



Status of Pandemic

Worldwide COVID-19 continues to spread. Many jurisdictions struggle to contain the virus and others are having troubles with flare-ups as they try and deconfine. This is very concerning as the world braces for a 2nd wave of COVID-19 which is already starting in some parts of the world. This means that these regions will never know relief or have break from COVID-19 since the pandemic began.

In Quebec things are improving but there remain cities and urban centers such as Montreal which continue to have too many cases per day.

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.

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

- 803 regular tests have been administered
- 782 returned negative
- 11 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:

- 980 screening tests
- 972 returned negative
- 8 awaiting results

Eeyou Istchee Deconfinement Plan

The people of Eeyou Istchee have been incredibly resilient during these trying times for the entire world. The cooperation and the respect of physical distancing and precautionary measures has allowed the Cree Nation to protect our Health care capacity and protect community members from COVID-19. Most importantly it allows us to confidently move into **Phase 4 of the deconfinement plan**, which involves:

- Resuming activities like weddings, graduations, etc. subject to the gathering size restrictions
- Increasing size of indoor gatherings (50 people max.)
- Increasing size of outdoor gatherings (150 people max.)

It is our respect for physical distancing of 2 metres and respecting other precautionary measures that allowed us to reach Phase 4, and it will be our continued respect for these measures that will allow us to stay in Phase 4 for as long as possible for the benefit of all community members.

The Public Health team will continue to provide support to communities and organizations in deciding which services or activities to resume and how to do it safely. Organizations may send their request to:

18tcr.phcovidteam@ssss.gouv.qc.ca or
covidrisk@cngov.ca

If you feel like you may need someone to talk to during these challenging times, please contact the Cree Health Board's **Psychosocial Health Line: 1-833-632-4357**. The Cree Health Board would also like to inform people that specialists with a traditional approach to healing are also accessible through the same number.



Travelling

Neighboring regions to Eeyou Istchee continue to do well with no significant outbreaks since mid-July. In fact, most regions in Quebec have dropped to levels which represent a lower risk, unfortunately the same cannot be said for cities like Montreal or Ottawa.

For the purposes of providing travel advisories the following regions in Quebec will **NOT** require self-isolation:

- Region 1 – Lower St-Lawrence
- Region 2 – Saguenay-Lake-St-John
- Region 3 – Quebec City
- Region 4 – Mauricie and Center Quebec
- Region 5 – Eastern Townships
- Region 7 – Outaouais (Includes Gatineau)
- Region 8 – Abitibi
- Region 9 – North Shore
- Region 10 – Northern Quebec
- Region 11 – Gaspé and Magdalen Islands
- Region 12 – Chaudière-Appalaches (Beauce)
- Region 17 – Nunavik
- Region 18 – Cree Communities

For the purposes of providing travel advisories the following regions **within** Quebec **will** require self-isolation:

- Region 6 – Montreal
- Region 13 – Laval
- Region 14 – Lanaudière
- Region 15 – Laurentians
- Region 16 – Montérégie



Travelling

After evaluation of the **Areas Representing a Risk** those individuals who have in the last 14 days travelled:

- **anywhere outside Quebec**
- **within Quebec to:**
 - Region 6 – Montreal
 - Region 13 – Laval
 - Region 14 – Lanaudière
 - Region 15 – Laurentians
 - Region 16 – Montérégie
- **to any mine site:**
 - Workers coming from the Windfall Mining Exploration Site by Osisko Mining Inc with the appropriate documentation will NOT be required to self-isolate;
- **any forestry camp;**
- **any Hydro-Quebec site;**

will be required to self-isolate for 14 days under the Local Mandatory Self-Isolation Laws.

It is extremely important for people to understand that until there is a vaccine there will always be a risk associated with travelling. The farther you get from your house, your community, your region, the greater the risk is of contracting COVID-19. It is imperative that people remain cautious, no one can say that travelling to any other area is safe, all that we can try to determine is how much riskier it is.

Further, Cree travellers should exercise caution beyond what is permitted in other jurisdictions. For example, movie theaters, bars and sit-down restaurants are open in other jurisdictions and have been linked to a considerable increase in risk of outbreaks. Cree travellers are therefore recommended to avoid all sit-down restaurants, movie theaters or bars when visiting in other jurisdictions.



Cree Nation Leadership COVID-19 Briefing Public Statement August 18, 2020

Testing

It is important to understand the limitations of the COVID-19 testing technology currently available. The current tests are most valid when the test result is positive, meaning that someone is infected with COVID-19. That is because the test is very specific, and false positive results are not very common. Unfortunately, even the best technology available is not very sensitive, which means that false negative results can be possible. This means up to a third of people who have no symptoms and obtain a negative test results could still be infected with COVID-19. The Cree Board of Health and Social Services will be working hard to increase our testing and screening capacity over the coming weeks.

Education

A virtual public information session will be held today at 3 PM to share the back to school plans and protocols from the three education sectors. All are welcome to tune in via TEAMS Live: <https://bit.ly/CSBVirtualInformationSession> or listen in on JBCCS. Local virtual sessions will also be held for all the communities on Monday, August 24, and Tuesday, August 25.

The respect and compliance of the health and safety measures in the communities throughout the pandemic has allowed the Cree School Board to plan for the reopening of schools, allowing the students to enter the school year in a safer way, have access to our services and programs, and help alleviate anxiety. Thank you to Public Health for their important collaboration in developing a plan for best practices to keep students and staff safe.

Congratulations to all the 2019-2020 high school graduates! 243 students have graduated from Secondary 5 with an additional 70 students who completed summer school successfully. Thank you to local leadership, parents, and guardians who have supported the students during these extraordinary times.

Reliable Sources

People are advised to continue exercising caution on where they get their information in relation to COVID-19 and to keep in mind that the reliable sources of information remain:

- eeyouistcheecovid19.org/
- cngov.ca/covid-19/
- creehealth.org
- eeyoueducation.ca
- <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/> (The Government of Quebec is currently transitioning between reporting systems to increase contact tracing capacity, unfortunately this transition is generating minor errors in the numbers for some regions which eventually get corrected.)
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>