

COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ISC BC REGION

UPDATE #63 / October 23, 2020

Good afternoon,

This week, the Province of BC confirmed a **second wave of COVID-19**. While not unexpected, it's not the news anyone wanted. We are comforted to hear outbreaks in Indigenous communities have been contained and case numbers declined. We applaud your ongoing efforts to protect your communities and encourage you to stay strong and stay the course during this pandemic.

As outlined in earlier updates, the Government of Canada is providing additional funds through the **Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF)** to address the needs of First Nations during the COVID-19 pandemic. This fund can be used for a wide variety of measures such as supporting Elders and vulnerable community members, addressing food insecurity, educational and other supports for children, mental health assistance and emergency response services, preparedness measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and more.

First Nations communities have received their allocations under the second round of the ICSF. It is expected that information about the needs-based funding, which will be application driven, and represents more than half of the funding in the new round, will be released shortly. We'll provide more information as soon as it's available.

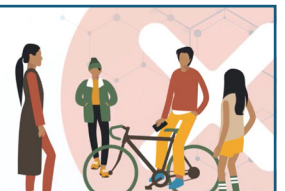
Lastly, many First Nations have been requesting BC regional staff travel to their communities. While nothing would make us happier, your safety and the safety of our employees remain top of mind. To that end, the Department remains under a Business Continuity Plan which means only essential travel can be approved. In the meantime, we would be happy to "meet" with you virtually or by phone. And we remain hopeful that we will be able to see each other soon – it's been far too long.

Stay the course
help limit the spread of COVID-19



Please watch this animated video:

Physical distancing: Stop the spread of COVID-19 in Indigenous communities



UPDATES

Canada Recovery Benefit open for applications

The CRA is providing a simple and efficient application process for the **Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)** similar to the one used to access the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). Eligible people can apply for these benefits online through the CRA's My Account portal or by phone through CRA's automated toll-free phone line at 1-800-959-2019 or 1-800-959-2041.

The CRB provides \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks, to workers who have stopped working or had their employment/self-employment income reduced by at least 50% due to COVID-19 and who are not eligible for EI.

To apply for these benefits, sign up for CRA's My Account, ensure that personal information with the CRA is up-to-date, and register for direct deposit. People are encouraged to file a 2019 tax return, if they haven't



done so yet, as this will reduce the likelihood that the CRA would need to request additional information before the application could be processed.

For information about eligibility requirements, how to apply, and eligibility period dates, visit the [CRA's webpages](#).

Canada announces new, targeted support to help businesses through pandemic

The Government of Canada plans to introduce **legislation to provide support that would help businesses safely get through the second wave of the virus and the winter**, cover costs so they can continue to serve their communities, and be positioned for a strong recovery, including:

- The new Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy, which would provide simple and easy-to-access rent and mortgage support until June 2021 for qualifying organizations affected by COVID-19.
- A top-up Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy of 25 per cent for organizations temporarily shut down by a mandatory public health order issued by a qualifying public health authority, in addition to the 65 per cent subsidy.
- The extension of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy until June 2021, which would continue to protect jobs by helping businesses keep employees on the payroll and encouraging employers to re-hire their workers.
- An expanded Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA), which would enable businesses, and not-for-profits eligible for CEBA loans—and that continue to be seriously impacted by the pandemic—to access an interest-free loan of up to \$20,000, in addition to the original CEBA loan of \$40,000. Half of this additional financing would be forgivable if repaid by December 31, 2022. Additionally, the application deadline for CEBA is being extended to December 31, 2020.

Further details will be announced in the coming days.

New support for small businesses through the Canada United Small Business Relief Fund

More assistance may be available for Indigenous businesses needing support to respond to COVID-19. The Government of Canada has announced **an**

investment of \$12 million in the **Canada United** Small Business Relief Fund. Canada United is a national fundraising campaign created by the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) in collaboration with private sector partners and provincial and territorial chambers of commerce. The campaign has been rallying support from Canadians for local small businesses in every corner of the country.

The Canada United Small Business Relief Fund is supporting Canadian businesses across different sectors and industries with grants of up to \$5,000. These grants will help thousands of small business owners cover the costs of personal protective equipment, make physical modifications to their businesses to meet local health and safety requirements, and enhance their digital or e-commerce capabilities.



THE REGISTRATION AND STATUS CARD SERVICE COUNTER IN VANCOUVER IS OPEN BY APPOINTMENT

Please call **236-330-9961** to make an appointment before arriving. For application requirements, please visit canada.ca/indian-status or call 1-800-567-9604.

HEALTH CANADA HAS RECALLED CERTAIN LOTS OF HAND SANITIZERS

from the market because they contain ingredients that are not permitted or are not properly labelled and are missing important information. Health Canada updates **their recall list** whenever there are affected products.



NO MATTER HOW YOU CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN THIS YEAR...

Turn off your porch light and stay at home if you are sick or self-isolating.

Try including a non-medical mask or face covering as part of your costume.

Costume masks should not be worn over non-medical masks or face coverings as that may make it difficult to breathe.

Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often.

Visit www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/social-interactions/halloween.

THE FLU SHOT:

Protect yourself, protect your community



Don't forget your flu shot this

year! The flu shot is the most effective way to protect yourself against anticipated flu strains, and so you are encouraged to get immunized for your own health, and encourage your family and friends to do so as well. For more information, visit the **seasonal flu and the flu shot**.

New COVID-19–related challenges to help reduce environmental impact of PPE in Canada

Last week, the **Government of Canada announced the launch of two challenges** through the **Innovative Solutions Canada program** to make personal protective equipment (PPE) more compostable and recyclable:

- **Recycling technologies for disposable (single-use) PPE used in health care sector:** National Research Council Canada (NRC), in collaboration with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and Health Canada (HC), is seeking solutions for the efficient and cost-effective recycling of disposable PPE waste generated in the Canadian health care system.
- **Compostable disposable surgical masks and compostable disposable respirators used in the Canadian health care system:** NRC, in collaboration with ECCC, HC and Natural Resources Canada, is seeking solutions for the manufacturing of compostable disposable surgical masks and compostable disposable respirators to be used by health care workers.

These challenges will close on November 6 and 17, 2020, respectively.

PARTNER INFORMATION

Online Tool Kit Helps Workplaces Build Customized COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) has launched a **new customizable tool kit resource** to help workplaces across Canada operate safely and prevent the spread of infection during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The online hub provides one-stop access to more than 40 free resources to reduce the spread and protect everyone in the workplace. The guide includes information on the responsibilities of employers and workers, and what workplaces should do to control risks. Topics covered include how the coronavirus spreads, employers' duties, handling work refusals, hazard and risk assessment identification for COVID-19, and how to control the risk and apply the hierarchy of controls in the workplace.

Workplaces can download the guide on its own or bundle other industry and workplace-specific tip sheets, infographics, and posters to create a customized and comprehensive COVID-19 tool kit tailored to their industry or specific workplace needs.

Please continue to follow public health guidelines related to physical distancing, hand washing and wearing of masks.



OF INTEREST

If your little ones are apprehensive about wearing a mask, check out [this video from Lennox Island First Nation](#) in Prince Edward Island.

You might also be interested in an online initiative which, for every mask sold, donates another mask to Indigenous children in remote communities. The [Indigenous Face Masks initiative](#) has seen masks sent from coast to coast to coast, including British Columbia.



Photo by organizer Tyson Wesley, Kashechewan First Nation

USEFUL LINKS

- **Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Indigenous communities** – developed by ISC, this page provides health and financial support information for Indigenous communities.
- Find information on how to apply for financial or economic support from the Government of Canada at: Canada.ca/coronavirus.
- With the help of BCFC, the First Nations Public Service Secretariat has developed [a series of one-pagers on COVID-19 support and resources](#).
- **Taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic**
- **Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Prevention and risks**
- First Nations Health Authority – **Information for community leaders**
- **COVID-19 BC Support App and Self-Assessment Tool**
The app will let you receive the latest updates, trusted resources, and alerts. The Self-Assessment Tool is built in.
- **Transport Canada – COVID-19 measures, updates, and guidance issued by Transport Canada**

REGIONAL CONTACTS

We've set up a dedicated email for any non-health COVID-19-related questions and requests: aadnc.iscbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca.