



Dr. Ibrahim Khan, Regional Medical Health Officer
First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Saskatchewan
Region
Health Protection Division, Indigenous Services Canada
6th Floor, Alvin Hamilton Building
Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 2B6

November 26th, 2020

ATTN: Community Members of Muskeg Lake Cree Nation

Indigenous Services Canada is currently responding to an increase in the number of cases of COVID-19 across the province, including the area of Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. As of 1400hrs on November 26th, 2020, there are 2 confirmed active cases of COVID-19 in the community of Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. Contact tracing is underway.

It is critical that community members remain vigilant in following good public health measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. School and community protocols for COVID-19 should be implemented and followed moving forward. We still do not see a lot of transmission happening in schools.

Because COVID-19 activity is rising in Saskatchewan, anyone (including First Nations residents) could be exposed to or contract the virus. The risk is higher for anyone who has participated in high-risk activities (**especially mass gatherings with no masks and hugs, handshakes**) or visited high-risk areas (see "Latest Updates" section of [Saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus](https://saskatchewan.ca/coronavirus)).

The following actions are critical right now to bring COVID-19 transmission in First Nations communities back down to manageable levels:

- **Eliminate non-essential traffic between communities**, including travel to urban areas and other First Nations.
- Address non-compliance with self-isolation with supports, education and enforcement.
- Restrict visits between homes except for essential reasons (e.g. caring for a family member).
- Require non-medical masks in all public places and shared workplaces. **Effective November 19, masks must be worn in all indoor public places across Saskatchewan.**
- **Closely follow public health advice and requirements in the new public health order.** Any type of gathering in a house or outbuildings (garages, etc.) can have no more than 5 people, including visits, birthday parties, weddings, religious gathering and funerals.

Note that transmission is happening mostly between household members when someone has visited other households or attended gatherings where protocols are not in place or not followed. This holiday season will be different as we face a surge of COVID-19 in Saskatchewan. While we do not yet know what public health requirements will be in place next month, the safest holiday gatherings and celebrations should be limited to the immediate household to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Testing continues to be available to anyone who requests it, regardless of whether they have symptoms or not, however individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 will be a priority. A referral for testing can be made by contacting the local clinic or HealthLine 811.

If testing reveals you have COVID-19, public health staff will contact you (and your close contacts) with further instructions and support. The Medical Health Officer notifies Community Leadership each time there is a new case in the community, but personal details (e.g. name, location) of individuals are **not** shared.

To encourage testing and protect mental well-being, avoid sharing information or rumours about people who may have the virus. Instead, share compassionate messages and support everyone to follow public health advice.

Your informed choices and actions will make a difference to protect yourself and others!

Dr. Ibrahim Khan, Regional Medical Health Officer
First Nations and Inuit Health Programs – Saskatchewan



**P.O Box 248
Marcelin, Saskatchewan
S0J 1M0**

Nov 26, 2020

Dear Community Members,

The Muskeg Lake Cree Nation Community Preparedness Team is monitoring and responding to COVID-19 while continuing to deliver essential services to residents. We're working closely with key partners, including the Saskatchewan Health Authority, the Ministry of Health and the Public Health Agency of Canada, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Our top priority is the health, safety and well-being of our members.

Attached is a letter from our Chief Medical Health Officer, Dr. Khan of Indigenous Services Canada. We now have two confirmed positive cases in our community. We are working with the individuals to provide supports and isolation and are doing contact tracing. We want to ensure you we are doing everything required to keep our members safe.

The community will be entering into our next level of preparedness, which will include 24-hour security at our borders. We will be monitoring who is allowed in. If you reside in the community you will be allowed in, if you are an essential worker you will be allowed in. We will be reviewing our pandemic measures in 2 weeks and we will be updating our members at that time.

Phone: (306) 466-4959

Facsimile: (306) 466-4951



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Public Health Orders

- The maximum allowable gathering size for private gatherings in the home setting is 5. If your immediate family is five or greater, you cannot have additional visitors.
- Wearing a non-medical or cloth mask is mandatory in **indoor public places**.

Preventative Measures

- Stay home.
- Designate one person in the family to do the errands e.g. grocery shopping.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water; if soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your face, mouth, nose or eyes with unwashed hands.
- Maintain a two-meter physical distance from others outside of your household.
- Wear a non-medical mask in public places.
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If you have any questions or require supports please contact our Pandemic Coordinator, Jordan Rekve @ 1-306-290-7352, Iva Lafond, Director of Health and Wellness @ 1-306-380-9334 or Dianne Lafond, Director of Operations @ 1-306-270-5100.

Stay safe,

Chief Kelly Wolfe

Muskeg Lake Cree Nation

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