/covid-special-grant-application/>

Mental Health and Wellness

- **Text4Hope-Addiction Support** and **Text4Hope-Cancer Care** are designed to help Albertans dealing with psychological issues related to addiction and cancer issues.
 - Text "Open2Change" to [393939](tel:393939) to subscribe to the addiction program.
 - Text "CancerCare" to [393939](tel:393939) to subscribe to the cancer program.
 - Text "COVID19HOPE" to [393939](tel:393939) to subscribe to supports for mental health and wellness in a time of stress and isolation.
- Other resources are also available if you, or someone you know, is struggling or needs a little extra support. Supports and resources are also available for children. These resources can be found through the **OneHealth** website at <https://www.onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19> or in weekly bulletins.

Updates and 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.

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

COVID-19 Data for Alberta <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-alberta-data.aspx>

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

Alberta Health Services – novel coronavirus (COVID-19)
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>

Public Health Agency of Canada – 2019 novel coronavirus: Outbreak update
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

World Health Organization – Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Indigenous Services Canada COVID-19 Updates available in several Indigenous languages -
<https://www.gotoinfo.ca/ISCInfo>
<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1581964230816/1581964277298>

InfoPoint, launched by the First Nations Health Managers Association, is designed for First Nations health managers across Canada to access credible sources of information and ask questions related to COVID-19. In order to access this service, simply call the toll-free number at **1-855-446-2719**, or email InfoPoint@fnhma.ca

For helpful advice on handling stressful situations and ways to talk to children please visit

- [Mental health and coping with COVID-19 \(CDC\)](#)
- [Talking with children about COVID-19 \(CDC\)](#)
- [Help in Tough Times \(AHS\) https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx](#)

Previous information bulletins and additional information and resources for health staff can be found at <https://www.onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19>

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.
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17019.aspx>

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

Should you have questions about COVID-19, please do not hesitate to email:
sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca