



Yellowknives Dene First Nation

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INFORMATION RELEASE

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 14th, 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 Taylor	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>



Chief Edward Sangris



Chief Ernest Betsina

cc

YKDFN Council
All YKDFN Members
All YKDFN Staff

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Information for YKDFN Employees

The global situation is changing rapidly. The content of this communiqué is subject to change as the situation evolves. New or amended information will be distributed as necessary.

What is COVID-19?

Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.

The new coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is caused by a virus producing mild to severe respiratory infections. At this time, there are over 120 countries reporting confirmed cases of COVID-19 of which some are reporting community transmission. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic. It is important that we prepare for the likelihood that the virus will spread further.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Most people with COVID-19 have mild symptoms. Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure. Many people are presenting with flu-like symptoms such as, in order of frequency:

- fever;
- cough;
- shortness of breath;
- muscle aches; or
- fatigue.

Severe cases may have:

- difficulty breathing; and/or
- pneumonia;
- severe acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Individuals with fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

Risk of severe disease may be higher for:

- Older adults
- People with chronic disease (for example: diabetes, cancer, heart, renal, or chronic lung disease)
- Those with weakened immune systems

How does COVID-19 spread?

Human coronaviruses cause infections of the nose, throat and lungs. They are most spread from an infected person through:

- Respiratory droplets that spread when you cough or sneeze,
- Close, personal contact,
- Touching something with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands,
- In rare circumstances, they have found the virus in stool.
- A close contact is:
 - a person who provided care for the person with COVID-19, including family, or other caregivers, and healthcare workers who did not use protective equipment; or
 - a person who lived with or otherwise had close contact (within 2 meters) with the person with COVID-19 while they were sick; or
 - a person who had direct contact with bodily fluids of the sick person (e.g. was coughed or sneezed on).

What can I do to keep from getting sick?

We can reduce the spread of respiratory infections (this includes COVID-19), in our communities by practicing the following:

1. **STAY HOME** if you are sick
 - Wear a mask if you must go out especially if you are in a waiting room or in places with large crowds.
 - If you need to see your healthcare provider, ask for a mask when you get there
2. **Avoid close contact** with others if you are sick
3. **Turn and cover your nose/mouth** with a disposable tissue for every cough/sneeze
 - If a tissue is not available cough/sneeze into your elbow
4. **Throw used tissues in the garbage**
 - If there is no garbage, carry a small plastic bag to put used tissues in and throw out later
5. **Wash your hands** for at least 20 seconds after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
 - Use alcohol-based sanitizer if no soap is immediately available
6. **Clean/Disinfect any surfaces or objects** you or someone else might have touched while sick, daily. (i.e. doorknobs, taps, toilets, light switches, elevator buttons, railings, cell phones, etc.)
 - Avoid sharing food, cups, glasses, dishes and cutlery

What are the expectations of my employer in continuing to shake hands with co-workers, clients, or the public?

We advise practicing healthy respiratory practices. See:

<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/healthy-respiratory-practices.pdf>

YKDFN employees are encouraged to forgo greetings involving physical contact (shaking hands/hugging) with co-workers, clients, and the public. YKDFN employees are encouraged to greet people with an elbow bump, wave, or head nod.

What do I do if you become sick or think I may have been exposed to COVID-19 or another disease while traveling?

If you have been travelling and you are sick you should tell your health care provider. You should also tell your health care provider if you become ill after contact with someone who has travelled (particularly if that person has been ill). If you seek health care, wear a mask or ask for one when you get there.

Let your healthcare provider know:

- Your symptoms and when they started.
- Where you have been travelling or living.
- If you became sick while travelling or have become sick since returning home.
- If you have been in close contact with someone who is sick and was travelling; and
- If you have been in direct contact with animals or fluids (i.e. droppings, blood).

What do I do if either I or my family has recently travelled outside of Northwest Territories?

Employees returning from travel outside the NWT who have not visited Iran, Italy or Hubei Province, China should monitor themselves for symptoms like fever, cough, or difficulty breathing for 14 days after their return from travel. There is no self-isolation advisory for general international travel.

If you develop symptoms and have traveled outside NWT in the past 14 days, you are to inform your health care provider ahead of time so they can arrange a visit for testing for COVID-19. When you arrive at a health care facility, you will be asked to wear a mask so you can protect others. You should then stay home and self-isolate until you receive the results of the test. You should then follow the advice of your health care provider based on the results of the test.

Employees/families who visited Iran, Italy or Hubei Providence, China in the last 14 days are to self-isolate for 14 days since their last day in those regions, even if they are feeling well.

Self-isolation means staying home and not going to work, school, or social gatherings. If you or a family member develops fever, cough, or difficulty breathing during your self-isolate, call a health care provider ahead of time so they can arrange a visit.

What should you do if you have travel plans?

Stay up-to-date with the Government of Canada travel alerts. Take the appropriate preventive measures, such as:

- Washing your hands regularly.
- Avoid contact with animals (alive or dead).
- Avoid surfaces with animal droppings or secretions on them.
- Avoid contact with sick people, especially if they have fever, cough, or difficulty breathing; and
- Be aware of the local situation and follow local public health advice.

Should I stay home if someone in my family is sick or self-isolating?

You should try to avoid close contact with family members who are ill or self-isolating, as much as possible. If your young child, or an immediate family member requiring care, is ill or self-isolating, Special leave may be used for this purpose.

What type of leave will be available to me if I am symptom free but am to self-isolate?

Special leave. Where the Public Health Agency of Canada or the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer of the NWT advises self-isolation due to travel or possible exposure to COVID-19 and the employee is not ill, the employee will be able to access Special leave with pay.

Will I need a “fit-to-return” to work medical certificate upon the completion of self-isolation?

No. If you have been symptom free during the recommended self-isolation period, you will not be required to provide a “fit-to-return” to work medical certificate as that would unnecessarily burden our medical system and cause unnecessary risk to possible exposure. Public health officials, however, will follow those who are self-isolating and direct people as to when it’s safe to end self-isolation and return to work.

What type of leave will be available to me if I am sick with cold and flu symptoms, am experiencing cold and flu symptoms and am awaiting COVID-19 test results, or have been confirmed to have COVID-19?

Sick leave. Employees experiencing symptoms of cough, fever, or difficulty breathing, experiencing those symptoms and are awaiting test results, or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 will have access to sick leave with pay.

Will I need a “fit-to-return” to work medical certificate if I was experiencing cold and flu like symptoms, was tested, and received confirmation of a negative test result for COVID-19?

No. It is the expectation of the YKDFN that employees will follow advice and direction from their health care provider and will accurately communicate to their supervisor when they are provided advice that they may return to work.

Will I need a “fit-to-return” to work medical certificate before returning to work if I have tested positive for COVID-19, recovered, and now have tested negative?

No, if you have self-isolated and received two negative tests for COVID-19. It is the expectation of the YKDFN that employees will follow advice and direction from their health care providers and will accurately communicate this to their supervisor before returning to the workplace.

What if I do not have any Special or Sick leave credits left and have already been advanced the maximum amounts permitted under my collective agreement/handbook?

Adherence to public health advisories and recommendations is of paramount importance in minimizing the possibility of community transmission during this public health event. It is the YKDFN’s expectation that all employees will follow public health advisories and recommendations. To minimize any barriers in doing so, and on a without precedent basis, the YKDFN will advance additionally required Special and Sick leave with pay to employees beyond the limits set out in the collective agreements and handbooks, to those who must self-isolate, care for an immediate family member for reasons connected to COVID-19, who are experiencing cold and flu like symptoms, or who are diagnosed with COVID-19, or during the YKDFN Emergency Plan Activation.

Can my supervisor direct me to go home if they observe COVID-19 symptoms?

Yes. Managers and supervisors must ensure a safe work environment for all employees and will direct an employee to go home should they observe cold and flu like symptoms and will have access to Sick leave. Non-essential employees will also be asked to go home and or work from home during the YKDFN Emergency Plan Activation.

Can I refuse to stay home for the full recommended self-isolation period?

If you meet the criteria for self-isolation and come to work before the end of the recommended time period, your manager/supervisor will direct that you go home and only return to the workplace upon the completion of the recommended self-isolation period. We are asking for your support in order to protect your colleagues and the public at large.

Can I work from home during self-isolation or while caring for an immediate family member?

If you have Internet access and it is operationally feasible for you to work from home, yes you may be able to work from home with the permission of your Manager.

Will planned duty travel be cancelled or limited?

Effective immediately, all work-related travel to international and Canadian destinations outside the NWT will be suspended. All travel within the NWT is cancelled.

This is a precautionary measure to promote the health of our employees and help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 in the NWT. Employees are encouraged to participate in meetings or conferences via teleconferencing tools. E.g. Skype.

Will the YKDFN shut down offices if there is a COVID-19 outbreak in my community?

Yes, however, YKDFN's plan is to provide its essential programs and services as normally as possible during any outbreak e.g. water, sewage, garbage, etc.

During the Emergency Plan Activations employees must remain on call in order to take on additional work or responsibilities that you are trained for in your own department. In some cases, employees may be asked to do work they are trained for in another department.

Normal procedures for overtime and acting pay will apply if you are asked to do more work, do a higher paying job.

Will annual leave be canceled or restricted?

There are no plans to restrict annual leave. Managers always must make sure they consider coverage requirements when they get requests for annual leave, but there are no plans to cancel or restrict annual leave for individuals. As always, you can be called back to work if there is an operational requirement, but every effort will be made to avoid this.

Where can I get the latest information about COVID-19?

The Department of Health and Social Services is the best source for accurate and up-to-date information about COVID-19. Any questions about symptoms, how to reduce the spread, and what to do if you think you are sick or think you may have been exposed to COVID-19 can be answered by referring to information on the Health and Social Services website at <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/covid-19>.

The global situation is changing rapidly. The risk of acquiring COVID-19 in NWT remains low at present. For the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 see the [Government of Canada website](#). This is an evolving situation, and we will provide updates with new information as it becomes available.

How to sign into Outlook from outside office.

To sign into Outlook on the web using your work account in Office 365:

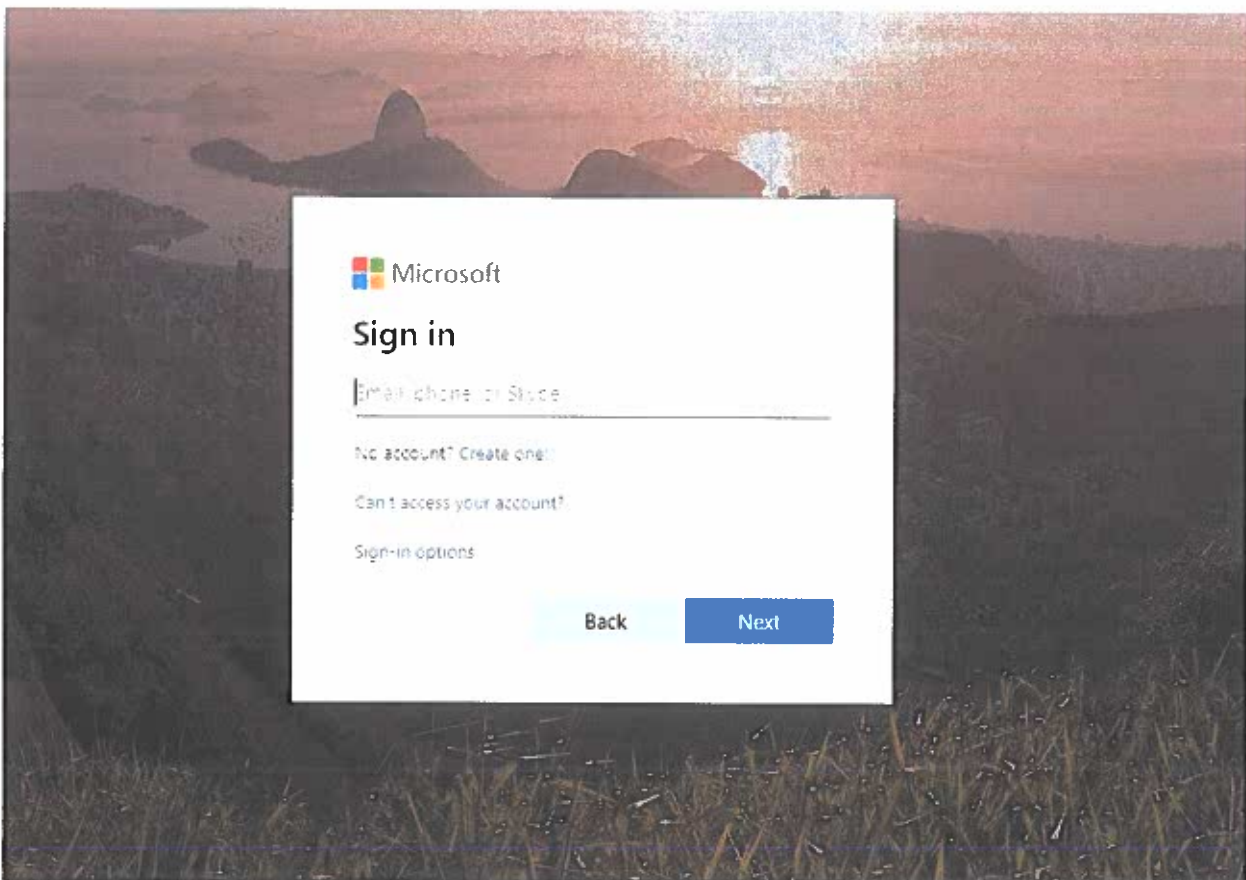
Go to the web browser (Firefox, Chrome, Internet explorer) and type

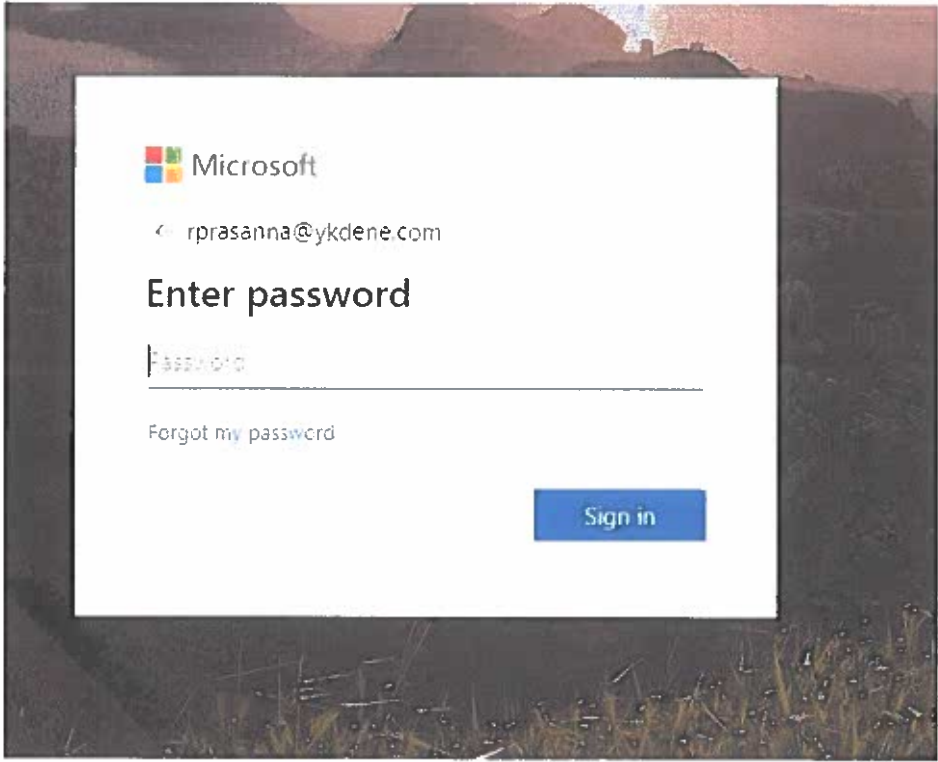
www.ykdene.com

once you login you will see a tab - Employee Portal click tab

after that click on YKDFN employee email – it will open a new window where you have to enter your email address and password.

If you have any issues with your password please contact Renuka Prasanna at 587 988 9772 or via email rprasanna@ykdene.com





1. Select **Sign in**.

Note: To sign into Office 365 using another account, select **Use another account** the next time you sign in.

2. Once you log in select **Outlook**.

Good afternoon

