



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) FNHA Public Health Response Community Situation Report March 24, 2020 Update

Note: Changes from the previous Community Situation Report are in red.

Purpose

The purpose of this information note is to provide a daily situational overview of the FNHA COVID-19 response activities that are being carried out by the Public Health Response Team and supporting executive leadership.

Background

On March 17, 2020, British Columbia's (BC) Provincial Health Officer (PHO) declared a public health emergency under the Public Health Act in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 18, 2020, BC's Public Safety Minister also declared a provincial state of emergency, in an effort to allow the government to support the PHO and Ministry of Health in their response. Please refer to Appendix "B" for details on the Provincial and Public Health Emergencies/Orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the powers granted under them. All provinces across the country that have declared public health emergencies.

As of the morning of March 24, 2020, there are 617 confirmed cases in BC, and a total of thirteen (13) deaths. Of these cases, 145 were confirmed in the last 48 hours (between the afternoon of March 22 and the morning of March 24). There are now outbreaks at eight (8) long term care centres. The regional breakdown of cases are as follows:

Vancouver Coastal:	330
Fraser:	194
Vancouver Island:	44
Interior:	41
Northern:	9

Of these cases, 173 patients have fully recovered (approximately 28% of total cases), as indicated by the resolution of symptoms, followed by two successive negative test results 24-hours apart. The backlog of tests has been worked through completely. There are approximately 3500 tests done every day, with a total of 30,000 tests done to date.

Funding Announced:

On March 11, 2020, the Government of Canada announced more than \$1 billion dollars for enhanced public health measures to ensure the health and safety of Canadians.

To support the immediate response to the outbreak, this funding includes \$100 million to support federal public health measures such as enhanced surveillance, increased testing at the National Microbiology Laboratory, and **ongoing support for preparedness in First Nations and Inuit communities.**

On March 18, 2020, it was announced that \$305 million would be available for Indigenous Community Support Fund.

Emergency/disaster supplement funding under the Income Assistance program is available to First Nations persons in BC affected by COVID-19 and an advance is being forwarded to allow First Nations to enact these provisions immediately. It is ISC's intention to mirror the provisions as that of the Province of BC who have

recently expanded eligibility to assist during this period. In order to assure a timely response to your needs, ISC has asked that First Nation identify to what additional resources that may be required over the next couple weeks if possible. For more information, call 1-888-440-4080 or e-mail aadnc.tsdboutien-bsdwsupport-bc.aandc@canada.ca.

For any ISC COVID-19-related questions and requests, please email: aadnc.isbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca, which will ensure that all requests are tracked and responded to promptly.

There is new funding to support women and children who are especially vulnerable during these troubling times. The Government of Canada has announced up to \$50 million to boost the capacity of women's shelters and sexual assault centres to manage or prevent a COVID-19 outbreak. This includes potential funding to facilities in First Nation communities and more information will be coming soon.

FNHA Funding:

1. FUNDING AND OTHER SUPPORTS FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE

On March 11, 2020, the Government of Canada announced more than \$1 billion dollars for enhanced public health measures to ensure the health and safety of Canadians. To support the immediate response to the outbreak, this funding includes \$100 million to support federal public health measures such as enhanced surveillance, increased testing at the National Microbiology Laboratory, and ongoing support for preparedness in First Nations and Inuit communities.

As such the FNHA will be supporting communities to identify their associated COVID-19 costs. The mechanism for funding is still being determined. FNHA will support First Nations to access resources as needed including through the following methods:

- Coordinate service delivery and supports on behalf of communities
- Purchasing activity to procure items needed for COVID-19 response as collectively we have purchasing power with medical equipment suppliers through the provincial process

This information and forms can be found at: <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-BC-First-Nations-Community-Guide-for-Additional-Supports-Needed.pdf>

2. HOW CAN BC FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

It is important for all communities to be prepared by updating their pandemic plans. Communities will be able access additional resources in order to:

- Respond to critical requirements to activate their pandemic plans including items such as:
 - E-health and connectivity requirements
 - Incremental funding required for continuity of service delivery funded through contribution
 - agreements
 - Reimbursement of costs incurred related to COVID-19 response
 - Other requests for COVID-19 related funding
- Support an effective allocation of the scarce public health and primary health care capacity to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Align with scientific evidence as determined by a medical officer of health.
- Be deployed in the short-term to address immediate needs.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for COVID-related primary health care activities, and possible transfer of individuals with respiratory symptoms can be requested from FNHA if they are not accessible through regular procurement channels, or provincial channels (please see Annex A for PPE request form and process). We recognize that each community's needs are different, and we will work with our system partners to ensure that the personal protective equipment needs are met, while facilitating fair and timely distribution of supplies across communities and the health system.

Recognizing the urgency of PPE needs it is important to note that PPE request forms may come in separately from requests for other expenses listed below.

Submit to: COVID19needs@fnha.ca

Communities should ensure that they track all expenses specific to their COVID-19 response. Please keep a list of planned or incurred expenses that include information related to:

- Cost (with receipt or invoice);
- Item required or purchased;
- Brief description of item and the essential function it has for your community to be able to operationalize your plan; to support your community in reducing the spread of COVID-19; and/or to respond to cases in your community.

See Annex B for a template to identify and/or track associated needs and costs planned or incurred by your community due to COVID-19.

Submit to: COVID19needs@fnha.ca

Eligible expenses will include:

- Community or service provider level infection prevention and control (soap, sanitizers, disinfectants, personal clinical supplies, community training, etc.);
- Medical Transportation: Travel (air, ground and water) / Meals and accommodations (note high-risk individuals eligible for private ground transportation, such as taxi, and private accommodations, such as hotel);
- Emergency Transportation - Additional escorts – Travel (air, ground and water) meals and accommodations (note high-risk individuals eligible for private ground transportation, such as taxi, and private accommodations, such as hotel);
- Health human resources surge capacity – primary care nurses and public health nurses needed to address outbreaks in communities, or other health providers such as paramedics and community workers;
- Mental health services to support communities, particularly when they are facing affected individuals;
- Adaptation of community space for surge capacity access to medical care or for self-isolation, quarantine and/or other related purposes;
- Storage costs of supplies; and
- Other types of expenses will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Note that other additional non-health related expenses may be covered through the Emergency Management and Preparedness Fund administered by Indigenous Services Canada. BC's Emergency Management and Preparedness coordinator can be contacted at:

Telephone: 604-209-9709

Email: aadnc.bcemu.aandc@canada.ca

FNHA Response:

- FNHA will maintain essential services to support First Nations communities during this pandemic.
- Supporting First Nations communities in refreshing their Pandemic Plans
- **Working with Federal and Provincial partners to obtain Personal Protective Equipment for health care staff and first responders in all communities.**
- Working with communities for on how to access supplies in relationship to COVID-19 such as personal protective equipment, and resources for medical transportation, isolation and quarantine.
- Maintaining communications and regular telephone updates with the Regional Health Authorities, Emergency Management of BC, Ministry of Health, First Nations Leadership Council, and Indigenous Services Canada. See Appendix "A"

- Providing First Nations communities with regular updates and new communications resources including podcasts or posters on COVID-19 prevention and hand washing.
- Specific site on FNHA Website <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>.
- **Radios advertisements on CFNR. (3 airing)**
- Upcoming communications include 2 podcasts on preparedness and general information along with radio advertisements.
- On Saturday, March 22, 2020, a New Release Advise Against All Gatherings to Prevent COVID-19 Spreading was released by FNHA-FNHC-FNHDA.

FNHA Resources:

The FNHA website has been updated and has been divided into three sections: Community Leaders, Health Professionals and Public. See Appendix “C”

Appendix “A” - Meeting schedule undertaken by Public Health Response Team

FNHA representation on coordination calls includes:

- **Daily:**
 - CEOs and Deputy Ministers Conference Call
 - Chief Medical Officers Conference Calls
 - Joint Information Centre – COVID-19 Conference call
 - FNHA Public Health Response Team
 - HEMBC SLT nCoV Daily Check-in
- **Monday:**
 - Expanded Level 1 COVID-19 Response Team
- **Tuesday:**
 - FNHA Executive Public Health Response Update
 - nCoV CD-Medical Health Officers
 - Northern Health COVID Coordination Call
 - Interior Health COVID Coordination Call
 - Vancouver Island COVID Coordination Call
 - North West/East COVID Coordination Call
 - COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control /WHS Provincial Working Group Meeting
 - North East COVID Coordination Call
- **Wednesday:**
 - Vancouver Island Health Regional COVID-19
 - Federal CDWG/ IPC meeting
 - CDE/IPC and NHEM COVID-19 Network
 - Northern Health Regional COVID-19
 - Fraser Health Region COVID-19
 - Expanded Level 1 COVID-19 Response Team
- **Thursday:**
 - nCoV CD-MHO T/C a(10-11)
 - nCoV Provincial Coordination Committee
 - Fraser Health Regional COVID-19
- **Friday:**
 - Regional Medical Officer COVID Call – SAC/ISC
 - Fraser Health Regional COVID-19
 - Expanded Level 1 COVID-19 Response Team
- **Saturday:**
 - CEOs and Deputy Ministers Conference Call
 - Chief Medical Officers Conference Calls
- **Sunday:**
 - CEOs and Deputy Ministers Conference Call
 - Chief Medical Officers Conference Calls
- Other meetings include: First Nations Leadership Council, ISC, EMBC, and FNHA-FNHC-FNHDA Chairs Meeting
- As well, the Chair has meetings with the Minister and Regional Health Authority Chairs, as required.

Appendix “B” - Provincial Orders in Chronological Order

Effective March 18, 2020:

The declaration of a Provincial State of Emergency allows the government the following powers:

- To prohibit the reselling of certain necessary supplies
- To enact food rationing protocols and set fuel prices if necessary
- Enforce the closure of bars and restaurants

The state of emergency is for two weeks, renewable by Cabinet. The legislature will be called back on Monday, March 23rd to expedite the response to COVID-19.

At the briefing, Dr. Henry was asked about Indigenous communities being able to offer their own testing. She said she has been in talks with FNHA to ensure there are courses of action to meet those needs, and noting that in particular elders are important in this. She further indicated that the provincial leaders are meeting with Chiefs from across BC on Friday, to ensure they are addressing this in a culturally-appropriate way. Minister Dix highlighted FNHA's involvement in meetings with Stephen Brown.

Effective March 17, 2020:

For the duration of the Public Health Emergency, the Provincial Health Officer is granted the following powers:

- Can deliver order verbally
- Can compel police to enforce those orders
- Can make orders of health staff in all health authorities

Additionally, the Minister of Health can make changes without being required to seek the approval of legislature.

The following announcements were also made by Premier John Horgan, Finance Minister Carole James and Education Minister Rob Fleming:

- Province will reveal pandemic economic plan once federal government reveals details of its own stimulus package on Wednesday, March 18. BC will then look to supplement where needed (ie. Expansion of EI coverage).
- Amendments to be made to employment standards act around assisting those who cannot work.
- K-12 classes across BC suspended indefinitely.
- Daycare/Childcare will remain available (at this time), but upon new advice this can change.
- New self-assessment tool available: <https://covid19.thrive.health/>

Effective March 16, 2020: the following orders are in place, announced by the BC Provincial Health Officer and Health Minister:

- Ban on gatherings of 50 people or more
- All casinos closed
- Restrictions on visitors at long-term care facilities (“essential only”)
- Pharmacies to refill prescriptions without requiring physician’s notes
- All hospitals (except Lions Gate) moved to Outbreak phase 2:
 - All elective scheduled surgeries cancelled — urgent and emergency services only
 - Staff within sites reallocated to support COVID-19
- Lions Gate Hospital moved to Outbreak phase 3 – accepting emergencies only
 - Preparing to open a dedicated COVID-19 unit to provide care to those affected
- Ministry moving to acquire more long-term care beds to move non-urgent patients out of acute care sites
- Physician compensation being extended for virtual-care services
- Regulatory colleges to list non-practicing providers to potentially re-register
- COVID telephone/text line available in addition to 811: 1-888-COVID19/1-888-268-4319

Appendix “C” – FNHA Website Resources

COVID-19 Information for Community Leaders

Important Steps for Communities

FNHA Info Sheet: Important steps for communities to take.

<https://www.fnha.ca/AboutSite/NewsAndEventsSite/NewsSite/Documents/FNHA-Coronavirus-Info-Important-Steps-for-Communities-to-Take.pdf>

Guide to Funding and Additional Support

FNHA has put together a guide to funding and other support for BC First Nations communities' response to COVID-19.

Download specific sections of the guide (or scroll down to read an overview):

Full guide (with Annexes) <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-BC-First-Nations-Community-Guide-for-Additional-Supports-Needed.pdf>

Annex A first section: Personal Protective Equipment Request Process and Form

<https://www.fnha.ca/AboutSite/NewsAndEventsSite/NewsSite/Documents/FNHA-Process-and-Considerations-for-obtaining-additional-PPE-for-BC-First-Nations-Communities-Annex-A.pdf>

Annex A second section: FNHA guidelines for PPE use (settings, target personnel, activities, equipment

required) <https://www.fnha.ca/AboutSite/NewsAndEventsSite/NewsSite/Documents/FNHA-Guidelines-for-PPE-Use.pdf>

Annex A third section: Storage of Personal Protective Equipment.

<https://www.fnha.ca/AboutSite/NewsAndEventsSite/NewsSite/Documents/FNHA-Process-and-Considerations-for-obtaining-additional-PPE-for-BC-First-Nations-Communities-Annex-A.pdf>

Annex B: Template to Identify Health Needs For COVID-19.

<https://www.fnha.ca/AboutSite/NewsAndEventsSite/NewsSite/Documents/FNHA-Template-To-Identify-Needs-for-COVID-19.pdf>

Medical Transportation Changes

FNHA Notice: Temporary Medical Transportation Changes in Response to COVID-19. <https://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/news/temporary-medical-transportation-changes-in-response-to-covid-19>

COVID-19 Information for the Public

Frequently Asked Questions. <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>

Self-Assessment Tool

You can use this easy self-assessment tool from the BC provincial government to help determine whether you or a loved one need further assessment or testing for COVID-19. <https://bc.thrive.health/>

FNHA Podcast

Information for First Nations Communities

Deputy Chief Medical Officer Dr. Shannon McDonald and Chief Operations Lead Sonia Isaac-Mann share:

- * The latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak
- * Tips on how to take care of your family and community members
- * Where to find the most trustworthy and up-to-date information

Listen via <https://soundcloud.com/firstnationshealthauthority/sets/covid-19-info> to your podcast player of choice or searching "FNHA" on the iTunes directory.

Public Health Information Resources

BCCDC (BC Centre for Disease Control): <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>

BCCDC: <http://www.bccdc.ca/about/news-stories/stories/2020/information-on-novel-coronavirus>

BCCDC: [Harm Reduction and Overdose Response for COVID-19](#)

BCCDC: Testing & Isolation. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing-isolation>

BC Pharmacy Association: [Your Pharmacist Can Help.](#)

<https://www.bcpharmacy.ca/system/files/assets/paragraphs/file/file/COVID-19%20Pharmacy%20Services.pdf>

FNHA Notice: [Temporary Medical Transportation Changes in Response to COVID-19.](#) <https://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/news/temporary-medical-transportation-changes-in-response-to-covid-19>

FNHA: [Prevent COVID-19 \(novel coronavirus\) by washing your hands .](#) <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Prevent-COVID-19-by-Washing-Your-Hands-Poster.pdf>

FNHA: [Protect yourself from COVID-19.](#) <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Protect-Yourself-From-COVID-19-Infosheet.pdf>

FNHA: [Staying Connected During the Pandemic Infosheet \(PDF\).](#) <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Staying-Connected-During-the-COVID-19-Pandemic.pdf>

HealthLinkBC: [Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) .](#) <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

Public Health Agency of Canada COVID-19 info line: 1-833-784-4397

BC Government Statements

- March 21: [Tracking the epidemiology of the virus.](#) <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0101-000538>
- March 20: [Update on COVID-19 response and new cases.](#) <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0097-000531>
- March 19: [Information on social distancing and update on response.](#) <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0095-000525>

Communicable Disease Follow-up Resources

CD Management Resources: FNHA Regions (PDF). <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Communicable-Disease-Management-Resources-Regions.pdf>

BCCDC Case Management DST Guidelines and Case Report Form. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care>

FNHA TB Services: Guidelines for DOT While Practicing Social Distancing and Enhanced Hygiene Practices (PDF). <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Guidelines-for-DOT-While-Practicing-Social-Distancing-and-Enhanced-Hygiene-Practices.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions by Clinicians and Health Leadership. (March 19, 2020)

<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-Health-Care-Providers-FAQs-March-19-2020.pdf>

Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Resources

COVID-19 Readiness Assessment: Nursing Stations and Health Centres document (PDF)

<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Covid-19-Readiness-Assesment-Nursing-Stations-and-Health-Centres.pdf>

COVID-19 Guidance for Health Centres and Nursing Stations (PDF) *Updated March 20, 2020

<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Covid-19-Guidance-for-Community-Health-Nurses-Working-in-First-Nations-Communities-in-BC.pdf>

[Case Identification and Client Flow in Nursing Stations and Health Centres document](https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Covid-19-Case-Identification-and-Client-Flow-in-Health-Centres-and-Nursing-Stations.pdf) (PDF) *Updated March 20, 2020.
<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Covid-19-Case-Identification-and-Client-Flow-in-Health-Centres-and-Nursing-Stations.pdf>

Respiratory Illness Sign for Entrances to Health Care Facilities (PDF). <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Respiratory-Illness-Sign-For-Entrances-to-Health-Care-Facilities.pdf>

PICnet Precaution Signs. <https://www.picnet.ca/resources/posters/precaution-signs/>

PICnet PCRA Risk Assessment. <https://www.picnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/RiskAssessment.pdf>

Cleaning Health Care Facilities

FNHA Housekeeping Manual. https://www.fnha.ca/WellnessSite/WellnessDocuments/HP_Housekeeping-Manual.pdf

Infection control in Health Care Facilities. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care>

PICnet BC Best Practices for Environmental Cleaning. <https://www.picnet.ca/wp-content/uploads/British-Columbia-Best-Practices-for-Environmental-Cleaning-for-Prevention-and-Control-of-Infections-in-All-Healthcare-Settings-and-Programs.pdf>

Protect Yourself From COVID-19 – general tips for staying safe and healthy (PDF).
<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Protect-Yourself-From-COVID-19-Infosheet.pdf>

Prevent COVID-19 By Washing Your Hands – information on handwashing (PDF)
<https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Prevent-COVID-19-by-Washing-Your-Hands-Poster.pdf>

Personal Protective Equipment

Safely Doffing Simple PPE document (PDF). <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Removing-Simple-PPE-Poster.pdf>

[Personal Protective Equipment Inventory Calculation](#) (XLSX - right click, save as)

BCCDC Respiratory Protection Guidance. <http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/Respiratory-protection-COVID19.pdf>

Guidance for Large Gatherings related to COVID-19

PHAC Risk Informed Decision Making Recommendation. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/mass-gatherings-risk-assesment.html>

Information and Resources from BC Regional Health Authorities

The information below is sorted by the BC Regional Health Authorities. Please connect with your local public health unit and/or BC Regional Health Authority for detailed information about COVID-19 in your area.

Fraser Health:

MHO Updates - <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/employees/medical-health-officer-updates#.XlIi6SNG1Xo>

COVID-19 News - <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/coronavirus#.XI16X0qIZhE>

Vancouver Coastal Health:

MHO Updates - <http://www.vch.ca/for-health-professionals/resources-updates/physicians-update>

COVID-19 News - <http://www.vch.ca/about-us/news/vancouver-coastal-health-statement-on-coronavirus>

Vancouver Island Health:

MHO Updates - <https://www.islandhealth.ca/about-us/medical-health-officers/mho-newsletters>

COVID-19 News - <https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/diseases-conditions/novel-coronavirus-information>

Interior Health:

MHO Updates - <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Leadership/MHO/Pages/MHOUpdates.aspx>

COVID-19 News - <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/CommunicableDiseaseControl/Pages/Breaking-News-and-Info.aspx>

Northern Health is directing Health Care Professionals to the BCCDC COVID 19 Page. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care>

Other resources:

World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

BCCDC Emerging Respiratory Viruses: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/communicable-diseases/emerging-respiratory-virus-updates>

BCCDC COVID-19 Information: [http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/novel-coronavirus-\(covid-19\)](http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/novel-coronavirus-(covid-19))

PHAC COVID-19 Guidelines: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/interim-guidance-surveillance-human-infection.html>

PHAC Case Definition: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/national-case-definition.html>

FNHA Advises Communities to Prepare for Possible Spread of Coronavirus - <https://www.fnha.ca/AboutSite/NewsAndEventsSite/NewsSite/Documents/FNHA-Coronavirus-Info-Important-Steps-for-Communities-to-Take.pdf>