



Message from Leadership

“Effective June 15th, 2021, fully vaccinated (defined as upon reception of 2nd dose) members are exempt from any isolation requirements including when returning from travel from anywhere outside the communities of Eeyou Istchee.”

1. Who does the isolation exemption apply to?

Anyone who is fully vaccinated. The Bulletin was addressed to the community members of Eeyou Istchee it was not meant to mean that it applied only to community members. It should be clear that it applies to anyone who comes to a community in Eeyou Istchee.

2. What does fully vaccinated mean?

Someone who has received their 2nd dose of a vaccine approved by Health Canada, before arriving to the community.

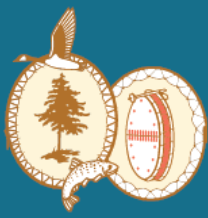
3. Why now?

Public Health authorities the world over are very confident that a fully vaccinated person will have difficulty contracting COVID-19 and even more difficult transmitting COVID-19 on the small chance they contract. This applies to all variants currently circulating. The Public Health Authority of Quebec is in fact so confident that should someone who is fully vaccinated be identified as a contact with a confirmed COVID-19 patient, they will NOT be required to self-isolate.

It should be noted that those that were fully vaccinated prior to arriving to the community and are currently on isolation lists maybe released from their isolation by local Public Safety Authorities.

4. What about people arriving from Ontario, a Hydro-Quebec worksite, a mine site, etc?

The reference to travel in the announcement of the exemption above was for example purposes only. The exemption has nothing to do with where the individual travelled to or is arriving from. Fully vaccinated individuals do not represent a risk even if they traveled from outside Quebec, Hydro-Quebec worksites, mine sites, etc.



5. *Are we not exposing ourselves to the same tragic situation in Kashechewan?*

There are important tools that the Cree Nation as a whole and the Communities of the Cree Nation have put in place which are unfortunately not available to Kashechewan:

a) *Local Mandatory Self-Isolation Law:*

Looking at other jurisdictions on of the glaring difference is the early implementation of a mandatory self-isolation. The very high commitment and compliance with the residents of Eeyou Istchee is single most important reason why cases were so limited in Eeyou Istchee.

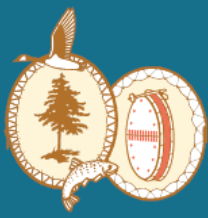
b) *Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay*

The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay has been working tirelessly since the beginning of the pandemic on securing the vaccine as early possible and administering as soon as possible. The same is true for testing capacity allowing for as much as possible an early warning and identification of where our weaknesses were in identifying cracks in the protective barrier that leadership was maintaining around our communities.

c) *Unity of the Cree Nation*

The unity of the Cree Nation leadership allowed for the constant flow of information to community members, through webcasts, radio announcements, public meetings, and bulletins. This allowed leaders to react with minutes instead of days, which would be too late in the context of a pandemic. The united approach also allowed to get the support and the exemptions we needed from the Government, for example:

- The early recognition from the Government of Quebec that Eeyou Istchee will be managed by Cree leadership;
- The support of the Government in restricting access by mining companies and mining exploration companies;
- The development of mining companies such as, Osisko, Stornoway, Newmont and Wallbridge of testing capacity to protect Cree workers;
- The agreement that Eeyou Istchee would be among the first regions that the Moderna vaccine would be delivered for adults and Pfizer for youth between 12 & 17;
- Etc



6. Does a fully vaccinated person have to self-isolate if they travelled with people who are not fully vaccinated?

A fully vaccinated person is exempt from all self-isolation. It does not matter who they travelled with or where they travelled. Those who are not fully vaccinated for the time being will still have to isolate for ten (10) days, even if they are the children of a fully vaccinated traveller. Fully vaccinated family members will be able to go to work and go to public buildings as they do not pose a significant risk to the community even if they live with family members who are isolating.

Please also see the answer to question 3.

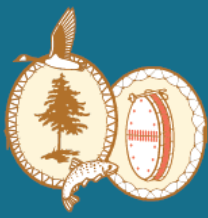
7. Why don't we get rid of the Mandatory Self-Isolation law now?

There are still members of our community that have only one dose or have not had any doses of a vaccine approved by Health Canada. COVID-19 and the new variants represent a very real threat for these people, and it is the Mandatory Self-Isolation that continues to protect these people. For anyone who is not vaccinated the identification of "Areas of Risk" will remain important and need to be respected. To remove the Mandatory Self-Isolation Law now when we are close to the end would be exposing the young and vulnerable members of our community unnecessarily. Further, the Mandatory Self-Isolation has allowed the Cree Nation to enjoy the most relaxed gathering restrictions in Quebec:

Eeyou Istchee	Quebec: Green	Quebec: Yellow
Indoor: 50 People*	Indoor: Max 10 people or 3 households	Indoor: Max 2 households
Outdoor: 150*	Outdoor: 10 people or 3 households	Outdoor: 8 people or 2 households

If a community were to remove the Mandatory Self-Isolation Law they would have to severely restrict gatherings to compensate as the rest of Quebec has: i.e. Maximum of 10 people indoors and 10 people outdoors. There are likely other restrictions that would be needed to compensate for the elevated risk and vulnerability of our communities.

Also please see answer a) to Question 5.

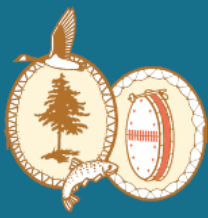


8. Why are we the only Government doing this?

We are not: Provinces that maintained mandatory self-isolation requirements (example New Brunswick, Manitoba, etc) are now removing the restriction for those that are fully vaccinated. The Government of Canada has announced that fully vaccinated travelers arriving in Canada will no longer be required to self-isolate. Nunavik public health authorities have also removed the requirement to self-isolate for fully vaccinated individuals entering the region as of June 14th (see <https://nrbhss.ca/fr/nunavik-voyage>). Quebec did not have mandatory self-isolation requirement from travelers from other provinces to Quebec because for the longest time the province of Quebec was the province of greatest risk in Canada. When Ontario surpassed Quebec as an area of risk the border was restricted. Quebec also lobbied the Federal Government to restrict international travelers arriving to Quebec.

9. What is being done for those that are not fully vaccinated?

Every effort is being made to make available as early as possible vaccine doses for anyone over 12 years old. Regions will continue to be evaluated to try and give as much freedom as possible without unnecessarily increasing the risk for the rest of the community. For example, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay is working on increasing testing capacity hoping it will allow for further reduction in restrictions inside Eeyou Istchee and possible the reduction of the ten (10) isolation period. We are not there yet but hopefully we will be there soon.



RELIABLE SOURCES

People are advised to continue exercising caution on where they get their information in relation to COVID-19 and the vaccine. The reliable sources of information remain:

- <https://eeyouistcheecovid19.org/>
- www.cngov.ca/covid-19/
- www.creehealth.org
- www.eeyoueducation.ca
- www.quebec.ca/coronavirus
- www.canada.ca/coronavirus

PSYCHOSOCIAL HEALTH LINE

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** where specialists with a traditional approach to healing are also accessible.

COVID-19 VACCINE AND GENERAL INFO LINE

Questions about the vaccine? The Cree Health Board has an info line with professionals to answer your **questions or concerns about vaccination: 1-866-855-2811.**

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND VARIANT INFO

To learn more about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and for information on variants of COVID-19, please visit:

<https://www.creehealth.org/covid/prevention>

TO OBTAIN PROOF OF VACCINATION:

Go to: <https://covid19.quebec.ca/PreuveVaccinale>

Or

Download and fill the consent form available here:

<https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/en/document-001089/>

Along with the completed form, attach a copy of your ID and send to the following email: 18TCR.CovidVaccinationForms@ssss.gouv.qc.ca