



March 25, 2020

# Public Update on COVID-19

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Whapmagoostui  
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Chisasibi  
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Wemindji  
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Eastmain  
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Waskaganish  
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Nemaska  
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Waswanipi  
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Ouje-Bougoumou  
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Mistissini  
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Washaw Sibi  
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MoCreebec  
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## Communications

There continue to be no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the communities of Eeyou Istchee. The Cree leadership would like to remind everyone on the importance of managing communications responsibly:

### 1. Distributing Information

People are asked to assist in distribution of official and reliable sources of information:

- Cree Board of Health Official Statements
- Quebec Health Official Statements
- Cree Leadership Statement (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)
- Daily Briefings from Premier Legault

### 2. Discourage the dissemination of alarming and unconfirmed information

- Social media information and messages even from people who claim to have first-hand information. Unfortunately, there are people with poor judgement that are disseminating unreliable information on social media platforms;
- Media outlets are good when relaying official government reports, but the public should exercise caution when media outlets express opinions, sensationalize facts or share information from unconfirmed non-governmental sources.

All levels of Government: Federal, Provincial, Cree Nation, Cree Board of Health are working to get out the most reliable information.

The need to manage information correctly was demonstrated yesterday when erroneous information was circulating in regard to a Cree patient who contracted COVID-19 while in Montreal.

[Please see the attached Statement from the Cree Board of Health on the matter.](#)

The tracing process was described:

Once an individual is diagnosed positive, their movements and contacts are traced back to the day before they became symptomatic. It is very important that everyone understand that transmission happens when symptoms appear and not before.

Once the movements and contacts are traced back, the Cree Health Board then contacts all people who may have come into contact with the person. The people are then isolated and possibly tested, they are monitored twice daily to verify symptoms, because again transmission happens when symptoms appear and not before.

These measures have been put in place by the Cree Board of Health and the situation is being managed properly.

It needs to be understood by community members that regardless of how many people are being tested, contacted and monitored, regardless of what community they come from, your best protection is social distancing:

Remaining 2 meters from people;

- Washing hands regularly;
- Coughing, sneezing into tissue or arm;
- Social distancing is the best guarantee of protecting yourself regardless of where you live.

## Cree School Board

Emergency childcare has been implemented as of Monday, March 23.

Teachers and staff have all been clearly informed of precautionary measures and social distancing that remain as priorities, especially if they are returning to the community. Non-essential travel is also discouraged at this time. Should a teacher or employee of the Cree School Board must travel, they are required to inform their supervisors.

A task force has been composed to analyze and determine what can be done to ensure that students projected to graduate may do so in this academic year. Recommendations concerning these graduates as well as promotion for other grades, will be shared in the briefest of delays.

Post-Secondary student allowances will continue during this time. For more information: <https://eeyoueducation.ca/ps>

## Cree Nation Government

Cree Nation Government is in the process of developing immediate measures that can be implemented by all Cree entities to help local Cree business during these challenging times. More substantives plans and programs are being developed to assist in complimenting and accessing the Federal and provincial relief programs and measures that are being developed.

The Cree leadership is making a call to all youth Chiefs, youth leaders and youth themselves in helping to find positive ways to get the youth to participate in implementing and respecting the precautionary and social distancing measures. COVID-19 does in fact pose a risk to youth and proposes an even greater risk to the elderly and the vulnerable community members. The best protection for the elderly and vulnerable members of our community is the Youth. By sacrificing social interaction for a relatively short time the youth could save lives in the community, it is that simple.

The Cree leadership will be developing a "Goose Break Precautionary Plan" to ensure that community members can safely prepare and carry out traditional goose breaks in the coming weeks.

The Cree leadership would like to express their sincere gratitude to the front line medical workers and all the staff of the Cree Board of Health, we know that a lot of these workers come from outside the community and we will be eternally grateful to them for the work they do to ensure the services of today and make sure that we are ready for tomorrow. We would also like to include all the other workers in essential services: from the continued dedication of cashiers in our stores to staff of the different financial departments helping us try and live a normal life as possible during these uncertain times.

*May god bless all of you.*