

## COMMUNITY NOTICE

### Closure of NFN Storefront Businesses until April 21, 2020

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**GARDEN VILLAGE, ON (April 6, 2020)** – On April 5, 2020, Nipissing First Nation Chief and Council passed the following motion:

Moved by Brian Couchie, Seconded by Corey Goulais that for the safety and well-being of Nipissing First Nation members, and to stop the spread of COVID-19, all businesses on Nipissing First Nation that offer store front sales and services accessed by the public at a physical location shall cease operations for fourteen days effective Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 4:00 pm to April 21, 2020 at 4:00 pm. This is in addition to businesses that are ordered to close by the province of Ontario.

This motion is made under the authority of part 11 of the Nipissing First Nation Gchi Naaknigewin and section 9.1 of the Nipissing First Nation Business by-law, enabled by section 81 of the *Indian Act* and Section 20 of the *Nipissing First Nation land code, enabled under the First Nation Lands Management Act*.

***Carried by Consensus***

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Every effort was made to notify affected business owners ahead of posting a short notice on our website and social media pages yesterday evening. Council understands that this sudden decision has serious impacts on business owners, especially those providing essential services.

However, the **responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of Nipissing community members is paramount in this decision**. With increased traffic into some of our communities by non-residents accessing NFN stores, we needed to act swiftly to eliminate the risk that this poses to our community members who work in and access the same stores.

“Nipissing First Nation is still not planning to shut down access to our communities,” says Chief Scott McLeod. He adds, “Council believes closing our storefront businesses for two weeks starting this Tuesday at 4pm until Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 4pm will be more effective in limiting the increased traffic into our communities that we have been witnessing, and that we know puts our community members at an increased risk. Their safety and well-being is first and foremost in our decision-making in these difficult times. We simply don’t have the resources to restrict access to

all the entrances to our territory and if the traffic to the stores dries up, there is no need to do that.”

Another important consideration in not closing access to NFN, as Chief McLeod has noted previously, is the importance of maintaining access to medical and other essential services in Sturgeon Falls and North Bay due to Nipissing First Nation’s geographic location.

NFN is making arrangements to ensure its members can access food and other items they normally would access through local retail stores. A notice to the community on when and how to access local community food will be posted to the NFN website this week. NFN reminds local members that we are providing transportation for medical trips and to grocery stores or pharmacies multiple times per week at no charge. These details are also available on our website.

Council again commends the leadership of those NFN business owners who have closed their businesses early to protect the community, and to those providing essential services who must close as of Tuesday in accordance with this decision that was made to protect community safety. We are working to determine how business closures will be supported and will provide an update to business owners soon.

For regular updates about essential services on Nipissing First Nation during COVID-19, please visit: <https://www.nfn.ca/covid-19-info/>

More information about financial aid and other supports available to businesses affected by COVID-19 is available on our website at: <https://www.nfn.ca/covid-19-support/> or please feel free to reach out to one of the contacts listed below.

## **Contacts**

### ***Business Inquiries & Support:***

Michael Harney, Economic Development Manager

705-840-8296 | [michaelh@nfn.ca](mailto:michaelh@nfn.ca)

### ***Employment Insurance Support:***

Tom Lambert, Employment & Training Manager and Economic Development Officer

705-753-6985 (office) | 705-477-4776 or 705-472-3334 (cell) – please leave a message

[thomasl@nfn.ca](mailto:thomasl@nfn.ca)