News Release

For Immediate Release

Nunavut moves to territory-wide COVID-19 restrictions

Iqaluit, Nunavut (November 16, 2020) – Beginning Wednesday, November 18, Nunavut will enter a mandatory, territory-wide restriction period for two weeks, in an effort to limit the spread of COVID-19. All non-essential services, businesses and organizations will be required to close and wherever possible, switch to work from home. Effective immediately, masks are strongly recommended in public spaces, and when physical distancing cannot be maintained. Masks remain mandatory in the Kivalliq region, and Sanikiluaq.

“As we see more cases in our communities, it is vital we look at ways to break potential transmission of COVID-19 in the territory,” said Dr. Michael Patterson, Nunavut’s Chief Public Health Officer. “Limiting any potential exposure to the virus is our best possible defense in Nunavut. We will re-evaluate the effectiveness of these measures on December 2, to determine if they need to continue or are working the way we hope.”

The Government of Nunavut strongly advises against non-essential travel. All schools will close and move to remote learning. Childcare centres will be closed to all but essential workers. Outdoor gatherings over five people will no longer be permitted and indoor gatherings are restricted to five people in addition to household members.

All recreation facilities will be closed. All sporting activities and events are suspended. All restaurants become take-out only, and bars will be closed. Personal services, such has hairstylists and masseuses must close. All health centres and the Qikiqtani General Hospital are closed except for emergency services. Government of Nunavut services will be maintained with staff transitioning to work from home, where possible.

“Nunavummiut, this is our opportunity to re-set and plank the curve in our fight against COVID-19. We all need to work together to protect one another,” said Premier Joe Savikataaq. “It’s more important than ever that we do everything we can to help our communities. I know this will be hard, but we can do this. If we all do our part, we will be in a much better position in early December. Please don’t take chances. Stay home and stay safe.”

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. EST, or notify their community health centre right away, and immediately isolate at home for 14 days. Please do not go to the health centre in person.

For all the latest information and resources about COVID-19 in Nunavut, go to: https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus

An update will be provided at a press conference at 1 p.m. EST today, November 16.

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