

COVID-19 GN Update - November 12, 2020

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Premier's update

Nunavut has three confirmed cases of COVID-19. The total number of persons followed to date is 3944. There are 666 persons currently being followed.

Without compromising any personal information, I can say this - there seem to be no links between our confirmed cases. The positive cases are not exempted, critical workers. Anyone who implies or says otherwise is wrong. This kind of blame serves no purpose. It definitely doesn't help the people with COVID or our communities.

Please stop spreading misinformation and rumours, and needlessly attacking people. Your energy is better used trying to maintain public health measures and staying up to date with the facts. No one wants COVID-19, and no one deserves to be blamed.

I know this is a very uncertain time. I know that a lot of people may feel overwhelmed or scared. I know that it's tiring. I also know that Nunavummiut are caring, thoughtful and community-minded.

This means that we now need to step up and be more compassionate and careful than ever before. Nunavut is not alone in this struggle to fight COVID-19, but we are new to this. Unlike the rest of the world, we are only starting to deal with the impacts of having COVID in our jurisdiction.

We need to act responsibly and be strict with our public health measures. This is not an option. It is absolutely critical. Please wash your hands. Practice social and physical distancing – when you are outside your home; even with family members who live outside your household. Always, always stay home if you feel sick.

Call the COVID hotline if you feel like you may have been exposed to COVID-19 at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. EST.

Every single one of us has an important role to play. Your actions impact everyone's health. Let's stop the potential spread and care for one another.

Chief Public Health Officer update

Good morning. Yesterday, we announced a COVID-19 positive test in Rankin Inlet. The individual presented to the health centre with mild symptoms late last week. The person is doing well and is isolated.

Based on the timing of the symptoms, we believe that the person became infectious around Nov. 5. Contact tracing is underway. As of today, the number of contacts is too few to report, but we know the number will grow in coming days. All high-risk contacts will be isolated at home. Low-risk contacts will be asked to monitor for symptoms.

We also announced several public health measures meant to limit the potential spread in the community. This information is available online at www.gov.nu.ca.

We are also asking anyone who has travelled from Rankin Inlet since Nov. 5 to self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days after leaving the community. We advise non-essential travel is not recommended at this time.

In Sanikiluaq, the two confirmed cases are doing well and remain in isolation. The 11 contacts identified on Monday have been swabbed and test results came back negative.

An additional 27 tests have been done and all results are negative. Contact tracing and isolation continues with the end goal to prevent community transmission. Testing will continue as deemed appropriate.

Today, I would also like to announce new measures on Nunavut's Path. Out of an abundance of caution and until the situation in Rankin Inlet is stable, we will be re-instating certain restrictions in the rest of the Kivalliq region as well as Iqaluit:

- Schools in the Kivalliq outside Rankin Inlet and schools in Iqaluit are advised to remain open and follow the Department of Education's opening plan for Nunavut schools.
- All food service establishments in the Kivalliq Region outside Rankin Inlet and in Iqaluit may remain open for on-premises dining, delivery, and take-out service.
- Seating capacity may be no greater than 50 people or fifty percent (50%) of the regular seating.
- There must be at least two meters (2 m) separation between tables and between persons in line for take-out or counter service.
- There shall be no more than six (6) people seated at or congregating near a table.
- Food service establishments may continue to establish their own hours for on-premises, take-out and delivery services.
- Licensed Premises in Baker Lake may open remain open for regular business hours, subject to any applicable licensing conditions. Physical distancing should be observed at all times.
- All organized public gatherings shall be restricted to:
 - 50 people for outdoor gatherings.
 - Five people in private dwellings in addition to household members.
 - Other facilities used for community events or meetings, including places of worship, are to be limited to 50 people or 50% of the rated capacity for the facility as established by the Office of the Fire Marshal.

- Non-essential travel is not recommended.
- Anyone who develops flu-like symptoms is asked to contact the health centre or COVID-19 hotline immediately.
- All government offices are to remain open.
- All government services to continue as normal.

If Nunavummiut have questions around testing or any other public health measures, I ask that they direct them to the COVID-19 hotline.

Thank you.

Minister of Health update

Just a few words before we sign off today. As the new Minister of Health, let me tell you, this has been quite a first week. But I want to let everyone know how prepared we are for this, and that despite how challenging things seem, there is no need to panic.

As the MLA for a community affected by COVID-19, I'm saying the same thing, and I know our towns can do this.

I just want to re-iterate some things that Premier and Dr. Patterson have said.

Let's please stop guessing about who, what, where, when and how this happened, and focus more on what we need to do to stop the spread.

Let's use common sense and follow the public health measures. Limit visiting, wear a mask, keep washing your hands and coughing into your elbow, and stay clam.

Let's support our health care workers. They are working around the clock on the front lines and behind the scenes to ensure we are cared for. They deserve our support and thanks, not disrespect.

Do not travel if it isn't necessary – now is not the time.

Finally, act like your Elder parent or immune-compromised friend's health depends on it. Because everyone's actions matter.

Let's focus on community instead of ourselves. Stay home and stay safe, Sanikiluaq and Rankin Inlet.

As part of the Government of Nunavut's (GN) effort to protect Nunavummiut against the risk of COVID-19, GN Departments are implementing the following:

Department of Health Services

Unless it is an emergency, we are asking that people in Rankin Inlet and in Sanikiluaq to call the health centre first and get direction. Anyone with questions about COVID-19 are asked to call the hotline at 1-888-975-8601.

Total (all health isolation locations)	
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Traveler type	Guests in Isolation as of Nov. 12
Medical	520
Public	283
Total	803

Traveller repatriation summary:

Departure date	# of travellers from health isolation sites
Nov. 12	50
Nov. 13	40
Nov. 14	0
Nov. 15	20
Nov. 16	96
Total	206

Critical Worker Requests

As of Nov. 11, there were 8678 requests, 4062 of which were critical worker requests.

Request status	#	%
Approved (includes critical and non-critical)	5833	67.2%
Denied	280	3.2%
Pending	187	2.2%
Common Travel Area Approved	2378	27.4%
Total	8678	100%

Department of Education Services

Iqaluit and the Kivalliq region, other than Rankin Inlet (Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, and Whale Cove)

K-12 Schools

According to Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer, schools in Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, Whale Cove, and Iqaluit (Iqaluit DEA, Apex DEA, and CSFN) are now in Stage 2: Escalated Risk of COVID-19 Transmission in the Region, until further notice.

Schools in the Kivalliq and Iqaluit (Iqaluit DEA, Apex DEA, and CSFN) will be implementing their Stage 2 action plans. Rankin Inlet schools will be implementing their Stage 4 action plan.

Elementary schools in Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, Whale Cove, and Iqaluit (Iqaluit DEA, Apex DEA, and CSFN) will be open full-time, five days per week.

Middle and high schools in Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, Whale Cove, and Iqaluit (Iqaluit DEA and CSFN) will have a blend of in-school and remote learning. Students will attend school 2-3 days per week. Specific schedules will be determined by each school's Stage 2 action plan.

Teachers/school staff will be contacting their students and families as soon as possible.

Updates on community stages will be posted on the Department of Education website: <https://gov.nu.ca/education/information/2020-21-opening-plan-nunavut-sc...>

DEAs whose schools are in Stage 2 may choose to close schools for 1 or more days for operational reasons, to prepare for Stage 2 learning. Families should monitor for announcements from their DEAs.

District Education Authority staff in Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, Whale Cove, Iqaluit, and Apex should attend work for essential duties only and coordinate with school leaders regarding their presence in schools.

Early Learning and Child Care

According to the Chief Public Health Officer, all child care facilities in Arviat, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Naujaat, Whale Cove, and Iqaluit can remain open under current health and safety guidelines and measures.

Nunavut Arctic College Services

As outlined in the Nunavut Arctic College (NAC) opening plan, NAC has entered stage 4 in Rankin Inlet, stage 2 in the Kivalliq communities and Iqaluit.

Rankin Inlet:

- Nunavut Arctic College facilities are closed to the public, students and non-essential staff. This includes the Community Learning Center, Kivalliq Hall and Sanatuliqsarvik.
- NAC classes are put on hold, and where possible, will move to a remote delivery format. Students in Rankin to confirm their contact information with their instructors.
- NAC will continue to support students living in residences at Kivalliq Hall.

- The NAC community is reminded that there are supports available if required, including counselling services in Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit.
- Any research related activities in the community must comply with the restrictions currently in place.

Kivalliq Communities & Iqaluit:

- Nunavut Arctic College facilities are closed to the public. Classes continue as scheduled.
- NAC students, staff and faculty are encouraged to wash their hands frequently, social distance and stay home if they are unwell.
- Visits to student residences are to be limited to close family only at this time.
- Any research related activities in these communities are encouraged to adjust their engagements in the communities accordingly.

Department of Finance Services

Rankin Inlet Offices

The Department of Finance office in Rankin Inlet will remain closed for the rest of the week. Finance staff will be back in the office on Monday, November 16. However, the office will remain closed to the public.

All GN employees in the Kivalliq region will receive their November 13 pay as scheduled. Employees who receive cheques will continue to receive them as usual. For those who receive direct deposit, paystubs will be issued at a later date.

For more information, please contact Tracey Moyles, Director of Compensation and Benefits at tmoyles@gov.nu.ca.

Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission

The NULC is considered an essential service and will continue selling liquor import permits through the Rankin Inlet office. To ensure the safety of staff and the public, the offices will be closed to the public. To purchase an import permit or place a community order in Rankin Inlet, please call 867-645-8575 or 855-844-5488 on Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 to 5 p.m.

Nunavummiut's health is our shared responsibility! Remember: wash your hands and surfaces, practice social distancing, listen to the advice of health officials, and stay home if you're sick.