

# COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ISC BC REGION

UPDATE #27 / April 23, 2020

Good Afternoon,

We know you are inundated with information each day about the COVID-19 pandemic. We strive to provide only “news you can use” to help inform your daily decisions and hopefully reassure you that you and your community are not alone in your efforts to prevent the spread of this novel virus. By keeping pace with this information and following the advice of medical professionals, we can all better protect our health and manage a full economic recovery.

**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

According to information from our partners at the **First Nations Health Authority**, as of April 22 there are 26 people who are resident on reserve and at least 6 other positive cases of COVID-19 in First Nations individuals not resident on reserve. As COVID-19 moves into communities here are some important reminders from the Public Health Agency of Canada on **how to isolate at home when you have COVID-19**:

- Do not leave home unless absolutely necessary, such as to seek medical care.
- Arrange to have groceries and supplies dropped off at your door to minimize contact.
- Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom from others in your home, if possible.
- If you have to be in contact with others, try to keep at least two metres between yourself and the other person.
- At least once daily, clean and disinfect surfaces that you touch often, like toilets, bedside tables, doorknobs, phones and television remotes
- Avoid contact with individuals with chronic conditions, compromised immune systems and older adults.

### Accessing financial benefits and support during the COVID-19 outbreak

On March 18, 2020, the Prime Minister announced a new set of economic measures to help stabilize the economy during this challenging period. These measures will provide up to \$27 billion in direct support to Canadian workers and businesses. As information is rapidly changing we strongly encourage you to visit the **federal** and **provincial** financial supports websites often for the latest information.

Additionally, we would like to share with resources from our partners:

- Many Band Administrations are trying to help their members living off reserve to find and apply for the government supports available in BC. Here is a **COVID-19 At a Glance Resources for All BC Individuals** on the First Nations Public Service Secretariat website that you can reference and share.
- **Skwah First Nation has created a video** which provides an overview of the Indigenous Community Support Fund
- **Namgis First Nation has links** to the many supports available



## Check-in with First Nations

Be aware, our Funding Services Officers have begun reaching out again to all of you to check-in to see how you are doing, answer any questions you may have about the Indigenous Community Support Fund allocations, and discuss your current and future needs.

## SHOUT OUT

We also want to applaud the many positive initiatives being shared online and on social media by communities in support of their members. We commend the leadership these initiatives show in the response to the pandemic. (You may need to paste the links into your Facebook page for them to work.)

- ʔaḡam posted an [article on Traditional Wellness](#)
- Quatsino First Nation posted [how to talk to children about coronavirus](#)
- Stó:lō Nation has posted [several videos, including one on how to manage conflicts with your loved ones](#)

## VACCINE FUNDING

There is some hopeful news. Researchers and scientists in Canada and around the world are working hard to better understand the virus, and its impacts on people and communities. This morning [the Prime Minister announced more than \\$1 billion in support of a national medical research strategy to fight COVID-19](#) that includes vaccine development, the production of treatments, and tracking of the virus. This new funding builds on the \$275 million investment for coronavirus research and medical countermeasures announced in March. It includes \$23 million to accelerate development of a vaccine against COVID-19 and the essential steps to ensuring that vaccines are effective and safe for human use.

## PARTNER INFO

### Lunch Programs

There was also some good news from the Province of British Columbia about the work being done in school districts of all sizes where [education leaders are helping students stay fed while in-class instruction suspended](#).

For those of you who have asked about supports available for members living off reserve, be aware that in many districts staff are using their resources and work with community organizations and local businesses to ensure students who normally received meals at school would continue to have them at home.

### B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers

Temporary relief is on the way for British Columbians whose ability to work has been affected by COVID-19, with applications for the \$1,000 [B.C. Emergency Benefit for Workers \(BCEBW\)](#) opening on May 1, 2020. Most people who are eligible for the new federal Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) are also eligible for the BCEBW, including those who have run out of employment insurance (EI) benefits and subsequently qualify for the CERB. Click the link for eligibility details.

### Rental Assistance

Additionally, if you missed it, the Province of British Columbia has recently shared more information about their [Temporary Rental Supplement](#) for renters living on reserve.

This program gives \$300 per month for eligible households with no dependents, and \$500 per month for eligible households with dependents. The temporary rental supplement is available for April, May and June 2020. It will cover part of the rent for low- and moderate-income renters who have lost income as a result of COVID-19. Renters will only have to apply once. If they apply in April, they will get payments for each month over the three-month program. If they apply in May, two payments will be made. The support is paid directly to the landlord. Click the link for a full list of eligibility criteria and Frequently Asked.

## QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

**How much of the of the \$306.8 million stimulus package announced by the Prime Minister on April 18, 2020 is going to be in a loan and how much of it will be a grant? And how do you decide which business gets a loan and which business gets a grant?**

The terms of what was announced last Saturday are still being worked on but the essential principle is that it will be very much along the same lines as what is accessible for non-Indigenous businesses, a total of \$40,000 which is divided into 75% or \$30,000 of an interest-free repayable loan. The terms of that repayment in terms of when it starts is yet to be determined, and up to \$10,000 that is a, essentially a grant, a non-repayable loan.

So it will likely not be a matter of picking and choosing, those who are deemed to need the financing will have access to that \$40,000 for business.

## FREE WEBINAR

For more information on the opportunities and challenges facing First Nations Economic Development Corporations and Businesses due to COVID-19, check out a free webinar being hosted by the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of BC (AFOA BC). The panel includes our own David Russell, Director, Lands & Economic Development, BC Region, Indigenous Services Canada.

**Date: Monday, April 27**

**Time: 10:00 a.m.**

[Register Here](#)

## REGIONAL CONTACTS

We've set up a dedicated email for any non-health COVID-19-related questions and requests: [aadnc.isbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca](mailto:aadnc.isbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca)

The email address and other information are also available on the [FNPSS website](#).

## NATIONAL INFORMATION

- [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Prevention and risks](#)
- The Government of Canada has made announcements regarding financial assistance for those who will be impacted during these unprecedented times – these individuals and business are encouraged to apply for assistance. You can find further information on how to apply for financial or economic support at: [Canada.ca/coronavirus](https://Canada.ca/coronavirus) and [Questions and Answers on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#).
- For a great description of what flattening the curve means, consider watching [Prime Minister Trudeau's video tweet](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [Resources for Canadian Businesses](#)
- [Transport Canada – COVID-19 measures, updates, and guidance issued by Transport Canada](#)

## USEFUL LINKS

- [Family Violence Prevention Program](#)
- [Virtual Doctor of the Day](#)
- [First Nations Public Service Secretariat](#)
- [First Nations Health Authority](#)  
Summary of COVID-19 information and response.
- [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.

