

COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ISC BC REGION

UPDATE #38 / May 8, 2020

Good Afternoon,

As we head into the weekend we all have a lot to process about the evolving COVID-19 response and what it means for each of us. While the Province of BC is on the cusp of relaxing COVID-19 restrictions through a staged approach, some of you might see that as a risk and are putting in place measures based on the specific needs of your community. We acknowledge your concerns relating to tourists, fishers and hunters and your community. Rest assured we working hard to communicate that while restrictions are being eased there are still vulnerable communities in the province. We are coordinating with other government departments to reinforce the message that now is not the time for non-essential travel. To quote Dr. Bonny Henry, BC's Provincial Health Officer, we need to hold the line even as restrictions are eased. That means maintaining physical distancing and frequent handwashing.



In that spirit, please watch **Emma-Lee Kelly's song called "Six Feet Away."**

Emma-Lee is 11-years old, from the Soowahlie First Nation in Cultus Lake, BC and lives in Chilliwack. She loves to play guitar, ukulele, and piano. She is in sixth grade at Mt. Slesse Middle School and cites comedian, singer and actress, Colleen Ballinger as her idol. She is very proud of her First Nations heritage.

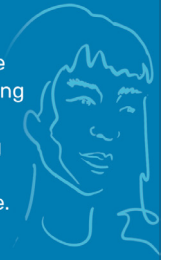
This past April, Xyólheméylh (Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children and Family Services Society) asked all Indigenous children and youth in British Columbia to create posters and videos to describe their feelings about social distancing and COVID-19. Emma-Lee won first prize in the video category. To see all the winning entries, please [click here](#). Many thanks to Xyólheméylh for sharing.

I'm fine, thanks.



What I really mean is...

I am feeling pretty positive with all the kindness pouring out of everyone and the creative ways we're taking care of one another and really it just gives me hope.



#GetReal
mentalhealthweek.ca

UPDATE

Forecast calls for record-breaking warm temperatures this weekend. With fast rising temperatures and lots of snow still on the mountains concerns remain about the possibility of flooding in parts of the province. It seems timely then to revisit emergency preparations for flood (and fire) season during the COVID-19 pandemic. Several First Nations on Vancouver Island and the BC Interior are still recovering from recent floods.

Complicating matters this year is the COVID-19 pandemic, which adds a new dimension as communities try to cope with multiple emergencies at the same time. Through [social media posts](#), Westbank First Nation urged its citizens to



be proactive and create an emergency plan. Tk'emlups te Secwepemc used **their Facebook page** to share best practices such as the need to have a grab-and-go bag ready in case of an evacuation.

People are also encouraged to get their homes in shape, clear nearby debris to prevent fires and limit damage to their surroundings.

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) remains the lead agency for all emergencies, including floods (and fires). In response to COVID-19, provincial officials have modified their emergency plans and created **new guidelines for flood response** such as sandbagging while practicing safe physical distancing. Provincial officials also recently launched a **digital registration system for Emergency Support Services**, which allows evacuees to self-register while keeping a safe distance from volunteers available to help them. If your community needs help, please call the EMBC 24/7 emergency line at 1800-663-3456.

For information about the Emergency Management and Preparedness Fund administered by Indigenous Services Canada. The Emergency Management and Preparedness coordinator can be contacted at 604-209-9709 or aadnc.bcemu.aandc@canada.ca.

Financial assistance available for victims of BC flooding, landslides

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) is now available for those who may have been impacted by overland flooding and landslide damages from April 15 to May 3, 2020 in the Cariboo Regional District and the Fraser-Fort George Regional District.

DFA is available to homeowners, residential tenants, small business owners, farmers, charitable organizations and local government bodies that were unable to obtain insurance to cover these disaster-related losses.

Applications for this DFA event must be submitted to Emergency Management BC (EMBC) by Aug. 5, 2020.

Best Practices Surrounding Status Cards During COVID-19

In response to questions received from First Nations members, citizens, and stakeholders, we're sharing information to ensure that registered persons with a

status card can access programs, services, rights and benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As you know, ISC offices for Indian status and secure status card applications are closed for the time being. This has delayed processing times, including the return of original document.

In light of these circumstances, ISC is recommending to service providers that they should accept status cards or Temporary Confirmation of Registration Documents (TCRDs) past the renewal date with a second piece of identification. ISC will be reaffirming to businesses and service providers that Indian status does not expire, and that the registration number provided on these documents remains the same and is what is required to confirm eligibility for programs and services.

Support for Workers

Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey for April 2020 shows the severe impacts COVID-19 are having on the economy here in BC and across Canada. BC's unemployment rate is 11.5 per cent, up from 5 per cent prior to the pandemic.

The Government of Canada responded with a **statement about the actions taken to date** to support Canadians and their families through these troubled times including the **Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy** and the **Canada Emergency Response Benefit** as part of **Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan**.

At his news conference this morning, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated that the emergency wage subsidy program will be extended beyond June 6 when it was originally set to end. He promised more information next week.

The jobless numbers also prompted the Province of BC to issue a statement by Minister of Finance, Carole James, noting that more than 400,000 British Columbians have been approved to receive the **\$1,000 BC Emergency Benefit for Workers**.

QUESTION OF THE DAY

What is Indigenous Services Canada doing to ease reporting requirements during these challenging times?

In response to the unprecedented pressures and challenges all organizations are facing at this time due to COVID-19, ISC and CIRNAC would like to alleviate any pressure your organization may be feeling to meet reporting requirement deadlines set out in your grant and contribution funding agreements. The safety and well-being of you and your organization is our first priority.

Audited Consolidated Financial Statements: Although the department is unable to grant an extension to First Nations due to First Nations' legislative obligation under the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act* (FNFTA) to complete audited consolidated financial statements within 120 days of year end (ie. by July 29), the department has stopped all discretionary compliance measures related to the FNFTA as per the December 2015 Ministerial directive. All other recipients have been granted a 90-day extension for audited consolidated financial statements.

No measures will be taken for late reporting: At this time, and until further notice, ISC and CIRNAC will not take any measures related to the late submission of any report that is required under your funding agreement. This includes measures such as the halting of funds, the downgrading of General Assessment scores and the initiation of default management action.

Adjustments to reporting requirements are being explored: As well, please note that ISC and CIRNAC are currently exploring what other reporting requirement adjustments can be made related to any outstanding FY19/20 reporting requirements and upcoming FY20/21 reporting requirements. We will formally communicate these adjustments as soon as they are confirmed.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We believe we are better when we share our knowledge. We are pleased to share resources and updates being offered by communities:

- **Council of the Haida Nation** posted a North Coast Regional District Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Information Officer is now meeting all ferry passengers departing from Kxeen and providing reports for each sailing. Upon arrival, incoming travellers will also stop at local EOC checkpoints to verify their 14-day self-isolation plan.
- **Nisga'a Lisims Government** posted the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority has increased their COVID-19 testing capacity. They also posted the Nisga'a Emergency Preparedness Committee's Response to BC's Restart Plan.
- **Ucluelet First Nation** reminded members that Phase 2 of BC's Restart Plan has not started and posted info on ways to stay safe while using substances during COVID-19.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19 SURVEY

Share your ideas and input!

B.C. is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with a co-ordinated province-wide approach. Our priority is to protect British Columbians and ensure we can effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 questionnaire topics include:

- Responses to government measures, actions, and decisions
- Current levels of concern
- Personal and job impacts
- Use and need of information sources

Share your feedback by completing the online questionnaire.

NATIONAL INFORMATION

- **Practical advice, articles and information to help you #GetReal about how you really feel**
- **Taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic**
- **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 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

- **Kids Help Phone**
- Economic measures to help stabilize the economy during this challenging period. As information is rapidly changing we strongly encourage you to visit the [federal](#) and [provincial financial supports](#) websites often for the latest information.
- 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.
- With the help of BCFC, the First Nations Public Service Secretariat has posted a [COVID-19 Resources for All BC Individuals](#).

REGIONAL CONTACTS

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

Executive Leadership Team

Should you or your team need to reach out regarding specific programs or services within their respective areas:

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

SERVICE CANADA OUTREACH

Service Canada is taking steps to ensure everyone can connect and get the full benefit of the Government of Canada supports available in these challenging times. To support access to critical programs and services for clients, including First Nations members, without access to technology, Service Canada Community Outreach and Liaison Service are available to offer alternate service delivery methods that will continue to support accessing critical programs, services and benefits.

 **1-877-631-2657**