

News Release

For Immediate Release

Public health restrictions to be eased in Iqaluit

Iqaluit, Nunavut (May 31, 2021) – Nunavut's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Michael Patterson, announced changes to the COVID-19 public health measures in Iqaluit today.

"Case counts in Iqaluit continue to fall and vaccine uptake in the city is high among adults. The availability of the COVID-19 vaccine means there has been limited spread in this outbreak, unlike what we saw in Arviat prior to Moderna being available," said Dr. Patterson. "These factors make it safe to ease restrictions in Iqaluit."

Effective Thursday, June 3, indoor home gatherings can have five people in addition to household members and outdoor gatherings of up to 25 people are allowed. It is highly recommended that people keep their social circles small. Long-term care facilities, continuing care centres, boarding homes and health centres may allow a maximum of two visitors from their immediate family, per resident, with mandatory masks.

Daycares may open and schools may open at Stage 3 of the 2020-2021 Opening Plan for Nunavut Schools. Government offices and private businesses may also open with masks and physical distancing. Indoor gatherings for support groups and group counselling can reopen for up to 20 people and indoor events can take place for up to 25 people or 25 per cent of the facility's capacity, whichever is less. Places of worship may open for in-person services with no singing for up to 25 people or 25 per cent capacity, whichever is less.

Arenas may allow 25 people or 25 per cent of the facility's capacity, whichever is less. There can be no more than 25 spectators and no team sports. Libraries and galleries may open for individual and family visits. Facilities holding fitness sessions may open for solo workouts with masks. All public playgrounds, municipal parks, and territorial parks may open, but their buildings remain closed.

Travel in and out of Iqaluit continues to be restricted, and masks remain mandatory in indoor public places (including offices) and when within six feet of another person. Personal services such as hairdressers and beauty salons, as well as theatres remain closed. Restaurants and licensed establishments remain restricted to takeout only.

"Iqalummiut, we've worked hard to manage this outbreak. Please continue to remain diligent and make responsible decisions," said Premier Joe Savikataaq. "These eased measures are not an excuse to take chances, but a good opportunity to continue to make progress in living with the virus. Thanks for all your hard work and patience."

Vaccine clinics continue across Nunavut. Call your health centre to make an appointment. The vaccine is safe, effective and our best defense against COVID-19.

Anyone who has reason to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 is advised to call the COVID-hotline at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. EST, or notify their community health centre right away, and immediately isolate at home for 14 days. Please do not go to the health centre in person.

For all the latest information go to www.gov.nu.ca

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