



July 7, 2020

Public Update on COVID-19

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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

Worldwide COVID-19 continues to spread at alarming rates. Many jurisdictions struggle to contain the virus and others are having troubles with flare ups as they try and deconfine.



Cree School Board
Commission scolaire crie

In Quebec the numbers continue to drop or remain lower however there is a shift from urban centres where Montreal used to represent 75% of all cases in the province to 10% of all cases in the province which would indicate an increase in importance of COVID-19 in the regions of Quebec.

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Within Eeyou Istchee, communities continue to do well, which is a testament to local leadership and more importantly to the people of Eeyou Istchee who respect and remain committed to physical distancing and precautionary measures.

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Our region has remained COVID-19 free all through our 2nd phase of deconfinement which began June 22nd. After investing so much collectively efforts to get where we are now, the message we have heard from the Cree leadership today is that we should continue to do everything in our power to remain COVID free. And this is why Public Health, in consultation with the Cree Leadership, will maintain our cautious approach to the deconfinement process.

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With 10 cases recovered, regular testing for COVID-19 in Eeyou Istchee is currently at:

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- 600 regular tests have been administered
- 586 returned negative
- 4 waiting for results

The Cree Health Board is doing more screening tests focusing on Health Workers, patients returning home and other high-risk groups such as elder's home workers. The current Screening results are:

- 579 screening tests
- 6 awaiting results
- 573 returned negative

As of July 7th, the following restrictions can be lifted;

1. Increasing the size of outdoor social gatherings

- A maximum of 10 households are allowed to meet outdoors, as long as there is adequate space for physical distancing (2 metres) between people from different households.
- Outdoor activities either on the land (going to bush camps, fishing, hunting, harvesting, etc.) or in/around the community (play grounds, walking trails, beaches) are all permitted, given we restrict the number of households present to a maximum of 10.
- It is important to continue avoiding direct contact between members of different households (shaking hands, hugs, etc.), as well as the sharing of food, utensils, cups, etc.
- If the gathering involves music, it is recommended to avoid singing in gatherings, since singing can increase the spread of droplets from people's mouths. If shared instruments are used (e.g. drums), it is recommended to only have people from the same house sharing the instrument.



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2. Resuming small scale indoor social gatherings

- Indoor social gatherings are more at risk than outdoor ones, because droplets spread more in indoor settings due to the ventilation and shared surfaces.
- Indoor gatherings are now limited to a maximum of 5 households; this includes church services, workshops and support groups
- The indoor space needs to be well ventilated (open windows), as well as big enough to allow adequate physical distancing between people from different households
- It is important to continue avoiding direct contact (shaking hands, hugs, etc.), as well as the sharing of food, utensils, etc.
- If the gathering involves music, it is recommended to avoid singing in gatherings, since singing can increase the spread of droplets from people's mouths. If shared instruments are used (e.g. drums), it is recommended to only have people from the same house sharing the instrument.

3. Resuming all sports and recreational activities

- Indoor sports facilities are now allowed to reopen, given they respect the indoor social gathering restrictions above; this includes gyms, swimming pools, arenas, etc.
- Team sports (either outdoors or indoors) are also allowed to reopen, again given they respect the social gathering restrictions listed above.

4. Reopening all activities aimed at children

- All activities targeting children and youth are now permitted to resume, including summer camps and school activities
 - Daycares should continue increasing their capacity for receiving an increasing number of children, according to how quickly it can adapt to the measures required;
 - Most centres should aim for a maximum of 75% of their usual capacity during phase 3
 - Daycares, summer camps and school activities should keep a registry of which children and caregivers are present each day
- Limits on the number of children present should respect the household limits mentioned above for indoor and outdoor settings
 - In outdoors, groups of children younger than 12 years old are now allowed to play with one another without strictly physical distancing. When games can allow some physical distancing, it is encouraged, even if only 1 metre distance.
 - These groups should however remain small (less than 10) and have the same children over time (avoiding transferring children between groups as much as possible).
 - Outdoor activities, rather than indoors, are encouraged whenever possible, due to increased ventilation and space, which contributes to reduce risk of transmission.
- Children and youth of 12 and over should as much as possible continue to observe physical distancing of 2 metres with people who are not living in their house.

