

## June 25, 2020

# **Public Update on COVID-19**

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## Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

The Cree Health Board continues to monitor jurisdictions worldwide. China with a population of 1.4 billion is averaging 16 cases per day, while the US with its 328 million population is at 40,000 cases per day. In Europe, the numbers are coming down slowly. In Canada and Quebec the downward trend in cases continues, with the emphasis remaining in Montreal for Quebec.

Our region is just below 1,000 tests carried out and only 10 cases from the beginning of the pandemic. The last case for Eeyou Istchee was May 1st, 2020 demonstrating that the commitment of the leadership and people of Eeyou Istchee to the current approach is sound. The screening testing is on par with the symptomatic testing.

The Cree Nation is currently in Phase 2 and limited activities can proceed in accordance with the following measures and restrictions:

### Increasing the size of outdoor social gatherings

A maximum of 5 households are allowed to meet outdoors, given adequate ventilation and space to allow physical distancing between people from different households. It is important to continue avoiding direct contacts (shaking hands, hugs, etc.), as well as the sharing of food, utensils, etc. Individual sports that can be practiced outside are also allowed (walking, jogging, cycling, etc.). Team sports will resume in Phase 3 only.

#### Resuming small scale indoor social gatherings

Indoor social gatherings are now allowed, for a maximum of 2 households, and only those visited already during Goose Break.

#### Reopening all local business as well as all local public services

Only if all precautionary measures are in place, including screening for symptomatic workers, self-isolating those who traveled to areas of risk, as well as making sure both workers and clients are observing hygienic and physical distancing measures recommended.

Restaurants are being allowed to open with adapted measures.

#### Resuming all non-essential health care services:

Specialists services, dentistry, or other services, as per local CMC capacity.

#### Slow increase of Daycare centres capacity

Daycare centres will continue to increase their capacity to receive children of parents gradually returning to work, putting in place all precautionary measures including screening for symptomatic workers, self-isolating those who traveled to areas of risk, as well as making sure hygienic and physical distancing measures recommended are observed. Each centre should increase the number of children it can accommodate according to its rhythm of adaptation to the measures required; a maximum of 75% of the usual capacity is targeted for Phase 3 only. In addition, day camps will also be allowed to reopen only in Phase 3.



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### **Church Services**

It is understood how important Church services are and people are encouraged to carry out Church related activities within the context of the parameters of Phase 2, for example outdoor services limiting the attendance to 5 households would be encouraged, indoor service would need to remain limited to two households including the celebrant or minister. All services are encouraged to respect the social distancing requirements. The services will be able to proceed with greater flexibility in Phase 3.

### **Hockey Activities**

There should be examination of the training and activities that don't require gathering or being confined spaces. Cardio training outdoors for example can be maintained so long as people keep the required distance from one another.

Although the Cree Health Board is constantly working to increase its screening capacity it is important to understand the inherent limits in testing. First, the test works well at identifying potential asymptomatic contagiousness. Therefore it is useful for determining potential positive cases but it is not reliable when looking for confirmation that someone does not have COVID-19. In this regards it is 50%-60% reliability on negative tests. This is why the test is being used to screen those that have symptoms or are at high risk. There is currently a limited capacity and for this reason it is reserved for high risk cases and front line health workers.

Because it is safe for people to travel between communities, the level of risk is analyzed for the whole region (and not for each community); consequently, the deconfinement phases can be uniform across Eeyou Istchee.

Public Health team will continue to provide support communities in deciding which services to reopen and how to do it safely. Organizations may send their request to: 18tcr.phcovidteam@ssss.gouv.qc.ca or covidrisk@cngov.ca

Quebec is still seeing a steady decline in cases and things are improving quickly, hopefully the trend continues for a number of weeks so that they can be considered safe again for members of the Cree Nation to go there again. There is still close monitoring of Region 02 (Saguenay-Lac St-Jean) and Region 08 (Abitibi), both regions have not reported any cases in the last 2 days.

With 10 cases recovered, regular testing for COVID-19 in Eeyou Istchee is currently at:

- 539 regular tests have been administered
- 529 returned negative
- o waiting for results

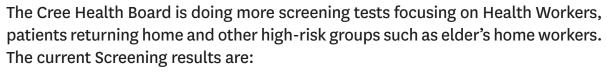


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- 445 screening tests
- · 2 awaiting results
- 443 returned negative



With regards to travel, the Cree Health Board would like to remind people that it is considered safe to travel for non-essential reasons within Eeyou Istchee, between communities and within Region 10. Self-Isolation is not required with travelling within Eeyou Istchee Region, with the exception of specific work sites.

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MoCreebec ⅃եւՆV<sup>ь</sup> Therefore, for now, the Areas Representing a Risk are:

- Anywhere outside Eeyou Istchee, Nunavik and Region 10
- Any mine site
- · Any forestry camp
- · Any Hydro-Quebec site

Travelling to these areas will require self-isolation.

It is extremely important to practice physical distancing and precautionary measures. Everyone must do what they can to protect fellow community members. Please also note that your community may have a more narrowly defined area where it is considered safe to travel and it is very important to remain informed of your local self-isolation requirements.

If you feel like you may need someone to talk to during these challenging times, please contact the Cree Health Board's **Psychosocial** Health Line: **1-833-632-4357**. The Cree Health Board would also like to inform people that specialists with a traditional approach to healing are also accessible through the same number.

#### **Cree School Board**

Secondary 4 and 5 official transcripts will be received 2nd week of July.

Post-Secondary applications have been reviewed and responses will be sent out shortly. PSSS offices in Montreal and Gatineau are closed but staff can be reached by phone or email.

The Cree School Board is actively planning for the return of teachers in August and ensuring that all schools are properly staffed for next year while meeting the needs for isolation and other precautionary measures. Other files continue to move such as the Cree Cegep file and capital plans for new schools. The organization is working hard to ensure a safe environment and procedures for students and staff in the upcoming year.