



OFFICE OF THE
ONTARIO REGIONAL CHIEF

MEMORANDUM

TO: First Nation Chiefs, Leadership Council
CC: Chiefs of Ontario Secretariat
FROM: Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald
DATE: January 29, 2021
RE: ORC MONTHLY UPDATE

Wahcheeyay, Aanii, Boozhoo, She:kon, Shekoli,

We are entering a new year with good momentum and we see a light at the end of the tunnel. Ontario has begun the rollout of its vaccination distribution plan and First Nations are a priority. Even with vaccinations on the horizon, we still need to remain vigilant with public health measures. Over the holiday season there was a sharp spike in numbers for First Nations as people gathered. However, they have started to come down again along with overall Ontario numbers.

With Family Day coming up on February 15th, please remind your citizens to find ways to celebrate with their loved ones virtually or distantly in order to keep each other safe. As more First Nations members are vaccinated, we can look forward to the end of the pandemic.

COVID-19 CASES AND PREVENTION

COVID-19 CASES:

- Globally = 102,380,564
- Canada = 766,103
- Ontario = 264,300

COVID-19 First Nations in Ontario:

- Total Confirmed = 622 on-reserve (from March 11 to January 27)

Note: Please see the Summary Report for more detailed information on the COVID-19 cases in First Nation communities.

ORC OFFICE PANDEMIC INITIATIVES

My office continues to work on the following initiatives: a COVID-19 speakers series; research papers on the federal debt, on food sovereignty and on COVID-19 outbreaks in First Nation Communities across Canada; as well as a proposal for universal masking for Ontario First Nations.

- More information on the ORC Initiatives is located in the Summary Report.

PROVINCIAL MEASURES RESPONDING TO COVID-19

- This month Ontario announced: extension of COVID-19 orders till February 19; issued stay at home order and enhanced enforcement measures; moved to phase two of its vaccine distribution roll out plan; accelerated vaccination of residents in First Nations elder care homes; temporarily paused residential evictions; \$11.1 million to support small air carriers serving remote First Nations; extended online learning in southern Ontario to January 25; \$10.9 million to bring faster broadband to parts of northern Ontario; \$9.4 million to improve and deliver reliable internet across Brant County and within Six Nations; \$5.3 million to help small and medium-sized forest sector businesses implement COVID-19 safety measures; working to enhance workplace opportunities for Indigenous, black and racialized peoples; \$200 million to help 424 small, rural and northern communities build and repair roads and water infrastructure; call for applications for up to \$20,000 in small business support grants for businesses impacted by provincial shutdown.

FEDERAL MEASURES RESPONDING TO COVID-19

- This month Canada announced: \$380 million for Indigenous Community Support Fund; \$1 million to support the COVID-19 Evidence Network.

ORC POLITICAL UPDATES

- **COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force**
 - As of January 28, 2021, Ontario has administered 317,240 vaccines. The priorities are Long-Term Care homes and health care workers; which includes vaccinating those priority groups in First Nations.
 - First Nations are the third priority behind long-term care homes, and health care workers. (approx. 1.2 million before us).
 - The Ontario government established two sub-groups, a First Nations specific sub-group and an Urban Indigenous sub-group. Both sub-groups were established in order to address each of their unique needs and priorities.
- **Interim Policy on AFN Committees**
 - The interim policy on AFN Committees: Roles and Responsibilities continues to be worked on.
 - My office continues to meet with Leadership Council members.
 - For the next Leadership Council meeting, we will reach out to Elders from Elders Council to begin participating on our future calls/meetings.
- **Leadership Council Portfolio Holder's List**
 - The Leadership Council is in the later stages of reviewing the Leadership Council Portfolio Holder's List to make final amendments to it.
- **OFNTSC & Boil Water Advisories**
 - The Leadership Council passed a motion to provide Ontario First Nation Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC) the authority to collect

information on communities with Boil Water Advisories (BWA) over two phases;

- to collect data on the root issues experienced by the communities and identify barriers or challenges they face to resolve; and
- a BWA will provide the needs-based analysis that we require in order to create a made-in-Ontario strategy to end long-term BWAs permanently.

- **Funding to recreate COO Sectors in Justice and Economic Development**

- Funding was acquired for the Justice position and a number of initiatives have since been rolled out including a series of forums on policing engagement for federal legislation, and on responding to UNDRIP.
- The new Justice Director has also been advancing First Nation interests as part of the development of a collaborative table on First Nation bylaw implementation, and is currently working on a plan to improve consultation of First Nations.

UPCOMING LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

We are switching our Leadership Council meetings to Mondays.

Further, we are switching the Leadership Council and Chiefs meetings to Tuesdays.

We are doing this to accommodate the many year-end meetings that are conflicting with our usual meeting days.

Leadership Council – Monday, February 22, 2021

On February 22nd, the Leadership Council will be joined by Indigenous Affairs Ontario Minister Greg Rickford and Indigenous Affairs Ontario Deputy Minister Shawn Batise. Deputy Premier/Health Minister Christine Elliott (TBC)

Leadership Council & Chiefs– Tuesday, February 23, 2021

On February 23rd, the Leadership Council meeting will be hosted jointly between the COO Secretariat and ORC's political office, and will be joined by Indigenous Affairs Ontario Minister Greg Rickford and Indigenous Affairs Ontario Deputy Minister Shawn Batise. Deputy Premier/Health Minister Christine Elliott (TBC)

Ninanaskamon. Kisahkeetin.

Wishing you Peace beyond all understanding,



Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald