

COVID-19 GN Update

November 9, 2020

Premier's update

Good morning. We now have two confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Sanikiluaq. There is no evidence of community transmission in these two cases – it is considered household transmission. The total number of persons followed to date is 3834. There are 634 persons currently being followed.

A rapid response team arrived in Sanikiluaq on Saturday to help the team on the ground, and ensure more resources are available to help with contact tracing and testing as necessary.

We have always said it would be when and not if COVID-19 arrived in Nunavut. Now that we are here, it's time to act and respond accordingly. We know the public health measures and now all Nunavummiut should be practicing them consistently.

We all have the responsibility to act as caring community members, and do what we can to keep one another safe.

Please wash your hands often. Please practice social and physical distancing - at the store, in your work places, at the post office, and wherever there are crowds. Please regularly wash frequently used surfaces. Always stay home if you feel sick.

Remember that your actions impact everyone's health during a pandemic.

Chief Public Health Officer update

Good morning. Over the weekend we confirmed a second positive case of COVID-19 in Sanikiluaq. The testing was done in Iqaluit, where our lab is now validated for confirmatory testing. The new positive is living in the same household with the first

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>



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positive case and there is no evidence of community transmission. The second individual is asymptomatic and doing well.

On Friday, we decided to deploy our Rapid Response Team to assist the staff on the ground in Sanikiluaq. One nurse and one logistician were dispatched to help with contact tracing. A third nurse was flown to the community today. The RRT is also being assisted remotely by virtual public health nurses who are contacting people by phone.

Contact tracing is ongoing and samples are being sent daily to Iqaluit for testing. To date, all high-risk contacts identified are in the community.

I realize that there is a lot of anxiety and uncertainty right now but the best thing we can do is work together. If public health nurses are calling, please answer the phone. Your information will be kept confidential. If you have symptoms, it is important you contact your health centre immediately. Cooperating with the health care workers will help us prevent the spread of the virus.

On Sunday, we were advised by Manitoba Public Health that a Nunavut resident at the medical travel isolation site in Winnipeg tested positive for COVID-19. It is unlikely the case in Winnipeg is related to the case in Sanikiluaq.

The individual is doing well and has been following the isolation procedures. Information points to the individual being exposed to the virus before entering isolation and we believe there is little risk of transmission to other hotel guests.

The individual is isolated and not allowed to leave their room at this time.

Finally, we have received reports of health care staff who have faced criticism and verbal abuse in some communities since the case of COVID-19 was announced. These men and women are coming from the south to provide essential services and play an important part in providing care across the territory. There are strict guidelines in place to ensure they follow public health measures.

We understand there is worry about people who do not isolate before coming to Nunavut, but there are situations that the harm of not bringing people up quickly could be significant. We do everything we can to ensure the risk of anyone entering the territory as a critical worker is low.

Thank you.

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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

Unless it is an emergency, we are asking that people in Sanikiluaq call the health centre first and get direction. Anyone with questions about COVID-19 are asked to call the hotline at 1-888-975-8601.

Total (All Health Isolation Locations)	
Traveler Type	Guests in Isolation as of Nov. 7
Medical	417
Public	245
Total	662

Traveller repatriation summary:

Departure Date	# of Travellers from health Isolation Sites
Nov. 7	0
Nov. 8	19
Nov. 9	78
Nov. 10	46
Nov. 11	59
Total	135

Critical Worker Requests

As of Nov. 9, there were 8480 requests, 3985 of which were critical worker requests.

Request Status	#	%
Approved (includes critical and non-critical)	5646	66.6%
Denied	279	3.3%
Pending	258	3.0%
Common Travel Area Approved	2297	27.1%
Total	8480	100%

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Department of Education Services

K-12 Schools

- According to Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer, Sanikiluaq will continue to be in **Stage 4: Community Transmission of COVID-19** until further notice.
- No other communities or schools are affected at this time.
- The department is preparing internet-ready laptops that will be deployed to students and staff at Paatsaali High School to support continued learning.
- At this time, the students and staff of Nuiyak Elementary School will not be receiving digital devices, as the department is currently waiting for a shipment of internet sticks suitable for iPads. When the department has received and prepared them, they will be sent to Sanikiluaq. Until this time, remote learning for the elementary school will be done through phone contact and learning packages.
- All Nunavut school staff, including those in Sanikiluaq, have completed their training on the Edsby online remote learning platform. The department is aiming to have Edsby accounts for Sanikiluaq staff set up by mid-week, and then teachers will invite their students to join Edsby.
- Safety protocols for the distribution of digital devices and learning packages will also be provided to schools.
- Sanikiluaq schools received additional cleaning supplies in October, and more PPE will be sent to Sanikiluaq to support the distribution of digital devices and learning packages.
- To see how the Department of Education is keeping students safe visit: gov.nu.ca/education.

Department of Community and Government Services

Requests to enter the territory for construction related projects or to travel within the territory for construction related projects can be emailed to CPHOconstructionrequests@gov.nu.ca

Construction workers who completed isolation to date: **2086**

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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