

COMMUNITY UPDATE #6

Work from Home Measures Extended to April 19th & Update on COVID-19 Vaccine Roll-Out

March 11, 2021 – As you know, our district returned to the Red (Control) level of the provincial [COVID-19 response framework](#) on March 8th, and Nipissing First Nation (NFN) staff were expected to begin returning to work on March 22nd as advised in [Update #5](#) about the lifting of shutdown and stay-at-home orders.

However, with the confirmation of at least 30 cases involving Variants of Concern (VOCs) in the Nipissing district as of March 10th, and elevated case levels of COVID-19 activity in neighbouring districts, NFN staff will continue working remotely until Monday, April 19th (subject to change as the situation evolves). Further, Ontario [announced today](#) that the Sudbury public health region will move to the Grey (Lockdown) zone effective this Friday, March 12th at 12:01 a.m. We strongly advise against travelling between regions, and especially to avoid travelling to Grey and Red zones, except for essential reasons.

We are taking a cautionary approach to reopening our offices to staff as our district progresses to less restrictive measures. As we wait to see what the outcomes will be, the majority of our staff can continue working effectively from home as they have since our holiday closure and during parts of last year.

By extending our work from home measures until April 19th, we are minimizing the potential for exposure to COVID-19 for our employees and community members. Until our community has built up immunity by receiving vaccines, we believe that allowing staff who can work from home to continue doing so is a prudent measure to help keep everyone as safe as possible.

Update on NFN's COVID-19 Vaccine Roll-Out

To date, all 10 residents of our Seniors' Complex in Garden Village have received the Moderna vaccine, and staff working closely with these Elders or providing direct care were also offered vaccines. A total of 33 people were immunized by the end of February.

The arrival of our first mass shipment of the Moderna vaccine on March 8th marked a huge milestone towards protecting our most vulnerable citizens. With 858 doses, our skilled nursing team will be able to administer the second dose to the 33 people who already received their first, and to offer the vaccine (by appointment only) to an additional 825 community members aged 55 years and up.

More shipments are coming, but for now, vaccine appointments will be given according to priority level and the date/time of registration. We will be running four (4) clinics over the next two weeks to vaccinate those who have registered for a vaccine and are within the current priority level.

(Note: We are currently in [Phase 1](#) of Ontario's [three-phase plan](#) that prioritizes vaccines for those at greatest risk of severe illness and those who care for them. Indigenous adults are considered a priority group in Phase 1, however due to supply limitations, we need to prioritize our vaccines based on age.)

You must register in advance and will then be called for a vaccine appointment based on priority and the time at which you registered.

Community Update #6 – March 11, 2021

Extension of Work from Home Measures & COVID-19 Vaccine Roll-Out

CRITERIA TO BE ADDED TO THE COVID-19 VACCINE REGISTRATION LIST:

- You are over 16 years old; and
- Live in Nipissing First Nation; or
- Are a Nipissing First Nation member living off-reserve and can attend a vaccine clinic here; or
- You are employed by Nipissing First Nation, or by a business located on NFN.

If you meet the criteria and would like to get the COVID-19 Vaccine, please call to register as soon as possible. You should not wait until the vaccine arrives.

If you have already registered for a vaccine, someone from the Health Centre will call you to book an appointment. You do not need to call again. We will continue to process registrations until further notice.

PLEASE NOTE: The North Bay Indigenous Hub will be hosting vaccine clinics for the urban Indigenous community of the Nipissing-Parry Sound Districts and can be reached at 705-995-0060 for more information. If you live in another urban area, please contact your local Health Unit or Friendship Centre.

TO REGISTER FOR A COVID-19 VACCINE:

- Call the Lawrence Commanda Health Centre at **705-753-3312** to have your name put on the vaccine registration list.
- If the automated message picks up, dial extension 2232 or 0 to bypass. If all phone lines are busy, voicemail will pick up and prompt you to leave your name and number.
- You should expect to receive a follow-up call by a team member within 48 hours to complete the registration process.
- **Please only call once to register** and allow 48 hours for us to return your call. If you call in on a weekend, this window may be extended to 72 hours due to the high volume of calls.

We will not be accepting walk-up/walk-in vaccine appointments. Everyone must be pre-registered.

STAY INFORMED:

For regular updates about our operations during our extended office closure and for more information about COVID-19 vaccines, please visit nfn.ca/covid19 or refer to the March issue of our newsletter, [Enkamgak](#).

If you have any questions or concerns about COVID-19 vaccines, please contact our Community Health Nurse, Carole Lafantaisie, at 705-753-3312 or chn@nfn.ca.

A reminder that the limits for all organized public events and social gatherings where physical distancing can be maintained are **5 people indoors & 25 people outdoors** within the [Red \(Control\) zone](#) that we are currently in. Limits for religious services or ceremonies, including weddings and funerals, in any venue other than a private dwelling is 30% capacity of the room indoors or 100 people outdoors.

Staying home is still the best way to protect yourself and others. Avoid social gatherings and limit close contacts to those in your house. It is also recommended you wear a face covering when meeting with others from another household whether you are indoors or outdoors.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES & CONTACTS – MARCH 2021

HEALTH SERVICES:

- Community Health
- Home and Community Care
- Medical Transportation

Kimberly Lalonde – Director of Health Services
705-753-3312 ext. 2223 | kiml@nfn.ca

Carole Lafantaisie – Community Health Nurse
705-840-8830 | chn@nfn.ca

MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS:

Right Path Essential Client Services

705-753-1375 (please leave a message)
Harm reduction supplies are available every
Thursday from 1pm – 4:30pm at 316 Ted Commanda
Drive. Knock at the door and supplies will be
prepared for you, or call the office or email
lisal@nfn.ca to make arrangements. The Suboxone
Clinic at the Health Centre is open 8:30am – 4:30pm.

Overdose Prevention Line
1-888-853-8542

SOCIAL SERVICES:

- Ojibway Women's Lodge
- NFN Food Bank
- Ontario Works
- Child Welfare (Emergency)

Debbie McLeod – Director of Social Services
705-753-2050 ext. 1230 | debbiem@nfn.ca

Ojibway Women's Lodge Emergency Line
705-472-3321

Food Bank Access Days
1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month

For general questions and inquiries, please contact:

Brendan Huston, Chief Executive Officer
705-753-2050 ext. 1222 | brendanh@nfn.ca

HOUSING – NFN APARTMENT UNITS:

Emergency Repairs/Maintenance
705-477-1586

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC WORKS:

- Water & Wastewater Treatment
- Garbage & Recycling Pick Up
- Landfill Operations
- Building & Road Maintenance

Steve Doucette – Public Works Manager
705-840-3626 | steved@nfn.ca

EDUCATION & CHILD CARE:

Nancy Allaire – Director of Education
705-753-6995 | nancya@nfn.ca

Carole Couillard – Nbisiing School Principal
705-497-9938 | carolec@nbisiing.com

Brandie Fong – Manager of Children's Services
705-753-3312 | brandief@nfn.ca

BUSINESS SUPPORT/INQUIRIES:

**Thomas Lambert – Employment & Training
Manager** 705-753-6985 | thomasl@nfn.ca

Melvin McLeod – Emergency Services Manager
705-498-4407 | melvinm@nfn.ca

Stop the Spread Business Info Line
1-888-444-3659

Freda Martel, Director of Administration
705-753-2050 ext. 1223 | fredam@nfn.ca

Please visit our website for regular updates about our programs and operations: nfn.ca/covid19

Do your part. Stay Home, Stay Safe, Stay Kind and Save Lives.