



Status of Pandemic

Worldwide COVID-19 cases continue to rise. Many jurisdictions in the South struggle as cases approach levels as high or higher than the records set in the Spring with the first wave. Quebec and Ontario continue to struggle to bring case numbers down, while the Northern jurisdictions in both provinces continue to do well keeping COVID-19 out.

The Cree Nation and the people of Eeyou Istchee made incredible sacrifices in the adoption of local mandatory self-isolation laws over the summer and although they were very challenging to implement they have provided an incredible tool to protect the most vulnerable members of our communities. The commitment of our people to each other will ensure that life can be as normal as possible during these very difficult times.

Testing in Eeyou Istchee

14 cases with 13 recovered, regular testing for COVID-19 in Eeyou Istchee is currently at:

- 1,298 regular tests have been administered
- 1,283 returned negative
- 1 waiting for results

The Cree Health Board continues to make efforts to increase screening capacity 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:

- 1,611 screening tests
- 1,604 returned negative
- 7 awaiting results

Travelling

The situation of our neighbouring regions has remained relatively stable in recent weeks despite the arrival of the second wave.

Despite constant unfounded rumours, Region 8 – Abitibi continues to do exceptionally well, quickly contact tracing and isolating sporadic cases as they appear. If the Public Health administration in the region continues to demonstrate this capacity, there is no reason to anticipate the reclassification of the risk status for this region.

Region 2 – Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean continues to struggle having triple-digit numbers of COVID-19 in the last week. The Government of Quebec has placed an information checkpoint on Route 167, north of La Doré to warn people of the risk associated with the Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean Region or the regions further South. The checkpoints are to provide information at this time and not necessarily to control or restrict traffic although unnecessary travel to these regions is not recommended.

Northern Ontario continues to do very well like Northern Quebec and Abitibi. However, the administrative region of Sudbury is being monitored very closely since 9 cases were recorded. Should there be evidence of uncontrolled community transmission the status of the region will have to be changed. Travellers going to the Sudbury region are warned to exercise caution and go beyond the local precautionary restrictions when possible.



Travelling

Confirmation has also been received that contact tracing in regard to the recent outbreak of cases in Radisson is nearly complete and as reported earlier, thus far no residents of Region 10 have been identified as contracting COVID-19, on October 30th, 2020 it will be 14 days since a case from Radisson had been identified and the risk status of Radisson can be revised.

It is important to note that in the last 4 weeks there have been over 20 cases recorded at Hydro-Quebec sites in Eeyou Istchee and that caution needs to be exercised when visiting a Hydro-Quebec site.

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

- anywhere outside Quebec, except for the Ontario regions of Sudbury, Porcupine and Timiskaming, which includes the municipalities of Sudbury, Timmins, Moosonee and North Bay;
- within Quebec to:
 - > Region 1 – Lower St-Lawrence
 - > Region 2 – Saguenay Lac St-Jean
 - > Region 3 – Quebec Capital
 - > Region 4 – Mauricie and Centre du Québec
 - > Region 5 – Estrie
 - > Region 6 – Montreal
 - > Region 7 – Outaouais (Gatineau)
 - > Region 9 – North Shore
 - > Region 11 – Gaspé and Magdalen Islands
 - > Region 12 – Chaudière-Appalaches
 - > Region 13 – Laval
 - > Region 14 – Lanaudière
 - > Region 15 – Laurentians
 - > Region 16 – Montérégie
- any Hydro-Quebec site;
 - > Including the locality of Radisson
- to any mine site, please note:
 - > Workers coming from the Windfall Mining Exploration Site of Osisko Mining Inc with the appropriate documentation will NOT be required to self-isolate;
 - > Workers coming from the Renard Mine Site of Stornoway, with the appropriate documentation will NOT be required to self-isolate;
 - > Workers coming from the Éléonore Mine Site of Newmont, with the appropriate documentation will NOT be required to self-isolate;
- any forestry camp, please note:
 - > Workers coming from the Forestry Camp at km 105 on the James Bay Highway with the appropriate documentation will NOT be required to self-isolate effective immediately;

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



Travelling

Therefore, people coming from Regions 8, 10 (except Radisson), 17 and 18 in Quebec and the regions Sudbury, Porcupine, Timiskaming and North Bay in Ontario DO NOT need to self-isolate 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.

Managing Health Services

In the communities, services continue to be adapted to provide safe medical services and the Cree Health Board is making efforts to introduce more medical specialists into the communities. It will be much safer for Eeyou Istchee to have the critical health specialists come into the communities rather than high numbers of patients travelling to the South. The Specialists are respecting strict screening protocols, supervision and precautionary measures that includes the administration of multiple tests.

It is important to keep in mind that for the last seven months, the COVID-19 cases in Eeyou Istchee did not come from the medical professionals that come to our communities. It is therefore safe to go to the clinic and meet with specialists in our communities.

The regular flu season is beginning in Eeyou Istchee which is of great concern and requires that everyone do what they can to avoid burdening the health system unnecessarily. The symptoms of the flu are very similar to those of COVID-19 and the worry is that the normal flu might cause anxiety and stress as people might think it is COVID-19 at first. It will be very important that as many people as possible get the flu vaccine this year to limit the number of cases that we have. Orders have been placed with the Ministry of Health so that our communities get access on a priority basis to the vaccines for the flu this year.

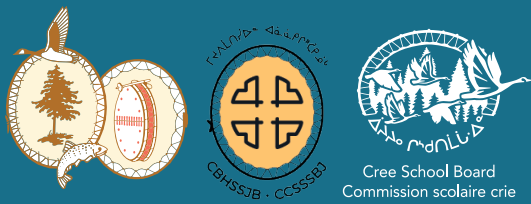
Eeyou Istchee Deconfinement Plan

The incredible sacrifice and discipline demonstrated by the Cree Nation over the summer in the development, implementation and compliance with precautionary measures including our local Mandatory Self-Isolation Laws allows us to remain in Phase 4 of the Deconfinement Plan while other jurisdictions have to move into re-confinement:

- No masks for grade 4 and below unless the student or parents wish to wear a mask;
- Grade 5 and above masks are required in common areas but can be removed once seated.

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.

- Activities like weddings, graduations, etc. subject to the gathering size restrictions
- Indoor gatherings (50 people max.)
- Outdoor gatherings (150 people max.)



Eeyou Istchee Deconfinement Plan

A special advisory has been developed to ensure that the children of Eeyou Istchee have the safest Halloween possible this year. Special recommendations are made to children and to the homes that wish to distribute candy, recommending certain measures in handling prepackaged candy and the distribution outside the house to ensure the safest environment possible for the children. Many alternative activities to Halloween parties are also provided in the special advisory: [Guide for Celebrating a Safe Halloween https://bit.ly/2Hwg4JT](https://bit.ly/2Hwg4JT). 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.

Finally, the Cree Health Board continues to work on increasing its testing capacity with the hope to develop a protocol which could see a reduced self-isolation period of seven (7) days, for Cree School Board students returning home for the Christmas holiday. Hopefully the protocol can be available for announcement on November 17th, 2020.

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. Any request for advice regarding the Deconfinement Plan or request for advice on what activities and how they can be carried out during a particular phase of the Deconfinement Plan can continue to be sent 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.

Education

Parents are reminded of the importance of the daily health check online for students: www.eeyoueducation.ca. It is an important tool in ensuring that the schools can remain open and continue giving quality instruction and educational experiences for the children of Eeyou Istchee. The staff and teachers also carry out a daily health check.

The Cree School Board is also making very preparation to ensure that should the need arise to move instruction to online learning: Teachers are getting training to be able to deliver courses online, the administration is ensuring the equipment need such as laptops will be available and that the necessary Information Technology support is also ready.

It is unlikely that orientation trips will be able to be organized this year for potential post-secondary students so virtual orientation trips are being planned. A new school calendar is also being developed based on 2 terms instead of 3 terms to ensure greater flexibility for assessing and monitoring the progress of students. The change in the calendar will not affect the content of the curriculum.

The Cree School Board currently has 389 registered post-secondary students with 112 studying online from the communities. The Post-Secondary office is developing a wellbeing plan for those students who are studying in urban centres to ensure that they have the support they need.