

COVID-19 Status

MARCH 31, 2020

In very sad news, Alberta has experienced five additional deaths today related to COVID-19, bringing Alberta's total to eight. Two deaths occurred in long-term care facilities or seniors' housing: a woman in her 70s in Calgary, and a man in his 80s in Edmonton. The three other deaths were of a woman in her 50s in Calgary, a man in his 80s in Edmonton and a man in his 30s in North Zone. We extend our deepest sympathies to the families and loved ones of all of these people.

We have confirmed 29 new cases of COVID-19 over the past 24 hours, bringing the provincial total to 690. Of the total cases, up to 65 are suspected to be through community transmission from an unknown source, 47 have been hospitalized and 17 have been in intensive care. The number of recovered cases is now at 94.

It is important to understand that while the number of confirmed cases in the last few days has decreased, we must not take this as an indication to relax our protocols. There are two specific reasons for the decrease in cases. First, we have stopped testing returning travellers, who must self-isolate for 14 days whether or not they are ill. If they develop symptoms during that time, they must extend their isolation for 10 days after their symptoms started or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer. Second, we have also had a decrease in the daily total tests in the lab over the past few days, which means we will naturally have fewer confirmed tests. Lab testing is now back to normal volumes.

Things You Need to Know

New Self-Isolation Rules

We must continue to take this extremely seriously. Today, a uniform health guideline has been put in place across Canada regarding [self-isolation](#): if you are quarantined because you recently came back from outside the country, or you are a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19, you must remain on your own property. You are only permitted to go outdoors on your deck, in your backyard or on a balcony. Under no circumstance should you leave your property during the 14 days of self-isolation.

This applies to everyone under mandatory-self isolation, including both people who are feeling well and those who have symptoms of COVID-19 including cough, fever, runny nose, sore throat or shortness of breath.

Distance at Work

Last week, we began screening healthcare workers as they come to work, as part of the stringent measures we have in place to reduce the spread in our facilities. However, if you are at work, even if you are currently symptom-free, we must continue to practice all [public health recommendations](#). This includes maintaining a safe physical distance from our co-workers, whenever possible. For instance, as we walk down hallways, leave enough space between you and others as you travel together or pass each other. Maintain your distance from those around you in lineups, on units, in seating areas and in elevators, as much as possible. Following these guidelines at work, at home and in our communities, will save lives.

We are standing together, six feet apart.

Additional Public Health Guidance for Grocery Stores

Today, AHS released additional [public health guidance to support supermarkets, grocery stores, and public markets](#), as they continue to keep staff and patrons safe.

These businesses play a critical role in the pandemic response, ensuring Albertans continue to have access to food, water and other essential goods to support extended periods of time at home. We appreciate the excellent service that these stores continue to offer in trying times.

Stores have been paying extraordinary attention to enhanced environmental cleaning, food protection, and social distancing, and this must continue to reduce risk of ongoing spread of COVID-19 in our communities. The additional guidance released today addresses common questions we've received from both public and store operators, and provides all guidance in one place.

The new guidance includes:

- Recommendations on safe food handling, cleaning and disinfection considerations as it relates to COVID-19
- Simple means of protecting staff and customers, while ensuring the safety of the food and necessary items are available

COVID-19 is spread mainly by coughing, sneezing or direct contact with someone who is sick with the virus, or with surfaces they have recently touched. Although food has not been identified as a likely source of COVID-19 transmission, it is imperative that the food supply remains safe, and that the virus isn't introduced onto food by coughing, sneezing, or through direct hand contact.

Our best defence is to limit our public activities and not to go out at all when sick with any symptoms. We thank our AHS public health inspectors who continue to inspect grocery and other food stores that remain in operation.

More Lab Testing through Spartan Bioscience Partnership

Alberta Health Services is partnering with a Canadian technology company with the goal to provide Albertans with faster, more convenient testing for COVID-19.

Spartan Bioscience is in the late stages of developing a COVID-19 test kit to be able to detect the virus using a platform that can be deployed beyond Edmonton and Calgary. If successful, this technology will allow AHS lab workers to test for suspected COVID-19 outside of our two centralized laboratories in Edmonton and Calgary.

Once approved by Health Canada and validated by AHS, this technology should provide additional, more expedient testing for COVID-19 in rural and remote communities, including Indigenous communities, by eliminating the need for lab samples to travel to the nearest lab. This will help guide appropriate care and isolation, speed up our contact tracing, and reduce the risk of further spread.

AHS has ordered 250 of the Spartan Bioscience units and 100,000 test kits, and hopes to begin deploying them shortly after Health Canada approval in a few weeks. Please read the full news release [here](#) and thank you to everyone at Alberta Precision Laboratory for their leadership in innovation.

Physical Distancing Posters:

Please find below links below, to the approved Physical Distancing poster, in two size options, for use within facilities:

- <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-physical-distancing-at-ahs-sites-letter-size.pdf>
- <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/ppih/if-ppih-covid-19-physical-distancing-at-ahs-sites-poster-size.pdf>

These are to replace all earlier versions developed and posted at any sites.

Financial Resources:

[SEE BELOW](#)

Response Indigenous Strategy Framework:

Attached below, is the strategic framework that we have been working on with the community.

[SEE BELOW](#)

Thank you and stay safe.

*****Please share this information as appropriate*****

*****For Alberta Health Services – Indigenous specific questions/concerns please email ahs.ecc.operations.ih@ahs.ca *****

*****For Indigenous Services Canada please**

email sac.cdemergenciesab-urgencesmtab.isc@canada.ca ***

Josipa Pavicic on behalf of Nadine McRee

Financial Assistance during COVID-19

**** THIS INFORMATION IS CURRENT AS OF MARCH 25, 2020. CRITERIA FOR THESE FINANCIAL SUPPORTS MAY CHANGE. PLEASE CONSULT WITH THE SERVICE WEBSITE FOR THE MOST CURRENT INFORMATION ****

Support for Individuals and Families

Provincial Emergency Isolation Support:

Alberta residents can receive a one-time payment from the Alberta government of \$1,146.

Eligibility:

You have no other source of compensation, such as workplace sick leave benefits or federal employment insurance benefits.

You have experienced total or significant loss of income and are not receiving compensation from any other source because you:

- have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- have been directed by health authorities to self-isolate
- are the sole caregiver of a dependent who is in self-isolation

How to apply:

Apply online at: <https://emergencyisolationsupport.alberta.ca/>

You will need a MyAlberta Digital ID (MADI) to complete the application. You can use a driver's license or an ID card number to verify your identity when creating an account.

If you need help with the application, you can call (403) 310-4455 for assistance.

Federal GST Credit:

The Government of Canada is proposing to provide a one-time special payment by May 2020 through the Goods and Services Tax credit (GSTC). The average boost will be \$400 for single individuals and \$600 for couples.

How to apply:

If you file your taxes for the 2019 tax year, you are automatically eligible to receive GST credits.

***Note:** *Canada Revenue Agency has deferred the filing due date for 2019 tax returns until June 1, 2020. However, it is recommended that you do not delay filing your return to ensure that your GST credit payments and Canada Child Benefit are properly determined.*

Federal Special Child Tax Benefit:

The Government of Canada is proposing to increase the maximum annual Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payment amounts, only for the 2019-20 benefit year, by \$300 per child.

How to apply:

If you have not applied to receive CCB payments, you can apply online through My Account (your personal CRA account): <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/e-services/e-services-individuals/account-individuals.html>

If you have any questions or need help with your application, you can call 1-800-387-1193.

Support for People Facing Unemployment/Unable to Work:

Federal Emergency Response Benefit:

We will provide a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months to:

- Workers who must stop working due to COVID19 and do not have access to paid leave or other income support.
- Workers who are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- Working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children that are sick or need additional care because of school and daycare closures.
- Workers who still have their employment but are not being paid because there is currently not sufficient work and their employer has asked them not to come to work.
- Wage earners and self-employed individuals, including contract workers, who would not otherwise be eligible for Employment Insurance.

The Canada Emergency Response Benefit will be accessible through a secure web portal starting in early April. Applicants will also be able to apply via an automated telephone line or via a toll-free number.

***** This benefit replaces the previously announced Emergency Care Benefit and the Emergency Support Benefit*****

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Federal Employment Insurance (EI) Regular Benefits:

If you were laid off or have reduced hours of work due to COVID-19, you can apply for EI regular benefits.

Eligibility:

- you were employed in insurable employment
- have been without work and without pay for at least seven consecutive days in the last 52 weeks
- have worked for the required number of insurable employment hours in the last 52 weeks or since the start of your last EI claim, whichever is shorter

How to apply:

You can apply online at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/apply.html> . *If you need assistance with your application or have any questions, you can call 1-800-206-7218.*

Improved Access to Employment Insurance (EI) Sickness Benefits:

If you are sick, quarantined or have been directed to self-isolate, the requirement to provide a medical certificate to access EI sickness benefits will be waived.

Eligibility:

- you're unable to work because you are sick, quarantined or have been directed to self-isolate
- your regular weekly earnings from work have decreased by more than 40% for at least one week
- you accumulated 600 insured hours of work in the 52 weeks before the start of your claim or since the start of your last claim, whichever is shorter

How to apply:

You can apply online at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness/apply.html> *If you need assistance with your application and have questions, you can call 1-833-381-2725 (dedicated EI phone number for COVID-19).*

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Support for Seniors:

Reduced Registered Retirement Income Funds Withdrawals:

Reducing the required minimum withdrawals from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) by 25% for 2020. Old Age Security (OAS) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits will come as usual.

More information about RRIF can be found at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/tax/individuals/topics/registered-retirement-income-fund-rrif.html>

Support to Businesses:

Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employer:

Providing eligible small employers with a temporary wage subsidy for a period of three months. The subsidy will be equal to 10% of remuneration paid during that period, up to a maximum subsidy of \$1,375 per employee and \$25,000 per employer.

Eligibility:

- are a non-profit organization, registered charity, or a Canadian-controlled private corporation (CCPC);
- have an existing business number and payroll program account with the CRA on March 18, 2020
- pay salary, wages, bonuses, or other remuneration to an employee

How to apply:

You must calculate your subsidy manually. Once you have calculated your subsidy, you can reduce your current remittance of federal, provincial, or territorial income tax that you send to the CRA by the amount of the subsidy

More information about this can be found on <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update/frequently-asked-questions-wage-subsidy-small-businesses.html#h1> or by searching for “Temporary Wage Subsidy for Employer” on <https://www.canada.ca/en.html>

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Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP):

The Government of Canada is providing \$10 billion credit to help Canadian businesses obtain financing. Financial institutions will work with the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) and Export Development Canada (EDC) to find solutions for business.

Eligibility:

Largely targeted for small to medium-sized businesses.

How to apply:

Businesses seeking support through BCAP should contact the financial institutions with whom they have a pre-existing relationship, so that the financial institutions may assess the client's financial request.

The financial institution will contact the BDC and EDC directly where appropriate. *If you need to contact them, they can be reached at: 1-877-232-2269 (BDC) or 1-800-229-0575 (EDC).*

Support for Students:

Deferring the Repayment of Student Loans:

Repayment of Canada and Alberta Student Loans has been temporarily paused from March 30, 2020 until September 30, 2020. Students will not need to apply for the repayment pause and interest will not accrue interest during this time. Students who are currently studying can continue to apply for Canada and Alberta Student Loans.

Other Supports for Albertans:

90-day Utility Deferral:

Albertans who are experiencing financial hardships can defer their electricity and natural gas bill payments from any service provider for the next 90 days and are ensured that no services will be cut off.

How to apply:

You must call your electricity or natural gas service provider directly.

- **Atco:** (403) 292-7500
- **Direct Energy:** 1-855-461-1926

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- **Enmax:** (403) 310-2010 or 1-877-571-7111
- **Just Energy:** 1-866-283-3108
- **Spot Power:** (403) 450-3458

Mortgage Deferral:

You can receive up to 6 months of deferral on mortgage payments, skip a payment, automobile loans, and credit cards. Terms and conditions vary for each bank.

How to apply:

You must call your bank directly to apply. General information can be found below:

- **TD:** <https://www.td.com/ca/en/personal-banking/covid-19/>
- **BMO:** <https://www.bmo.com/main/personal/bmo-branches-coronavirus-update/>
- **CIBC:** <https://www.cibc.com/en/personal-banking/advice-centre/covid-19.html>
- **National Bank:** <https://www.nbc.ca/personal/notice.html>
- **Scotiabank:** <https://www.scotiabank.com/ca/en/personal/scotia-support/latest-updates.html>
- **RBC:** <https://www.rbc.com/covid-19/>

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COVID-19 Response: Indigenous Community Strategy Framework

April 2, 2020

Four Stages of Emergency



Our Indigenous Community Strategy should be adaptable to each stage of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

We are here

Immediate Indigenous Community Needs



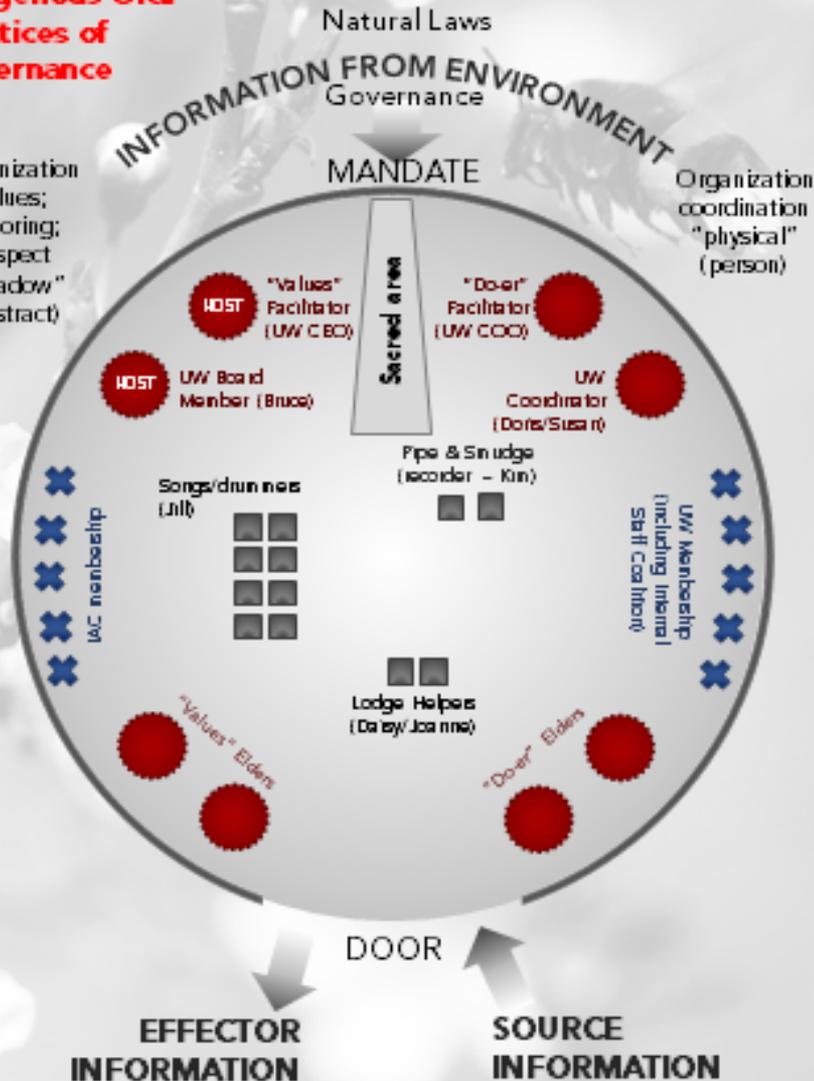
1. Basic needs pertaining to physical needs and safety
 - Food security, including baby food and diapers
 - Income – Elders’ loss of honorariums, laid off employees, etc.
 - Shelter (rent)
 - Medical supplies, prescriptions and assistance
 - Access to specific supplies to take preventative measures against illness
2. Mental health issues, coupled with intergenerational trauma and self-harming issues
3. Cultural and spiritual support
4. Social programming or help
5. Technology
6. Safety from domestic violence
7. Support to address needs of particularly vulnerable, isolated populations
 - Elders
 - Indigenous youth
 - Some Indigenous families hesitant to ask for help
 - On-reserve and rural Indigenous people
 - Homeless people
8. Support for systems such as agencies to meet increased demands

Indigenous Governance Model



Indigenous Oral Practices of Governance

Organization values; honoring; respect "shadow" (abstract)



Strategy Circles:

1. Initial/New data or information about the emergency.
2. Initial/New information about the wider context.
3. Initial/New partners at the table.
4. Initial/New information on what works to respond.
5. Initial/New information on financing/resources.
6. Changes to the action plan and budget.

Going from the Ends to the Means



- The **Results-Based Accountability Framework** starts with the ends and works backwards, step by step, to means.
- It is intended to **get from talk to action more quickly**.
- For communities, the ends are conditions for well-being for children, adults, family and the community.
- In the **Respond Phase** of the COVID-19 Emergency, the ends for the well-being of the Indigenous community we propose are:
 - *Basic Needs are Met*
 - *Mental Health and Spiritual Needs are Met*
- Different results will be defined for each stage of the emergency
- There are two layers of accountability: Population and Performance
 - In **population accountability**, a group of partners takes on the well-being of a population in a geographic area.
 - In **performance accountability**, a manager or group of managers takes responsibility for the performance of a program, agency or service system.
 - Taken together their actions form a strategy.

Result-Based Accountability



Population Accountability

Population Result: What are the quality of life conditions we want for the people who live in our community?

Experience: What would these conditions look like if we could see them?

Indicators: How can we measure these conditions?

Baseline: How are we doing on the most important of these measures? Why?

Partners: Who are the partners that have a role to play in doing better?

Solutions and Criteria: What works to do better, including no-cost or low-cost ideas? For whom?

Strategy and Action Plan: What do we propose to do?

Performance Accountability

Clients: Who are we serving?

Performance Measures: How do we know if our clients are better off?

Performance Measures: How do we know if we are delivering services well?

Baseline: How are we doing on the most important of these measures? Why?

Partners: Who are the partners that have a role to play in doing better?

Solutions and Criteria: What works to do better, including no-cost or low-cost ideas?

Strategy and Action Plan: What do we propose to do?

These questions are designed to be answered quickly and then repeated.