



Dene Tha' First Nation
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM
COVID-19

COVID-19 CURRENT SITUATION UPDATE

October 13, 2020

Dene Tha' First Nation Chief and Council and the Emergency Management Team (EMT) are continuing with ongoing efforts in response to COVID-19 and ensuring the DTFN members are receiving continued supports for COVID-19 testing, essential services, education on COVID-19, and the safe reopening of all services. We ask all our members and residents to continue helping us by practicing the Public Health Measures provided by Alberta Health Services, the risk of infection remains in our region and in our communities, so please remain alert and cautious when leaving the community; consider only traveling out for essential food and supplies. Alberta Public Health Measures continue in Alberta as there are “hot spots” areas of COVID-19 within the province. We encourage all members and residents to stay home as much as possible.

We are the continuing monitoring of COVID-19 cases within the Mackenzie County, within our communities and surrounding communities. Our Emergency Management Team are responding to any potential contacts and activating emergency plans as quickly as possible to mitigate the COVID-19 situation. The DTFN C&C and EMT will continue monitoring COVID-19, and should the situation change; a State of Local Emergency (S.O.L.E.) will be reinstated to implement safety measures again for our communities. The EMT will keep the Chief and Council apprised of the COVID-19 situation and cases and will provide recommendations to reinstate S.O.L.E. as required.

The Emergency Management Team will activate their emergency plans as part of mitigation even as a “Precautionary Measure”; this ensures that we are taking steps to stop the spread of COVID-19 to limit further spread with members and/or other communities. During such time we ask for community support in understanding when this measure is taken and not to assume that there is a case or cases. The only way this can be determined is by COVID-19 testing. Our team will do what they can to avoid any spread or contact and contain an area for the safety of all members and residents. We encourage everyone not to make judgement, criticize or demean the person or family when these safety measures are in place; these

measures are done to protect everyone even if the situation outcome is a negative COVID-19 case. ***Please be kind and understanding of one another while we get through these difficult times.*** Help prevent the spread - Download and use the [ABTraceTogether contact tracing app](#) when out in public. This voluntary app helps let you know if you've been exposed to COVID-19 – or if you've exposed others – while protecting your privacy.

There is an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Administrator on call from September 6, 2020 to October 31, 2020 that members can call if you should have questions, concerns, or require more information about COVID-19 updates. The number to call is **1-780-285-0084** regarding COVID-19

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES

- **Local Radio Station Continues**– Daily announcements in Dene and English are available Monday to Friday 1:00 – 5:00 PM. Please tune in daily for updates from Chief and Council, Emergency Management Team, Health News and Updates, Educational Sessions
- **Thanksgiving during COVID-19**
 - Albertans are encouraged to keep their Thanksgiving gatherings as small as possible, and keep it to your family unit.
- **Halloween during COVID-19**
 - A new [website and tip sheet](#) will help Albertans of all ages enjoy a safe and healthy Halloween. (Refer to attachments)
 - Printable posters will let people know if you are handing out treats.
 - Online [guidance](#) is available to help Albertans enjoy a safe and healthy holiday while limiting the spread of COVID-19. (Refer to attachments)
- **Disposable mask and/or masks.** We encourage everyone to use disposable masks or a homemade mask when you are entering a business or office in the DTFN or in our neighbouring communities or towns, where you cannot safely keep your 6 feet distance. A reminder that some businesses have mandatory masking in place before you are allowed entry; please respect these businesses and service areas. Masking up is one of the ways that you are caring for and protecting one another....***When I wear a mask, I am protecting YOU, when you wear a mask you are protecting ME.***
- **#DTFN STRONG** – Continue practicing all safety measures provided by Alberta Health Services. Together we will get through this. As a homeowner you have the right to refuse visitors to your home and this is encouraged. The EMT has many useful resources available such as up to date COVID-19 statistics and information, posters, pamphlets, health kits (masks, gloves, sanitizers), education material. Please contact the on-call

administrator number, DEM or Deputy DEMs for COVID-19 or any EMT member, or call your local offices.

- **Mass Gatherings Restriction** (remains in place) – Due to the increasing cases within Alberta and cases remaining within the Mackenzie County, neighbouring First Nation communities and in DTFN. The EMT are advising that all large group gatherings in Dene Tha’ communities be stopped, to help us prevent or stop the spread of the virus. Mass gatherings increase the risk to members and residents. Listed below are still not recommended until such time it is safe to do so:
 - Hand games
 - Indoor Bingos
 - Poker games
 - Tea dances
- **Intercommunity Travel Restriction** (remains in place) - It is strongly advised that there be **NO Intercommunity travel** until it can be determined safe; this practice will help us to reduce the risk of transmission and spread of the virus.
- **COVID- 19 ZONES OR HOTSPOTS** - Anyone who has been in an AHS “watch area” zone or “hot spots” for COVID-19 are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19 by reaching out to the on-call number or to your community Health Services to arrange for testing. For more information please visit the website at: www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans
- **If you are not feeling well, feeling ill, or feeling sick** - you are encouraged to get tested and isolate at home until you have received test results or symptoms resolve which ever is longer. Remember to stay home if you are starting to feel sick or have gotten sick. Do not go to work, school, or go out in public.
- **If you have any of these other symptoms - Stay home and minimize your contact with others until your symptoms resolve:**
 - Chills, painful swallowing, stuffy nose, headache, muscle or joint aches, feeling unwell, fatigue or severe exhaustion, gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite), loss of sense of smell or taste, conjunctivitis, commonly known as pink eye
- **Who can be tested?**
 - Alberta is shifting to **targeted COVID-19 testing** to reduce testing wait times, speed up access to results and support Albertans during influenza season and the winter months.
 - Asymptomatic testing for those with no known exposure will continue to be offered for priority groups that are most at risk of spreading COVID-19 to vulnerable or at risk populations.
 - residents and staff in congregate settings,

- healthcare workers,
- school teachers and staff,
- Albertans experiencing homelessness
- Priority testing is available to: any person exhibiting any symptom of COVID-19; all close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases; all workers and/or residents at specific outbreak sites.
- Albertans who don't have symptoms or exposure to COVID-19 should speak with their health-care provider if they have concerns about their health.
- **How to get tested**
 - Book a test - If you have symptoms or known exposure to COVID-19, you **must** stay home and book your test online with AHS assessment tool or call Health Link 811, or by contacting your local Health Centre in Chateh, Meander River or Bushe River.
- **COVID-19 Symptoms** – You should get tested if you have any COVID-19 symptoms. If you have any of these symptoms you are **legally required to isolate for at least 10 days** from the start of your symptoms or until they resolve, whichever is longer:
 - Fever
 - Cough (new cough or worsening chronic cough)
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (new or worsening)
 - Runny nose
 - Sore throat
- **DTFN ADMINISTRATION Updates**
 - Programming during COVID-19 pandemic required adjusting and remains in effect until further notice. Since March of 2020 when the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. DTFN implemented restrictions on travel support in attempts to lessen the transition of COVID-19 into our communities, this includes assisting members to travel into the community from infected areas. As a remote vulnerable First Nation community we will continue to do our best to protect all members from the pandemic. Membership are encouraged to follow all health guidelines such as mask wearing, social distancing, proper hand washing/sanitizing and recommendations to practise essential travel only. Please note: members cannot be stopped from traveling in and out of the community at their own expense however, until COVID-19 is no longer a threat to society travel assistance **will not be issued** by the Nation, thank you for your understanding
 - All essential services are continuing for its nation members/residents. If you require essential services, please contact your local band office in each community.

- **DTFN OFFICE CLOSURES**

- All offices remain closed to the public until further notice. More information will be posted and shared once it has been determined it is safe to reopen the nation offices.
- Mail Slots at each local band offices are being installed to address the offices being closed and members/staff that need to drop off mail for employees.

- **EDUCATION Updates**

- The school year has begun SAFELY in our communities for K-12.
- Headstart in Chateh and Meander have resumed.
- Attending students are using their PPE, and those who are refusing to follow protocol are either being taken home or their parents are contacted. There is no room for thinking this pandemic is a joke. Safety must be maintained for all students and staff.
- Procedures in all schools are being fine-tuned to make school as safe as possible.
- All staff at Dene Thá education staff continue to be COVID-tested every 2 weeks to help ensure they are providing a safe environment for their students.
- Learn-at-home programs are currently in operation in all schools.
- Please inform your child's school if they have any medical conditions or allergies.
- Please keep your child home if they are sick.
- Please offer suggestions to help the schools through this new territory!
- **Please go through the checklist each morning with your child before sending them to school.**

- **EOC ADMINISTRATOR ON-CALL**

- **September 6, 2020 to October 31, 2020** the number to call with any questions and/or concerns or information pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic is **1-780-285-0084**
- **Restrictions during COVID-19 Pandemic** - Any agency or company that are reporting for work in any of our communities are still required to report to the on-call number. They are required to have clearance of COVID-19 meeting AHS screening criteria by their agency, or company. Written clearance on official letterhead of the agency or company is required prior to entry into any of the DTFN communities and forwarded to the DEM for COVID-19.
- **Restrictions during COVID-19 Pandemic - NON-MEMBERS or NON-RESIDENTS** are not allowed entry due to COVID-19 restrictions, for additional information and/or questions please call the on-call number **1-780-285-0084**

STAYING HEALTHY AND SAFE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Core personal public health measures is the “new normal” to maximize our ability as a society to control the spread of the virus in the long-term. The following core personal public health practices are fundamental, and should continue throughout all steps of the COVID-19:

- **Staying informed, being prepared, and following public health advice**
- **Practicing good hygiene and other infection prevention and control measures (frequent hand washing, avoid touching face, respiratory etiquette - coughing into your arm, or tissue that is thrown out immediately after, disinfect frequently touched surfaces). Clean hands with hand sanitizer when on the go.**
- **Maintaining physical distancing as much as possible when outside of the home (i.e. from non-household members). Keep at least two metres or 6 feet distance.**
- **Increasing environmental cleaning of one’s personal environment**
- **Staying at home and away from others if feeling ill or symptomatic (i.e. not going to school/work and following public health advice)**
- **Staying at home as much as possible if at high risk of severe illness**
- **Wearing a medical mask if available, otherwise a non-medical mask (NMM) or face covering if experiencing symptoms and required to be in close contact with others (i.e. going to access medical care)**
- **Considering the use of mask in situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained**
- **Reducing personal non-essential travel. Limit the number of times you need to leave the house for errands.**

Thank you,

Dene Tha’ First Nation – Chief & Council and Emergency Management Team

Don’t get it, Don’t bring it, Don’t spread it
Stay Safe & Stay Healthy
#DTFN STRONG