



## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**Date: November 18, 2020**

**From: Hiawatha First Nation Council and COVID-19 Task Team**

**Re: COVID-19 Wave 2 Information - Update #12**

Aaniin Citizens,

We have come a long way since March of this year and have remained with 0 confirmed COVID-19 cases to date, and have not had any contract tracing back to Hiawatha. These are positive outcomes to date.

Many comments have been made in regards to this virus and the one that stands out is “Try not fear the virus, but respect the virus”. As a First Nation, as Citizens and as a Community we have done this by following all measures put into place and keeping ourselves, our families, our friends and our neighbours safe.

Since March we have closed down our Community, and then slowly re-opened it back up with strict measures in place. We have provided the structure and measures to be followed and relied on each and every one of you to follow these measures, for the safety of us all. “Chi-Miigwetch” for doing your part during this pandemic – we are truly grateful.

When we first closed down our Community, we had no to little information on this virus and we did what we thought was best to keep our Citizens safe. What we know now is that this virus is spread through droplets and that wearing masks, physical distancing of 6 feet, and frequent hand washing and/or sanitizing works.

These are measures, along with COVID-19 self-assessments prior to each work day, are required to be done in each of our buildings and Hiawatha owned businesses. We also asked our Citizens who own businesses to follow these measures. Prior to re-opening each business owner had to submit a COVID-19 safety plan stating how they will re-open safely and measures that will be implemented to remain open safely.

We brought back services, (foot care, massage, personal training) under a controlled environment with strict guidelines in place and opened up the gym under these same guidelines.

We have also ordered air purifiers for each building and 2 portable disinfectant sprayers for use in our buildings. These items were ordered back in September, however they are on backorder, and should be arriving in the very near future.

In saying all this, we want you, the Citizens, to know that you are our most valuable asset and we cannot stress enough how important it is to remain vigilant during this second wave.

We are in this together and to help each other, we ask all of you to protect yourselves, your family members, your friends and neighbours. It is vital to follow the health and safety measures that have been put into place, as these measures do work and will help to stop a Community wide spread:

- Wear a face covering/mask
- Social distance – stay 2 metres apart
- Wash your hands with soap for a least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available
- Only have those in your house with whom you live, however if you do have others in your home please remember the limit is 10 people max and they must be wearing masks during this time.
- Avoid travelling to the “Hot Spots/Red Zone” areas

In doing this, we will hopefully be able to continue to keep the COVID-19 virus out of our Community and not have to take further steps, including and up to a shut-down. With the holiday season upon us please keep this in mind and remain vigilant so we can be together with our families at Christmas, and that all our family members can be with us at our tables.

We understand that this past 8 months have been challenging for all of us, but we have come this far and we can continue to get through this together – we are warriors, we are strong, we are all family and we have our Ancestors behind us – we have got this!!

As we continue to monitor the second wave, and in watching the numbers increase, we will be taking an initial step back in our Stage 3 Re-opening, effective Monday, November 23, 2020. This will allow us the time to get prepared, and to get our message out to our Citizens, and customers.

### **EFFECTIVE MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2020**

We will be implementing precautionary measures and take an initial step back in our Stage 3 Re-Opening. Due to the rise in COVID-19 case numbers, and with what we know works in limiting the spread of the virus, we will be placing some programs and services on hold until after the Christmas holidays. We will re-assess in the New Year.

#### **We Know That (Through Medical Research and Data):**

- Masks, physical distancing and frequent handwashing/sanitizing work in limiting the spread of the virus.
- Infection can happen quickly when in close contact with an infected person(s), but it has been found most infected individuals had 15 minutes or more of contact.
- Gatherings (large or small) are a large part of the spread of this virus.

#### **Programs and Services on Hold:**

- Foot care, massages and trainers (gym) will be on hold until after the holidays.
- In-person meetings will be on hold until after holidays.
- HFN In-Person Group Programming will be put on hold until after the holidays.
- ORRS Gas Bar, Store and Restaurant will not be accessible/open to those from the known “COVID Hot Spots/Red Zones” (COVID-19 Alert Level) of Toronto, Peel Region, York Region, and Ottawa.

### **We Ask:**

- All business owners to ensure you follow your safe re-opening plans that were submitted to the COVID Task Team and Council. For those business owners who have walk-in customers, we ask that you also not have your store accessible/open to those from the known “COVID Hot Spots/Red Zones” (COVID-19 Alert Level) of Toronto, Peel Region, York Region, and Ottawa.
- Citizens who live outside the Community to only come as needed and if visiting a family member to please wear a mask during this time. The numbers for inside are still 10 with mask wearing and physical distancing in place. The numbers allowed for outside are still 25 with mask wearing and physical distancing in place.
- If you have to travel outside the Community to please follow all the safety measures (**masks wearing, physical distancing and frequent handwashing/sanitizing**) in place.
- If you are being tested for COVID-19, please self-isolate until your test results come back, and if positive please continue to self-isolate, along with those with whom you live, until you receive a negative test.

**Please Note:** As we continue to monitor wave 2 of this pandemic, further changes could occur at any time, including up to a total shut-down of our First Nation.

**Most importantly,** if you are awaiting a COVID-19 test result, please reach out and let us know so that we can assist you in your self-isolation process. This will also allow us to ask any of your close contacts to self-isolate while you await these results. These steps will make a huge difference in stopping the potential spread of COVID-19 in our Community. **We will** be here to assist you in your self-isolation, and by working together we can keep the potential spread of this virus minimal in our Community.

The Peterborough Public Health Unit does not do contact tracing until after your test results are in and by this time you could have been in contact with many other people (if you did not self-isolate). If we know that you have gone for testing we can do early contact tracing and ask all your close contacts to self-isolate and once again, keep the potential spread of this virus minimal in our Community.

### **COVID-19 TESTING:**

It remains important to remember that being tested once is only relevant at that point in time. An individual who has previously tested negative can still become positive at a later date. Testing in Ontario remains by appointment only, if you want to or need to be tested, please ensure to call ahead and book.

Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC)  
To book an appointment call: **705-876-5086**

PRHC also operates drive-through testing services in Peterborough with support from the Peterborough County/City Paramedics. For the location and operating hours, please visit **[PRHC's COVID-19 Testing webpage](#)** or **[covid-19.ontario.ca/assessment-centre-locations/](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/assessment-centre-locations/)**.

Shoppers Drug Mart located at Lansdowne & High Streets  
To book an appointment call: **705-748-6141** or;  
Email: **[asdm614@shoppersdrugmart.ca](mailto:asdm614@shoppersdrugmart.ca)**.

## **COLD WEATHER INFORMATION:**

As the colder weather arrives, we recognize that it will become more difficult to spend time outside, which has been the safest way to engage in social activities with others in the warmer months.

Despite this, officials and medical experts continue to emphasize how important physical distancing is, and that gathering indoors is not recommended or safe for the more vulnerable parts of the population. With cases on the rise in many parts of Ontario, we must remain cautious to protect each other.

Health officials are advising to be aware of cold weather attire. Try not to touch your face while wearing gloves or mittens, as the virus can be carried from a surface, to your glove, to your face and cause infection. Wash your hands right away once you have taken gloves off. Scarves are not a replacement for masks. Many scarves are not made of tightly woven materials, and evidence suggests that damp or moist surfaces (such as a scarf when your breath condenses on it) hold the virus longer.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS:**

With the decrease in daylight, and spending more time indoors, health and wellness experts are concerned regarding the impact on people's mental health. Please take care of yourself and others, and reach out if you are struggling. Please call your medical professional or our Health Centre at **705-295-4421** any time you are in need and/or struggling – we are here to help. Other mental health and addiction resources and supports include:

### **Mental Health Supports/Resources:**

**Hope for Wellness Help Line** - Available to all Indigenous peoples across Canada  
For more information or assistance please call 1-855-242-3310 (toll-free) or connect to the [online Hope for Wellness chat](#).

**Kids Help Phone** - Available 24 hours a day for ages 5 to 29.  
For more information or assistance please call 1-800-668-6868 (toll-free) or text CONNECT to 686868.  
who want confidential and anonymous care from professional counsellors.

**Canadian Mental Health Association – Peterborough, Kawartha, Pine Ridge**  
For more information or assistance please call 705-748-6711 or 1 (866) 990-9956 or visit the website at <https://cmhahkpr.ca/> .

### **Addiction Supports/Resources:**

#### **Hiawatha Addictions Support Group:**

'Maamwawi Bishkaabii Daa Mino Bimaadiziwing- Let's Come Together and Return to the Good Life.' If you need supports during this time, please feel free to reach out to our cultural advisors/support people Ziigwanbinesii (Ziig) Charles or Tim Smoke.

Ziig can be reached by phone at 705-768-0408 or by email at [zcharles@binnoojiyag.ca](mailto:zcharles@binnoojiyag.ca)  
Tim can be reached by phone at 905-802-9537 or by email at [tsmoke@binnoojiyag.ca](mailto:tsmoke@binnoojiyag.ca)

## **AA Peterborough:**

For more information or assistance please call 705-745-6111 or you can visit <http://peterboroughaa.org/meeting-list/> for meeting information.

## **NA Peterborough:**

For more information or assistance please call **1-877-909-3636** or you can visit [www.intheroom.com](http://www.intheroom.com) for online meetings.

## **FLU VACCINE:**

Flu season brings new challenges. While there have been questions regarding availability, wherever possible it is highly recommended that everyone, especially the most vulnerable, receive a flu vaccine this year. Please contact your medical professional, or Lori Webster, HFN Nurse at **705-295-4421** for more information or to receive a flu shot – Lori currently has 20+ doses of the regular flu vaccine and 10 doses of the high dose flu vaccine for those over 65 years.

## **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SEASON:**

With the holiday season on the horizon, we understand the added difficulties of the safety practices and restrictions that are in place. Large public events and gatherings continue to be discouraged or not permitted depending on regional status or restrictions. This means that the events which are popular through the season will need to be reconsidered and are not recommended at this time. If an event is planned, please keep in mind that changes in restrictions could mean the event must be cancelled on short notice.

It is advised to think ahead to Christmas and the seasonal holidays. While the COVID-19 situation is constantly evolving, as at Thanksgiving and Halloween, gatherings continue to be highly discouraged, as well as travelling – especially in or out of one of the “hot/red” zones, however if you are out shopping to prepare for the holiday season, please remember to:

- Wear a mask
- Physical distance
- Practice frequent handwashing/sanitizing
- Do not touch your face

It is impossible to know what things will look like by Christmas, but, think about it now and look at alternatives to in person celebrations. Virtual parties or dinners, winterize a patio to stay outside, or any other creative solution to meeting in person. Once again, if you are gathering in person, please abide by the limits, physical distance, wear a face covering and wash hands frequently.

The mail service, which has often seen slower delivery times, will be overwhelmed by volume in the coming weeks. Consider sending parcels or packages very early, and do any online buying well ahead of the holidays.

## SOCIAL GATHERINGS:

The social gathering limits, set by the Ontario Government for unmonitored and private social gatherings are still:

- 10 people at an indoor event or gathering (mask wearing and physical distancing is required); or
- 25 people at an outdoor event or gathering (mask wearing and physical distancing is required)
- Indoor and outdoor events and gatherings cannot be merged together - gatherings of 35 (25 outdoors and 10 indoors) are not permitted.

## COVID ALERT APP:

Canada's free exposure notification app is available for download on your smart phone – it can be downloaded from Google Play or the App Store. The COVID Alert App helps to break the cycle of infection, by letting people know of possible exposures before any symptoms appear.

The App works by:

- Using Bluetooth to exchange random codes with nearby phones;
- A daily check of a list of random codes from people who tell the app they tested positive;
- Sending you a notification if you've been near one of those codes in the past 14 days. Your privacy is protected, as the COVID Alert does not use GPS or track your location, and no way of knowing:
  - Your location;
  - Your name or address;
  - Your phone's contacts.
  - Your health information; or,
  - The health information of anyone you are near.

## WINDOW SIGNS FOR SAFETY:

At the beginning of the pandemic, we have handed out three sheets of coloured paper, **green**, **yellow** and **red**, and asked if you would like to use this paper to place in your window to let us know how you are doing.

**GREEN:** means you are okay

**YELLOW:** means you need assistance with supplies (ie: groceries, pharmacy pick-up)

**RED:** means you are isolating

	You are okay
	You need assistance with supplies (ie: groceries, pharmacy pick-up)
	You are isolating

We have been, and will continue to check for these colours, especially now that we are in wave 2 of this pandemic. If you require new coloured paper, or if you need anything on the interim please call Donna at **705-295-4421**.

We also ask our Citizens to check in with family members and neighbors who have mobility/health issues or who may be on self-isolation.

In closing, we would like to say “Chi-Miigwetch” to all of you for your patience and kindness during this time. We thank you in advance for your ongoing practice to follow public health measures/guidelines, and the health and safety measures put into place by Hiawatha First Nation.

**“Our Citizens and Community remain our first priority and we will work to mitigate risks for best possible outcomes moving forward through the COVID-19 pandemic.”**