

# COMMUNITY NOTICE

## Declaration of COVID-19 Outbreak in Nipissing First Nation

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**March 31, 2021** – Nipissing First Nation (NFN) Chief and Council passed a motion today declaring a COVID-19 outbreak in Nipissing First Nation focused on the community of Duchesnay **effective 12:01 a.m. on Thursday, April 1, 2021 until further notice.**

At least five (5) positive cases of COVID-19 known to be linked have been confirmed since March 28, 2021. The origin of this outbreak cannot be confirmed at this time and the investigation remains ongoing.

Individuals assessed as high-risk exposure contacts will be advised by a Community Health Nurse to self-isolate and go for COVID-19 testing. Community Health Nurses will conduct regular follow-ups with high-risk exposure contacts for the duration of an isolation period. A high-risk exposure contact can occur if there is no appropriate barrier and/or a face covering and physical distancing was not maintained over a period of time that adds up to 15 minutes or more. Outdoor exposure decreases the risk slightly, while indoor exposure increases the risk.

It's important to note that while there isn't a standard threshold for declaring a "community outbreak," this sudden surge in cases in one area of our nation meets our definition of an outbreak requiring immediate notification of our community members to control and contain it as quickly as possible.

There is currently no timeline for when the outbreak declaration will be lifted as that will depend on when the outbreak is contained. The outbreak will be considered contained when all positive cases are resolved, and it is confirmed that there is no further spread of COVID-19 in the community linked to these cases.

### Impacts to NFN Operations (effective Thursday, April 1, 2021)

- **As a pro-active measure, the Couchie Memorial Daycare is CLOSED until further notice.** We understand this sudden closure will be challenging and frustrating for parents, but the safety of our community is paramount and we apologize for any inconvenience.
- **As a proactive measure, Nbisiing Secondary School will return to VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION until further notice.** Parents/guardians and students will receive a separate notice from the Principal.
- **Nbisiing Bus Lines:** There is currently no concern around bussing cohorts through Nbisiing Bus Lines, and our team continues to monitor and re-assess the situation hourly.
- **As a proactive measure, the Duchesnay Creek Bridge Shuttle Service will REDUCE HOURS OF OPERATION from 7am to 8pm for essential trips only until further notice.** Essential trips are for going to work, the bank, purchasing medications and/or groceries and attending medical appointments. You will be required to provide your name, contact number and reason for travelling for tracking purposes. After hours taxi services for essential trips must be pre-arranged by contacting Glenn McLeod at 705-471-7073 for screening and approval. The shuttle and taxi will travel from Northshore Convenience and the New Duchesnay Store to the Oak Street Terminal, and from the Oak Street Terminal to Northshore Convenience.

## **Top 3 Actions for All Families & Households**

With Easter weekend nearly upon us and spring break around the corner, we can't stress enough how important it is for community members to stay within their own households to prevent any further spread of COVID-19 in our communities. Please follow these tips from our Public Health Unit to help keep yourself and your loved ones safe:

- 1. Stay 2 metres apart from anyone you don't live with.**  
*Avoid gatherings, shared meals or carpools - these are common ways that COVID-19 spreads from one family to another. A person infected with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others 48 hours before they even feel sick.*
- 2. Have symptoms? Get tested right away, and until you have results, you and everyone else you live with must stay home.**  
*Do not go to work or school or visit anyone if you have symptoms.*
- 3. Stay home and avoid non-essential travel or receiving visitors, especially between different colour zones.** *Our District is in the yellow zone and is surrounded by high-risk zones. Avoid travel to or from the Sudbury district in the west which is in the grey zone (lockdown), the Timiskaming district in the north and the Simcoe Muskoka district in the south which are both in the red zone.*

## **Important Information about Self-Isolation and Vaccines**

Self-isolation means individuals are to remain on their property and avoid contact with others for a minimum of 10 days (for a positive case) and 14 days (for individuals without symptoms) even if you receive a negative COVID-19 test result. This includes self-isolating from others in your home. Community Health Nurses will be conducting regular follow-ups with close contacts for the duration of the isolation period.

On December 24, 2020 a Class Order under Section 22 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* was enacted in this public health district. Individuals not complying with self-isolation requirements can be subject to legal action. If you believe someone who is required to self-isolate for COVID-19 is not following the class order you can call the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) at 1-800-563-2808 option 5.

Vaccines prevent people from getting sick with COVID-19 or experiencing severe symptoms if they do come into contact with COVID-19. It is important that we vaccinate as many people as possible to achieve herd immunity. But, as Phase One of the vaccine rollout is still underway, we are not there yet.

It is imperative that people continue follow public health guidance to prevent further spread of virus, including washing hands, physical distancing, wearing a face covering that fully covers the nose, mouth and chin and staying within your households.

## **Contacts**

If you are concerned about a potential exposure, please contact Carole Lafantaisie, NFN Community Health Nurse at (705) 840-8830. Other inquiries may be directed to Kimberly Lalonde, Director of Health Services at (705) 498-3698. Visit [nfn.ca/covid19](https://nfn.ca/covid19) for regular updates and links to helpful information.