



## Yellowknives Dene First Nation

P.O. Box 2514  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P8

### Dettah

Telephone: (867) 873-4307  
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### Ndilo

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# INFORMATION RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 2020

Though there are no cases in the Northwest Territories, cases of COVID-19 continue to rise across the rest of Canada. Public health authorities are urging Canadians to strengthen social distancing measures and to avoid going out for non-essential reasons. YKDFN and its employees have a role to play in reducing the spread of infection.

YKDFN is committed to following the advice from the GNWT Chief Public Health Officer on the importance of implementing social distancing measures where possible to assist in mitigating and containing the possible risk to the health of our employees and members.

**Effective March 19 the majority of YKDFN employees will be asked to work from home until April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, except for essential services.**

We are asking members and employees for patience as we work through all the logistics related to implementing Emergency Continuity Plan.

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation Chief and Council and Senior Management Team met on March 18th, 2020 to discuss the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), and its potential impacts on the communities of Dettah and Ndilo and the YKDFN membership.

Chief and Council of YKDFN have a responsibility to take measures to ensure the health and safety of their community members. It has been proven that preventative measures can slow the outbreak of a pandemic.

The YKDFN has now activated the Emergency Continuity Plan and the following directives are immediately in effect for YKDFN membership:

- **Travel Outside of Northwest Territories (In Canada):** As per the travel advisory announced from the Government of Northwest Territories, individuals are to limit all travel outside the Territories and if one does, they're recommended to self-monitor and practice social distance for 14 days. If symptoms arise, they are to contact their healthcare provider at once (developing a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) and self-isolate at home.

- Travel Outside of Canada: As per the travel advisory announced from the Government of Canada, individuals returning to Canada from abroad are required to self-isolate for 14 days. If symptoms arise to contact their healthcare provider at once (developing a fever, cough, or difficulty breathing).
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation Travel: All- territory business travel for Chief & Council, staff, committee members are cancelled.
- Tourism activities are restricted in the community until further notice.
- All members are advised not to use common utensils.
- Community Wellness will coordinate with elders to source on the land medicine for the elders.
- Band Offices: Effective March 19, 2020, the YKDFN Band Offices will be closed and we will implement limited appointment access to membership until April 14, 2020. All Members must the office to arrange appointments.
- All efforts will be made to ensure that all YKDFN Staff experience minimal financial hardship during this period.
- All programs and services will be suspended except those identified as essential until April 14, 2020 and then will evaluated at that time.
- Departments and Employees who have been identified to be providing critical/ essential services will be required to report to work in person as normal.

Department	Contact	Telephone
Dettah Office	Marie Hardisty	867 873 4307
Ndilo Office	Tina Sangris	867 766-3496
CEO	Jason Snaggs	867 445 1222
Human Resources	Nora Taylor	867 873 4307
Finance	Juanita Sangris	867 873 4307
Public Works	Ryan Peters	867 445 0803
Dechita Naowo	Margaret Erasmus	867 688 7788
Dechita Naowo	Angus Charlo	867 765 8288
YKDFN Housing	Agatha Laboucan	867 920 4403
Community Wellness		867 920 2925
Community Wellness	Jennifer Drygeese	867 445 4520
Community Wellness	Melissa Sangris	867 445 8048
Community Wellness	Cindy Caisse	306 930 3276
Community Wellness	Theresa Lynn	867 767 8686

- Any employees who have not been deemed non-essential will be required to work from home if feasible and remain on standby in the event they are required by management.
- Those employees who have been asked to work from home but who need to visit their office for computer or equipment should work with their manager or supervisor to arrange a time when it is appropriate to do so, as long as they are not self-isolating.

- Schools: Effective today {March 16} the Government of Northwest Territories recommended the closure of all schools until April 14, 2020 at the earliest. Chief and Council supports the extended closure of the Ndilo and Dettah Schools, including Aboriginal Head Start.
- Community Wellness will be going door-to-door handing out pamphlets and information on coronavirus and the precaution to be observed by all members including social distancing.
- The CEO and Community Wellness is working with the GNWT Health and Social Services to secure a Nurse Practitioner for Medical Support for both communities.
- Daycare: Currently {March 19} the Government of Northwest Territories Chief Public Health Officer (CHPO) is not recommending the closure of territorial daycares. Staff and children are required to follow healthy respiratory and hygiene practices. Children and staff returning from overseas must self-isolate for 14 days. Those returning from within Canada should self-monitor for symptoms. All sick children and staff should be sent home even if they have not travelled. Updates will be provided if the situation changes.
- The GNWT Department of Education , Culture and Employment has provided information to day home and daycare operators on behalf of the Chief Public Health Officer and will continue to do so as updates are provided.
- Community Gatherings: YKDFN supports the advisory of the Government of Northwest Territories to suspend all community gatherings. All community gatherings and meetings are postponed until further notice pending the status of the Health and Social Services virus advisory.
- GNWT Emergency Operations Centre Activated: The Government of Northwest Territories NWT emergency operations centre, led by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, was activated {March 13, 2020}. That center is designed to coordinate the territory's response between all communities and departments.
- In collaboration with Public Works, Community Wellness will be arranging a grocery shopping shuttle for Elders in collaboration with the Co-op and Independent stores.
- Public Works will work with Community Wellness Department for the distribution of the community hunt meat to community members
- Dechita Naowo will work with local members on setting nets to provide fish for Elders.
- According to Canada's Health Minister Patty Hajdu, Canadians should be gathering food and medication in their homes. It is recommended to have a week or two's supply of food, water, as well as medical supplies and any prescription drugs. However, individuals are advised against stockpiling or hoarding supplies.
- As part of it's COVID-19 response, Northwestel has submitted an urgent application to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) for temporary relief on residential Internet usage to facilitate increased telework in the north. Northwestel has proposed waiving any overage charges for customers exceeding their Internet usage caps during March and April. YKDFN will keep the community apprised of developments.

- Emergency support/grant funding is being discussed with the Federal Government for Elders, Young Mothers, Low Income Families, persons at risks or with disabilities. This the funding will provide support for:
  - a. Food and essential groceries and cleaning supplies,
  - b. Increased Sewage
  - c. Increased Water Supply
  - d. Garbage Pick Up
  - e. Medication Supply
  - f. Shuttle Services
  - g. Extra Funds for Salary and Overtime for Essential Services.
  - h. Public Health Education Communication Materials and resources
  - i. Family on the Land Activities funding
  - j. Protection equipment and resources for frontline employees

What should I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?


If you are experiencing milder symptoms such as fever, cough or flu-like, call: Yellowknife: 867-767-9120.

As you can appreciate, the next few of days are critical for the implementation of the Emergency Continuity Plan. This is an unprecedented situation and is being monitored very closely. We will continue to communicate information on an on-going basis.

For additional information please see the GNWT Health and Social Services website:

<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

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Chief Edward Sangris



Chief Ernest Betsina

cc

YKDFN Council  
All YKDFN Members  
All YKDFN Staff