

COVID-19 GN Update

April 30, 2020

Premier's update:

Good morning. Today, I am confirming Nunavut's first confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Pond Inlet.

Dr. Patterson will speak to the very thorough, very prepared rapid response to COVID-19 in Nunavut, but I first want to remind Nunavummiut of something very important:

No one wants this virus. No one brought the virus to Nunavut on purpose. No one deserves shame or blame at this time.

The whole world is experiencing this uncertainty and fear. We are not alone. Nunavut is no exception to this global pandemic.

Now is the time for patience, kindness and staying home. We will get through this. We will beat COVID-19 in Nunavut.

Chief Public Health Officer update

As you have seen and heard, today we have announced that a case of COVID-19 has been detected within Pond Inlet. Since the onset of the pandemic, we knew that no combination of preventative measures can absolutely guarantee the prevention of COVID-19. We anticipated that sooner or later the virus would be detected in the territory. Just as we have poured extensive effort into our prevention plan, so too have we developed a comprehensive response plan to minimize, to the greatest possible extent, the impact that COVID-19 has on Nunavut.

We have been in contact with hamlet authorities and have initiated our Rapid Response Plan. A Rapid Response Team has already been deployed to Pond Inlet and is scheduled to arrive early this afternoon. That team will immediately initiate containment measures, begin contact tracing, and monitor the health and well-being of persons on home isolation orders. The Pond Inlet Health Centre is well-staffed and prepared, and health centre operations will continue.

For the latest COVID-19 information and GN Departments updates in all languages: https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus; https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus; https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus; https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus; https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus; https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus; https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus;





All passenger travel in and out of Pond Inlet has ceased. This includes any movement in or out of the community by land travel. This travel ban is a necessary containment measure to minimize the risk of COVID-19 spreading to multiple communities at once.

Until we have determined the potential spread of the virus within the community, all nonessential offices and services will be closed. There is to be no social gatherings within dwellings, and all residents of Pond Inlet are asked to continue to maintain social distancing and good hygiene.

For residents of Pond Inlet, we recognize that this news may be frightening. However, the Government of Nunavut would like to assure everyone that although travel is restricted, you are not cut off from help and support. Critical services will be maintained, and plans are in place to ensure that access to services such as heat, power, water, sewer, and communications will not be interrupted. Our primary focus now is to detect and contain the virus to prevent further transmission within the community and to other communities.

Anyone who has reason to believe that they have been exposed to the virus is advised to call the COVID-19 hotline at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. or 6 p.m. or call your community health centre. Please, do not go to the health centre in person unless you are instructed to by a health official.

To all Nunavummiut, know that the preventative measures that we have all been taking are more important now than ever. Everyone needs to practise social distancing, stay home whenever possible, and avoid contact with those who are not a member of your household. Together, our efforts can slow the spread of COVID-19.

Finally, I remind everyone of the importance of kindness. Now is not the time for blame, or shame. It is the time for compassion, empathy, and support of your fellow Nunavummiut.

The Government of Nunavut thanks all Nunavummiut for their efforts to date. We will continue to exhaust all efforts to contain the virus, and minimize its impact on Pond Inlet, and on all the territory. Only together can we all protect our territory from the threat of COVID-19.

As part of the Government of Nunavut's (GN) effort to protect Nunavummiut against the risk of COVID-19, GN Departments are implementing the following:

Department of Health Services

Residents of Pond Inlet must call their health centre first. All regular appointments at the Pond Inlet Health Centre have been cancelled. Only emergency services are available.

COVID-19 Hotline and self-assessment tool

Anyone who has reason to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 is advised to call the COVID hotline at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., or call their community health centre right away, and immediately isolate at home for 14 days.

Nunavummiut can also use the self-assessment tool available at www.gov.nu.ca

COMMUNITY TRAVEL AND GATHERINGS RESTRICTION ORDER

POND INLET

All travel to and from Pond Inlet is banned except:

- People with a letter from the CPHO
- Medevac patients
- Flight crews
- Nunavut Inuit exercising their hunting rights as set out in Article 5 may leave and return to Pond Inlet but **not** travel to any other community
- People travelling on a flight which must land in Pond Inlet due to weather or emergency

Medevac crews must restrict movements to the airport and the health centre and must wear personal protective equipment.

All businesses operating in Pond Inlet must close except for:

- Grocery stores
- Fuel and motor vehicle stations
- Post office
- Restaurants open for take out service

All social gatherings shall be restricted to five persons or fewer.

No social gatherings in dwellings.

The order can be consulted at:

https://gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus

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Department of Community and Government Services

Critical services will be maintained in Pond Inlet, and plans are in place to ensure that access to services such as heat, power, water, sewer, and communications will not be interrupted.

Community and Government Services (CGS), along with the municipality, has a plan in place for a water intake/pumping solution to ensure the community has ongoing access to water

The temporary pumping system will include:

- A pump set up on the shore of the reservoir,
- Suction hose put through a drilled hole in the ice,
- A discharge hose to supply water into the back of the water truck,
- Manual chlorination into the back of the truck, and,
- The pump will be set up in a temporary porta-tank to provide containment for fuel refilling.

This solution can be managed by municipality staff. CGS is actively working on a permanent solution to be implemented later this summer.

Department of Education Services

Schools in Pond Inlet are closed to the community, including school staff, until further notice.

The physical distribution of student learning packages in Pond Inlet has been suspended until further notice.

All Department of Education staff, including school staff, are to work from home if possible.

These measures are to ensure the health and safety of Pond Inlet students, families, and staff.

The Department of Education will provide support to other Government of Nunavut departments as needed.

Department of Family Services

INUK | ENG | IKW | FRE

All Family Services programs and services are being conducted via phone – all critical services (such as emergency services for children, youth, women, homeless, and adults with disabilities are available 24/7) remain in place. Contact 867-899-1886, 24/7.

Department of Human Resources

Under the Government of Nunavut's (GN) work-from-home model implemented on March 20, GN employees in Pond Inlet continue to be supported to work from home whenever possible.

The GN Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) by Homewood Health offers a wide range of confidential services to employees and their families. Many of these confidential services are relevant in supporting employees and their families as a result of the questions and possible anxiety that has arisen from the coronavirus (COVID-19). Employees and their families can call 1-800-663-1142.

The Department of Human Resources would like to remind employees that if they have a reason to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 to call the COVID hotline at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., or call their community health centre right away, and immediately isolate at home for 14 days.

Employees must inform their managers if they are in self-isolation.

Department of Economic Development and Transportation Services

Community Operations Office in Pond Inlet remains closed. For inquiries please write to CEDO@pondinlet.ca

Department of Environment Services

The department has suspended the purchasing of pelts due to the confirmed case of COVID-19 in Pond Inlet. The Department of Environment will continue to purchase pelts in other communities.

Nunavut Housing Corporation

The local housing office in Pond Inlet will continue to provide emergency services only. Tenants can call 1-867-899-1418; 1 867-899-8910 to call if they have an emergency. The local housing office in Pond Inlet is closed.

Nunavummiut's health is our shared responsibility! Remember: wash your hands and surfaces, practice social distancing, listen to the advice of health officials, and stay home if you're sick.

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