



Yukon First Nation Leaders' Call to Action on COVID-19

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday March 27, 2020

The Yukon Territory has now confirmed 3 cases of COVID-19. Yukon First Nation Leaders are urging all citizens, and Yukoners alike, to adhere and implement the public health measures set out by the Yukon Chief Medical Officer. The time to act is now and together we must all work to minimize the spread of COVID-19 in the Yukon Territory.

YFN Leaders have been undertaking collaborative efforts to monitor the pandemic as events unfold. Regular contact with government officials remains in place to ensure accurate and the most recent information is being provided to communities and citizens. Leaders also acknowledge the tremendous efforts made by health officials, and those working in essential services, who are helping to keep the Yukon safe.

The seriousness of the situation needs to be met with an equal response. Yukon First Nation Leaders agree that with many rural and remote communities and all with minimal health resources, that the Yukon Chief Medical Officer's COVID-19 health measures must be acted upon and respected.

Leaders are calling on all Citizens and Yukoners to:

- Refrain from Elder care or childcare if you have a fever, shortness of breath, cough or flu-like symptoms;
- Maintain a 2-meter distance from others including public areas and outside;
- Social distancing is important, now is *not* the time for visiting in-person;
- Panic purchasing and overharvesting can be harmful to others;
- Road and air travel must be limited to essential travel *only*;

Yukon First Nation Citizens who require information and additional resources are directed to contact their home community offices if they require supports and to take advantage of the Government of Yukon's resources, such as online health tools, how to access additional benefits if needed.



Background:

Ta'an Kwäch'än Chief Kristina Kane:

“Keeping up to date on these measures and cooperating is critical at this time in order to keep our Elders and our Citizens safe during this pandemic. Yukon First Nation Leadership meets daily with Yukon Health Officials. We are working together at all levels of leadership, but we need cooperation from all our Citizens to protect our communities.”

Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Kluane Adamek:

“This is a time where we must come together and take the direction of health officials seriously. There is a role and responsibility for everyone – youth, Elders, leadership and our communities – and we must all continue to support our most vulnerable. We are urging all Yukon First Nation Citizens to follow these steps to ensure the health of all communities. Let’s work together to keep people safe.”

Council of Yukon First Nations Grand Chief Peter Johnston:

“Foremost, I urge Yukon First Nations to cooperate with the recommendations of Yukon’s Chief Medical Officer of Health. While we are physically distancing, let us be reminded of our traditional and cultural practices that have given us strength and resilience.”

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Resources:

Government of Yukon: yukon.ca/covid-19

Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

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