



ANISHINABEK NATION

COVID-19 Update - April 22, 2020

Indigenous

- The National Association of Friendship Centres spoke to the House of Commons Health Committee Tuesday, arguing that Canada's urban Indigenous population is being left behind by the federal response to the current crisis. With the extra workload presented by COVID-19, the association said they are struggling to function without additional funds from the government.
- The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has received permission from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit to operate a mobile testing clinic to address the unique geographic challenges of the Mohawk community. The council says it's one of the first mobile testing clinics operated by an Indigenous public health body in Canada.
- A technical briefing took place this afternoon on prevention and preparedness for COVID-19 in Indigenous communities. Valerie Gideon, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister for Indigenous Services Canada, and Dr. Tom Wong, Chief Medical Officer of Public Health led the conference. The briefing was accessible to media outlets only.

Provincial

- Bruce Power has announced a donation of 1.2 million pieces of personal protective equipment to Ontario's Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long Term Care, as well as over 100 frontline organizations across the province. These supplies should be delivered by the end of the month.
- A coalition of public-interest organizations is threatening to file legal proceedings against the City of Toronto as early as Thursday, unless the city takes more urgent action to improve its shelter system and protect people experiencing homelessness amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The groups, including the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario, the Black Legal Action Centre, and the HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario, say the shelter system is deplorable and threatens the health and safety of the people forced to use it.
- As of April 20, there have been outbreaks at 14 Toronto shelters, with over 100 confirmed cases.
- SEIU Healthcare, the union representing 60 000 healthcare workers in Ontario, filed an application with the Ontario Labour Relations Board on Tuesday. The union asked the labour board to order the government to take control of three privately run long-term care facilities, including Anson Place Care Centre in Hagersville.
- Ontario Minister of Children, Community and Social Services Todd Smith announced on Tuesday that the Ontario government is providing \$148 million to local service managers and Indigenous program administrators across Ontario to give them flexibility to expand key services.
- Education Minister Stephen Lecce will be making another public announcement within the next few days.
- Ontario is now requesting federal help from Canadian Armed Forces personnel at five long-term care homes for staffing relief, help with medical care and logistics. 17 hospital swat teams have gone in to help long-term care homes so far.



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- Ontario is increasing testing on both symptomatic and asymptomatic staff and residents in long-term care. Ontario has completed 11 500 COVID-19 tests in long-term care homes to date. The province has addressed staffing shortage issues at 22 long-term care homes this week with new escalated measures, and there have been 31 infection control interventions.
- 20 long-term care homes across the province which were previously experiencing outbreaks are now outbreak-free after government involvement.
- Ontario's Health Workforce Matching Portal has provided over 400 job matches in long-term care homes since its launch.

Federal

- There are 37,374 lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 1,728 deaths across Canada, according to federal statistics updated Tuesday.
- The federal government is closely monitoring the agricultural and transportation sectors over concerns the country is facing shortages in food and medical supplies.
- The federal government has flagged serious concerns over shortages of drugs used to sedate patients and help them breathe; drugs that are critical in treating COVID-19. Health Canada has placed 19 drugs on its Tier 3 list, which is reserved for shortages that have the greatest potential impact on Canada's drug supply and health-care system.
- Today, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the launch of the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB). This benefit will provide \$9 billion to students to provide immediate help, double student grants, and create student jobs.
- The CESB will provide eligible students and recent graduates with \$1,250 per month from May until August of 2020. If you care for someone else or have a disability, you will receive \$1,750 per month for the same period of time. Recent graduates who graduated in September of 2019 and make up to \$1000 per month will also be eligible.
- Payments for the CESB will be delivered through the Canada Revenue Agency. Payments will be retroactive to May 1. This program will create 76,000 jobs for young people in addition to the Canada Summer Jobs program.
- The CESB will also include targeted help for Indigenous students, with \$75 million dedicated to increasing supports for First Nations, Inuit and Metis students.
- Ottawa is investing \$291 million to extend scholarships, fellowships and grants by 3 to 4 months, depending on funding. The government is also doubling student grants for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Students helping in the fight against COVID-19 through volunteering will be eligible for between \$1000 and \$5000 through the Canada Student Service Grant.

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