



# ANISHINABEK NATION

---

## COVID-19 Update – May 4, 2020

---

### Indigenous

- Anishinabek News Articles
  - [Book review: The Porcupine Year](#)
  - [Dilico Anishinabek Family Care services continue amidst pandemic](#)
- As of April 30, there were 131 active cases of COVID-19 in a total of 23 Indigenous communities across Canada, and federal officials are working closely with First Nations leaders, provinces and territories to help slow the spread of the virus.
- Federal officials say the next two weeks will be crucial in trying to determine the scope and severity of the spread of COVID-19 in First Nations communities.
- Dr. Tom Wong, chief medical officer of public health at Indigenous Services Canada, says it's too early to determine the severity of outbreaks and whether the situation will worsen.
- The Anishnawbe Business Professional Association (ABPA) is welcoming a \$306.8 million federal stimulus package for small and medium-sized Indigenous businesses, but the head of the group representing entrepreneurs and companies throughout northern Ontario said the program's success depends on how quickly applicants can access the funding.
- Acting Medical Officer of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit, Dr. Ian Gemmill, explained today that health unit staff won't be conducting COVID-19 testing in First Nation communities, as that work will be left for staff with Indigenous Services' First Nations and Inuit Health Branch. Gemmill said that those test results are then sent to the NWHU, to be added to the regional and provincial data.

### Provincial

- Ontario is reporting 370 new cases of COVID-19 today, and 84 more deaths. This increase brings the provincial total to 17,923 cases, including 1,300 deaths and 12,505 resolved cases — nearly 70 per cent of all of Ontario's cases. The new provincial total is 2.1 per cent higher than the previous day, representing the lowest increase in four weeks.
- Ontario beat its target of 16,000 tests per day by May 6th, reaching approximately 17,000 by April 30th. Ontario is now the leading province in COVID-19 tests per day.
- Premier Ford said today to expect more good news soon, and told retail stores to begin preparing for reopen as we get closer to opening parks and retail services for curbside pickup.
- Minister of Health Christine Elliott said today that her ministry is looking at the option of 'COVID-free' hospitals in order to begin elective procedures again. Elliott told reporters to expect a finalized plan soon.



# ANISHINABEK NATION

---

- Ford said today that Ontario will be focusing on starting random community testing moving forward.
- SEIU Healthcare, which represents more than 60,000 frontline healthcare workers in Ontario, has reported the death of a third personal support worker in as many weeks.
- Some Ontarians who rely on provincial disability support say the federal government's new emergency benefit for people affected by COVID-19 is laying bare a double standard when it comes to the question of what is considered a liveable income. The Canada Emergency Relief Benefit provides \$2 000 per month to people who have lost their income because of the pandemic. The maximum amount available per month through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) is just \$1 169.
- Premier Doug Ford criticized a group protesting coronavirus-related restrictions at Queen's Park on Saturday, the second such event in as many weeks.

## **Federal**

- The Prime Minister announced today that Canada and international partners have launched the Coronavirus Global Response, dedicated to raising more than \$8 billion to help researchers and innovators develop solutions to test, treat and protect people against COVID-19.
- Canada's contribution of \$850 million toward the Coronavirus Global Response includes investments to support both Canadian and international research targets.
- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau defended his assault-rifle ban on Sunday and promised to go even further by targeting handguns and tightening border security with new legislation introduced in Parliament.
- Ottawa biotech company Spartan Bioscience Inc. is voluntarily recalling a rapid test for COVID-19 after Health Canada expressed concern about its effectiveness, dealing a setback to expanded testing in the country. The company said it would recall the 5 500 tests shipped nationally and work on additional clinical studies to assess the sampling method and swab.
- The federal government has established a national supply council tasked with improving Canada's efforts to procure equipment and other tools to halt the spread of COVID-19 as provinces take early steps to reopen businesses shuttered by the crisis.

---

*Allan Dokis*  
*Director of Policy and Communications*  
[allan.dokis@anishinabek.ca](mailto:allan.dokis@anishinabek.ca)