

COVID-19 Message from ISC - BC Region March 25, 2020 - Update#8

Good afternoon

While the continuing COVID-19 situation is anything but routine, some important milestones were reached today that will help give support and structure to the days ahead. The Minister of Indigenous Services today reiterated that his sole priority— one that is shared by the Government of Canada—is the health and safety Indigenous peoples in Canada.

With the emergency recall and passing of legislation, we can now share more about the distinction-based \$305 million Indigenous Community Support Fund announced by the Prime Minister last week. The First Nations portion is \$215 million; each First Nation in will get a base amount adjusted for population, remoteness and community well-being. Just what those formulas mean for your communities is now being determined and we will provide more information as soon as we're able. Also, as many of you had asked what measures are in place to support your members living off reserve, please note that \$15 million of the Fund will go to supporting regional, urban and Indigenous organizations supporting those who live away from their communities.

These allocations of the \$305m are only part of what is available to all Canadians on and off reserve as there are other supports to individuals such as Income Assistance, and [the Canada Emergency Response Benefit](#) a taxable benefit announced today that would provide \$2,000 a month for up to four months for workers who lose their income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Minister Miller says this is just the beginning. "We know more support will be needed and we will be there to make sure no Indigenous community is left behind. Our government is here to support you during this uncertain time." We will have more on these important measures in future updates.

To ensure we continue to be available to your management teams as well as leadership, Associate Regional Director, Bill Guerin will be joining a webinar with Band Administrators hosted by the First Nations Public Service Secretariat this Friday morning. It is another opportunity to share information about the support measures now in place. A link to the session will be made available on the FNPSS website.

We want to thank you all again for the important work you are doing and the strength you have shown during these challenging times. We note that the cherry blossoms are out in Vancouver right now, bringing beauty and hope; and if *flowers* can do that, imagine what we can achieve as we continue to work together.

Thank you and be safe,

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