

December 14, 2020

Dear Chiefs:

We would like to acknowledge your ongoing dedication to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of your Nations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize that COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact in many of your Nations, and would like to thank you for your continued leadership, and support as we work to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, together.

We are writing to share information on the new COVID-19 measures and restrictions in place across Alberta. We recognize that you are in the best position to determine how these precautions should be implemented within your Nation, and what additional precautions may be necessary to ensure the health and safety of your members and residents.

On December 8, Premier Kenney announced province-wide measures to protect the health system and stop the spread of COVID-19. The current situation is critical, and we must take more mandatory actions across the province – now – or we will not stop the rapid rise in cases adequately or quickly enough.

Please note that the restrictions previously announced on November 24, including measures pertaining to K-12 schools, capacity limits for weddings and funerals, and specific business closures (including the closure of banquet halls, conference centres, trade shows, concert venues, markets and community centres, children's play places, and indoor playgrounds) continue to remain unchanged and in effect. However, additional measures and restrictions were necessary. The new measures are intended to further limit the spread of COVID-19, by reducing indoor and outdoor social interactions, with additional restraints for businesses, personal services, and new capacity limits for retail businesses, and places of worship.

The new COVID-19 measures are in effect for **at least the next four weeks**, at which time they will be re-assessed. A detailed list is available at <https://www.alberta.ca/enhanced-public-health-measures.aspx>, for your reference.

Province-wide mandatory restrictions in place **effective immediately** include the following:

- **Masking:** The mandatory indoor public space masking requirement will be extended province-wide. Public spaces include locations where a business or entity operates and is applicable to employees, visitors or the general public. The requirement also applies to all indoor workplaces and facilities outside the home. Farm operations are excluded except if interacting with members of the public.

- **Social Gatherings:** Indoor and outdoor social gatherings, public or private, are not permitted. Indoor and outdoor social close contact must be limited to those in the same household.
  - This measure does not apply to service visits from caregivers, health or child care providers, or co-parenting arrangements.
  - Work and support group meetings are not social gatherings, but attendance should be limited and public health measures followed.
  - Out-of-town visitors, regardless of where they are coming from, cannot stay in other people's home while these restrictions are in place.
- **Weddings and Funerals:** As previously announced on November 24, wedding and funeral services must be limited to 10 people, with receptions not permitted.

Province-wide measures effective midnight, December 13 include:

- **Places of Worship and Religious Services:** Although in-person services may continue, capacity limits have been further reduced from 25 percent to 15 percent of the occupancy set under the Alberta Fire Code; on-line services are encouraged. Mandatory masks and physical distancing between households is required.
  - Drive-in services where individuals do not leave their vehicles and adhere to guidance will be permissible.
- **Retail Businesses:** While retail business may remain open, capacity limits have been reduced from 25 percent to 15 percent of the occupancy set under the Alberta Fire Code. These businesses include shopping malls, retail, grocery stores, pharmacies, clothing stores, hardware, and automotive.
  - For businesses where 15% of their Fire Code is less than five customers, those small businesses are allowed up to five customers at a time, with physical distancing and mandatory masks.
- **Restaurants, bars, pubs and lounges:** Will be closed to in-person service. Only take out, curbside pickup, and delivery services are permitted.
- **Business closures:** Casinos, bingo halls, gaming and racing entertainment centres, horse tracks, raceways, bowling alleys, pool halls, legions, and private clubs will be closed. Businesses remaining closed for in-person service include banquet halls, conference centres, trade shows, concert venues, markets and community centres, children's play places, and indoor playgrounds.
- **Recreational facilities:** Fitness centres, recreation centres, pools, spas, gyms, studios, day and overnight camps, indoor rinks and arenas will be closed. Outdoor recreation is permitted, but facilities with indoor spaces except for washrooms will be closed.
- **Entertainments businesses and entities:** Libraries, science centres, interpretive centres, museums, galleries, amusement parks, and water parks will be closed.
- **Hotels:** may remain open but must follow restrictions – no spas, pools or in-person dining. Room services only.
- **Personal and wellness services:** Services including hair salons, nail salons, massage, tattoos, and piercing, will be closed.

- Regulated health services: Services including physiotherapy or acupuncture, social or protective services, shelters for vulnerable persons, emergency services, childcare, not-for-profit community kitchens, soup kitchens, and religious kitchens will remain open for in-person attendance.
- Work from Home: Mandatory work from home measures will be implemented on midnight December 13, unless employers determine the work requires a physical presence for operational effectiveness.

This year has been hard on everyone, with hardship and sacrifice across many areas of our lives, but it is up to us all to work together to stop the spread so we can return to the things we care about. We recognize that these new restrictions will impact holiday plans, however we encourage all Albertans to create new experiences and memories at home.

Once again, we would like to acknowledge the exceptional actions that have been taken by First Nation leaders and staff during this pandemic and are appreciative of your ongoing support.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yours sincerely,



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