

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19): Bulletin to First Nations in Alberta: Aug 7, 2020

Office of the Senior Medical Officer of Health

Please email questions about COVID-19 to: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca

We continue to see COVID-19 cases being linked to social gatherings, and/or non-essential off-reserve travel, with most cases identified in those aged 20-29. As of July 31, 2020, confirmed cases in First Nations on-reserve in Canada represented one quarter of the rate of cases in the general Canadian population, with the highest rate of active cases in First Nations in Alberta. We are all working hard to flatten the curve, and are feeling the fatigue of this pandemic. This is the time to continue to be vigilant throughout each day; staying home when sick, washing our hands, social distancing, wearing a mask, and limiting non-essential travel to keep everyone safe.

Status Update

Number of cases reported *, as of Aug 7, 2020:

**numbers are changing rapidly and may change after this bulletin is released*

Alberta: There are **1,107 active cases** of COVID-19 in Alberta.

	Alberta (Alberta Health)	Canada (Public Health Agency of Canada)
Confirmed Cases	11,296	118,561
Deaths	205	8,966
Recovered	9,984	103,106

First Nations living on reserve in Alberta:

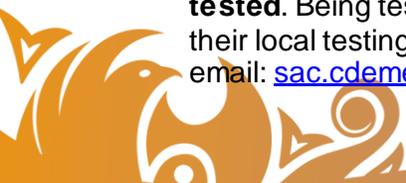
Location (By Zone)	Confirmed Cases	Active Cases	In Hospital	In ICU	Deaths	Recovered
Calgary Zone	52	2	1	-	-	50
South Zone	49	2	-	-	1	47
Central Zone	3	-	-	-	-	3
North Zone	55	6	1	-	-	49
TOTAL	159	10	1	0	1	149

First Nations living on and off reserve (Alberta): There are **382** confirmed cases of COVID-19 and **5** deaths in First Nations living on and off reserve in Alberta; **139** in Calgary Zone; **55** in Edmonton Zone; **79** in South Zone; **97** in North Zone; **10** in Central zone and **2** unknown.

Further Information: Aggregate data on COVID-19 First Nations cases in Alberta is available at: <http://www.afnigc.ca/main/index.php?id=home> and <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-alberta-data.aspx>

Testing in Alberta – Update

- As of Aug 7, 2020, **32,483** First Nation individuals living in Alberta have been tested.
- Testing continues to be available to any person with or without symptoms who wants to be tested.** Being tested will not put personal health information at risk. Communities desiring to expand their local testing capacity are encouraged to reach out to FNIHB-AB through local health staff or email: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca



Alberta's Relaunch Strategy- Update

- Alberta continues to move forward in stage two of the provincial relaunch strategy.
- Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health continues to study public health evidence as it evolves and update public health measures based on the most up to date medical evidence.
- **Edmonton and Calgary** have passed a temporary bylaw **mandating mask/face covering use** for all indoor public spaces and public transportation as of August 1, 2020. Other jurisdictions may also require mask/face covering use in their towns/cities. Please check with specific municipalities/towns to verify the most up to date public health measures in effect.
- Alberta has announced that **students will return** to learning in classrooms for the 2020-21 school year with near-normal daily operations and public health measures in place. As part of school re-entry, school health measures will now include **mandatory masks for Grade 4-12 students, and all staff**. For more information: <https://www.alberta.ca/k-to-12-school-re-entry-2020-21-school-year.aspx>
- While provincial school re-entry plans for the 2020-2021 guide approaches of First Nations in Alberta, ISC-AB continues to **work with Nations** and regional education representatives to support the planning and implementation of **school re-entry models reflective** of each Nations' needs. Regular updates on this support will continue to be provided in the coming weeks.
- As **First Nation** communities and leadership plan for **general relaunch**, at their determined pace, ISC-AB Medical Officers of Health (MOHs) and Environmental Public Health Officers (EPhOs) continue to be available to provide public health support.
- Alberta's [Relaunch Status Map](#) identifies the different **levels of risk** and information about outbreaks and local health measures based on the rate of COVID-19 active cases in each area. Note: Communities smaller than 10,000 such as most First Nations reserves are included in the surrounding municipal district.
- All regions in Alberta should **continue to follow** Alberta's public health measures and guidelines, regardless of relaunch status.
- More information on the phases of the Alberta's relaunch and key public health measures can be found at [Alberta's relaunch strategy](#), [Alberta's Safely Staged COVID-19 Relaunch](#), and [Alberta Biz Connect](#).

What the Government of Canada and ISC/FNIHB-AB Are Doing

- The Government of Canada is aggressively [pursuing COVID-19 vaccines](#), treatments and supplies to protect Canadians and has entered into two agreements with two pharmaceutical companies to secure millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccine candidates. An independent task force has been set up to advise the Government of Canada on options for **Canada's choice** of vaccine.
- The Government of Canada has launched a national [COVID-19 Tracing App and Self-Assessment Tool](#), as well as a new [COVID-19 Mobile Alert App](#).
- The Government of Canada has announced a new [COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream](#), with over \$3 billion of available existing funding to provide added flexibility to provinces and territories for short-term projects, including: retrofits, repairs and upgrades for Indigenous buildings. For more information email: infc.covid-19resiliencestream-voletresponseau covid-19.infc@canada.ca
- Indigenous Services Canada has recently updated its [Accessing additional public health support for First Nations and Inuit communities during COVID-19](#), including **eligible funding to support public health perimeter security**. Additional information on this funding and submissions can be viewed on the July 14, 2020 [Telehealth Session](#) or by emailing: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca
- The next Alberta COVID-19 First Nations Telehealth session will be held **August 13, 2020**. Previous telehealth sessions are recorded and are available at: <https://fntn.ca/>.

Mental Health and Wellness- Update

- Alberta's [Mental Health and Addiction COVID-19 Community Funding Grant](#) 2nd Call for Proposals **closes August 21, 2020**, providing up to \$10 million for community initiatives aimed at improving

coping skills and supporting social connection/healing activities that build community mental wellness and resilience. First Nations/Indigenous groups are encouraged to apply.

- The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) has a variety of [COVID-19 Mental Health Resources](#) to support organizations and individuals during this time, including:
 - [Managing Stress, Anxiety and Substance Use During Covid-19: A Resource for Healthcare Providers](#)
 - [The Working Mind COVID-19 Self Care & Resilience Guide](#)
- Alberta Health Services operates a **Drug Alert System** for health professionals, providing up to date alerts on drug activity based on each health zone. For more information or to register for your area please contact harm.reduction@ahs.ca
- We continue to be concerned with an increase in opioid related overdoses, including deaths which may have been worsened by this crisis. Resources are available to support those affected.
 - Naloxone is a safe and effective intervention that saves lives:
 - **Province wide injectable program** – Clients are able to access the Take Home Naloxone injection kits at any registered site, including Health Centres, Treatment Centres, medical offices, and pharmacies through Alberta Health Services' Community Based Naloxone (CBN) Program. Information about registration can be found at: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hrs/if-hrs-cbn-program-distribution-site-manual.pdf>
 - **Narcan® nasal spray** – In Alberta, Narcan® is not covered by the province; however, it is covered through Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB). Only pharmacies are able to bill NIHB for this product for individual clients, therefore clients are only able to access it through a pharmacy. No prescription is required.
 - The **AHS Harm Reduction Services Team** has developed printable handouts that may be useful to provide to clients: <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-harm-reduction-handouts.pdf>
- Please see a list of other available resources at the end of this document.

Additional Updates

- Alberta is providing an [additional \\$48 million](#) to continue supporting those dealing with **homelessness** during the pandemic. Funding will support shelters/organizations responding to the ongoing impacts of the pandemic on those experiencing homelessness in Alberta.
- Alberta's Medical Officer of Health has developed videos to provide awareness and information on [Non-medical mask use](#). Additional information can be found: <https://www.alberta.ca/masks.aspx>
- The frequency of this bulletin has moved to bi-weekly. As a result, you will receive the next bulletin on **Friday, August 21, 2020**.

First Nations Community/Organization COVID-19 Response Spotlight



The **Blood Tribe** Department of Health will be presenting on their efforts to support their community during the pandemic at the next [COVID-19 Telehealth Series](#) on **August 13, 2020**. This work has included a message of hope and encouragement through a [Blood Tribe PSA Video](#) encouraging everyone to stay safe and healthy. **If you are interested in highlighting** the work of your Nation or organization please contact VCHelp@fntn.ca or sac.cdemergenciesaburgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca

Additional information

If you have general questions about COVID-19 or require current information, please refer to the following websites which are trusted information sources and are being regularly maintained and updated. **Should you have questions about COVID-19, please do not hesitate to email: sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca**

OneHealth - <https://www.onehealth.ca/ab/ABCovid-19>

InfoPoint- By the First Nations Health Managers Association, site is designed for First Nations health managers in Canada to access credible sources of information and ask questions related to COVID-19. To access this service, call the toll-free number at **1-855-446-2719**, or email InfoPoint@fnhma.ca

Alberta Health

- [Coronavirus info for Albertans](https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx) <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>
- [COVID-19 Data for Alberta](https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-alberta-data.aspx) <https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-alberta-data.aspx>

Alberta Health Services

- [novel coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx) <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>
- https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17101.aspx?fbclid=IwAR1hzie9aLgDLr0K7Qi80mb9ozNby5dK6VZO3CFhhKgLrALUp06_wGmSxUc

Public Health Agency of Canada

- [2019 novel coronavirus: Outbreak update](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html) <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

Indigenous Services Canada COVID-19 Updates available in several Indigenous languages

- <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1581964230816/1581964277298>
- <https://indigenous.link/indigenous-services-canada/>

For helpful advice on handling stressful situations and ways to talk to children please visit

- [Mental health and coping with COVID-19](#) (CDC)
- [Talking with children about COVID-19](#) (CDC)
- [Help in Tough Times](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx) (AHS) <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx>

Mental health and coping resources are available for individuals who are struggling or need a little extra support.

- The **Alberta Health Services - Indigenous Health Cultural Support Line** provides afterhours support Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 4-8PM. Call toll free at **1-855-735-6766**
- The Mental Health Help Line [1-877-303-2642](tel:1-877-303-2642) is available 24/7 to provide advice and referrals to community supports near you.
- Hope for Wellness Help Line [1-855-242-3310](tel:1-855-242-3310), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Kids and teens can call the Kids Help Phone: [1-800-668-6868](tel:1-800-668-6868).
- Text COVID19HOPE to [393939](tel:393939) to subscribe to a free service supporting mental health and wellness in a time of stress and isolation.
- Family Violence Resources: <https://www.alberta.ca/family-violence-prevention-resources.aspx>
- **Text4Hope-Addiction Support** is designed to help Albertans dealing with psychological issues related to addiction. Text "Open2Change" to [393939](tel:393939) to subscribe.

Anyone with specific questions or concerns about their health is encouraged to call Health Link at 811 for health advice.