

## COVID-19 Message from ISC - BC Region March 17, 2020 - Update#3

Good afternoon,

Please be advised, effective immediately, the building at 1138 Melville Street in Vancouver will be closed until further notice. We are all working remotely and will advise you when the building is opened but you may experience some delays in non-critical services for the time being.

We are writing to provide a quick update in the wake of the Prime Minister's announcement this morning pledging increased resources for First Nations for preparedness and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Today's announcement has committed additional resources to support resiliency and preparedness of communities and we are working closely with the First Nation Health Authority (FNHA) and Emergency Management BC (EMBC) to ensure seamless service and leverage each organization's capabilities. You will equally be receiving updates from FNHA on health-related services and supports.

Although we are still awaiting full details, we are proposing to advance some initial funds to assist with incremental costs such as Emergency Operation Centre costs (e.g. overtime), shipping of food or other necessities, costs for continuation of essential services (e.g. that preserve life, health and basic societal functioning), social and cultural supports, and costs to meet the needs of vulnerable persons in isolation who are unable to access usual support networks. This initial amount is not a total allocation per community but just an advance to assist communities to get started. We can work with your community on additional needs and how best to flow funds based on community circumstances. Should you have any questions regarding the Emergency Management Assistance Program, please contact our Duty Officer at 604-209-9709 or [bcaandc.do@canada.ca](mailto:bcaandc.do@canada.ca).

We would also like to inform all First Nations in British Columbia of the emergency/disaster supplement funding available to support communities under the Income Assistance program. It is our intention to provide the same level of funding as that of the Province of BC who have recently expanded eligibility to assist during this period. Additional information will follow in the coming days. In the meantime, should Band Social Development Workers have questions concerning Income Assistance, they are encouraged to call the BSDW Policy Support Line at 1-888-440-4080, or by e-mail: [aadnc.tsdbsoutien-bsdwsupport-bc.aandc@canada.ca](mailto:aadnc.tsdbsoutien-bsdwsupport-bc.aandc@canada.ca). The BSDW Policy Support Line is available Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. The e-mail is checked on between 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. Please note that the advances we will be forwarding can be used for either the income assistance or emergency management programs.

More details will be provided in the coming days. In the meantime, should you have immediate needs please let us know. We will work with our partners such as the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC) to ensure a coordinated approach that will allow you to be advanced from the onset. If you have other COVID-19-related questions and requests, please e-mail: [aadnc.isbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca](mailto:aadnc.isbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca). This will help ensure all requests are tracked and responded to promptly.

We are striving to remain nimble so that we can address challenges as they arise and to respond to your emerging needs. If you have key individuals who you want to be included on these updates, please email their coordinates to the above-noted email address.

On Monday, staff from Indigenous Services Canada, BC Region, began phoning all First Nations in British Columbia. While there are still some First Nations we have yet to reach, we will keep on trying to connect with you personally. We would greatly appreciate you informing us in real time of impacts to your band office operations and whether your ability to provide essential services is impacted.

Additionally, I would also like to take this opportunity to once again share the contact information for our Executive Leadership Team should you or your team need to reach out regarding specific programs or services within their respective areas:

- Catherine Lappe, Regional Director General: 604-340-7703
- Bill Guerin, Associate Regional Director General: 604-803-9476
- Paula Santos, Director Community Infrastructure: 604-790-8451
- Wendy Rogers, Director Programs and Partnerships: 604-363-8117
- David Russell, Director Lands and Economic Development: 604-817-2644
- Angela McCarthy, A/Director Funding Services: 604-209-1251
- Chiara Taylor, Director Child and Family Services: 778-668-9067
- James Moxon, Director Community Development: 604-367-8241
- Viola Gressel, Director Corporate Services: 604-367-8136
- Harold Powell, A/Director Corporate Services: 604-219-1737

Should you have any COVID-19 health-related questions, the First Nations Health Authority would like you to use the following:

- For general inquiries - [COVID19@fnha.ca](mailto:COVID19@fnha.ca)
- For FNHA and community health care providers (CHNs, HD, etc.) or CDE planning questions - [CDMgmt@fnha.ca](mailto:CDMgmt@fnha.ca)
- For individual health care and COVID-19 questions- 811 or primary care provider

We understand this is a rapidly evolving situation and want to ensure you're aware that ISC is and will continue working with First Nations, the First Nations Health Authority, and the provincial government to take every precaution in the face of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Thank you and please stay safe,

Catherine Lappe  
Regional Director General  
**604-340-7703**

Bill Guerin  
Associate Regional Director General  
**604-803-9476**

Indigenous Services Canada – British Columbia Region