COVID–19 EMERGENCIES
and First Nations communities

Activate federal and provincial support and get resources

This package provides support and guidance on how to access assistance if your community faces an Emergency due to COVID-19. This package is specific to the Ontario region.

In this package

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Implementing public health measures is up to Chief and Council

While provinces have moved to end public health restrictions, such as masks and vaccine passports, it may not be the right time to do this in all communities. Chief and Council can best determine what public health measures are needed within their community at any given time and when they can be lifted. A community's CEO, Health Director, Pandemic Lead, and Regional Medical Officers of Health can also provide valuable input on public health measures that Chief and Council may wish to consider.

The actions that a community takes in an outbreak–beyond what is required by the Province of Ontario–are entirely up to Chief and Council. That being said, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) wants to assure First Nations that we, in collaboration with the Province of Ontario, will continue to provide public health expertise to support your decision-making in your respective pandemic response and recovery efforts. Any measures that Chief and Council may wish to implement in community should be communicated to all health care providers in your community.

If there is an outbreak in your community:

- Consider implementing public health measures like masks, travel advisories and vaccine passports. This document will support the emergency response for your community.

- Use this package for guidance on how who to contact to request additional support, including funding.

How to alert an emergency to government and get help

STATES OF EMERGENCY

- When your community experiences an emergency due to a COVID-19 outbreak, it is not necessary to enter into a State of Emergency to access federal support.

- Financial assistance for eligible response and recovery costs as well as non-financial support is available without declaring a State of Emergency.

- Federal, provincial and territorial governments and other public, non-government and private sector public safety partners will act once alerted by a First Nation that an emergency situation is imminent or underway, without requiring the declaration of a State of Emergency.

ALERTING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF A CURRENT OR ANTICIPATED COVID-19 EMERGENCY

- To ensure Indigenous Services Canada and other relevant partners are aware of an emergency in a First Nation, Chief and Council can contact any of the following individuals or groups, who can provide further information on next steps:

1. Your community Pandemic Lead or Pandemic Team

2. The First Nations health authority, Tribal Council or Political Territorial Organization that supports your community

3. The ISC Ontario Region Health Emergency Management Team

- Email the inbox at urgencesanitaireon-healthemergencyon@sac-isc.gc.ca. You will receive an automatic reply to your email with a name and phone number for the current on-call contact. Please call this contact to alert them to your emergency. Do not wait for a reply to your email before calling. The Health Emergency Management team is on call 24/7 to provide support and will inform other relevant individuals in the federal government of your emergency as needed.

How to request and receive rapid tests in Ontario

Rapid tests should be ordered through the Ontario portal or through the Ontario ISC regional office. Rapid tests that are procured through private distributors cannot be reimbursed by ISC or the Province.

Follow the instructions below to order rapid tests through the Province of Ontario.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORDERING

1. **Online ordering portal**

- Visit the Provincial Antigen Screening Program.

- Click on "Check your eligibility and apply." Follow the prompts to answer the eligibility questions and submit contact information.

2. **Confirmation email of the application—don't stop here**

- Once you have completed the eligibility screening and submitted your contact information, you will receive an email confirming your application to the Provincial Antigen Screening Program has been approved. This email will include a reference number. Please note: this email is not confirmation that tests have been ordered. See next step on ordering rapid tests.

3. **Follow the link in your email to continue the application**

- Click on the link provided in the email to order rapid tests through the E-Health Online Ordering Portal. Please follow the instructions and carefully review the following, ensuring that you select the sector "Indigenous communities/organizations:".

4. **Select "Rapid Tests"**

- Ensure that when asked "What will you be requesting today?" on the E-Health Online Ordering Portal, the item selected is "Rapid Tests," not "Swab Kits" or "Personal Protective Equipment."

5. **How to choose the "Quantity of tests" to order**

- When determining the number of tests to order, estimate how many people you will need to test, and how many tests you need per person each week. Then, determine how many weeks you will need to continue testing these people. If you request 500 rapid tests for four weeks, this equals 500 individual rapid tests or "500 eaches."

- The total number of kits shipped will depend on the brand of the tests, since some kits include 5 individual tests and others include 2. For example, if you requested 500 individual tests, do not be alarmed if you receive 100 kits—your order will still contain the requested number of individual tests since there are 5 in each kit (5x100=500).

6. **Guidance on the additional comments section**

- Please include a description in the "additional comments" section with details on how you plan to distribute the rapid tests, to whom they will be provided and for what purpose. This section confirms that the tests are being distributed to eligible groups, and that the tests are planned to be used in a manner that is consistent with Provincial and Territorial health guidelines. You may be asked for an organization or business number. If you do not have this number, select "other" to move through the order form—this will not impact your order.

7. **Notify Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services of your request**

- After you submit your order, please contact supplychain.inquiries@ontario.ca to notify the Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services of your request along with a 15-character INC number.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECEIVING THE SHIPMENT

8. **Be present for the delivery**

- An individual must be present at the address provided for delivery to receive the tests. Please do not list an address to a First Nation office if there is no one at the location during business hours.

- Please provide the contact information of the person who will be physically present to receive the tests, including their name, a valid phone number and an email address. The contact listed must be able to monitor their phone and email to receive the order. Please note that the delivery cannot be made to a post office (PO) box.

- Please note, delivery is dependent on regional availability and weather delays. The Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services is not in control of shipping delays or if a courier delivers a package to a location where a recipient is not available.

9. **Sign up for delivery notifications and track the shipment**

- When your shipment is sent, the person who made the request will receive a tracking number sent by the provincial warehouse. We encourage the requestor to sign up with the carrier for email notification when the delivery has been received at the location noted in the order.

- Signing up for the carrier's notification will allow a community or organization to follow up with the carrier, if needed, such as to receive details when the expected delivery time is and who signed for the delivery.

10. **Store rapid tests in climate controlled area**

- Once the rapid rests are received, please ensure tests are brought indoors immediately so they are not exposed to extreme heat or cold for long periods of time. This will ensure the integrity of the product. You should not leave shipments outside for any period of time once they are delivered.

11. **Check the shipment's temperature Indictor**

- Check the temperature indicator if your shipment has come with one. If a temperature indicator has been set off, quarantine the shipment and do not use it. Immediately contact whoever shipped you the order (the sender of the shipment, not the shipping company). After you notify the sender that a temperature indicator was set off, wait for further guidance. A replacement order can be shipped if there is an emergency need for tests.

IF YOU NEED FURTHER ASSISTANCE

Should you have any additional questions for shipping through the Ontario portal, please contact supplychain.inquiries@ontario.ca.

If the Ontario Government is unable to complete your request, contact the ISC Ontario Regional Office by email at: covid-19fnihbontario@sac-isc.gc.ca. ISC will work with you to resolve the issue and will provide assistance based on your community's need.

How to request personal protective equipment

If you are in need of personal protective equipment (PPE), start with seeking supply from your local health unit or through the Ontario provincial portal:

- Critical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Intake Form | Ontario Health (ehealthontario.on.ca)

If your local health unit or the Province is unable to complete your request, contact the ISC Ontario Regional Office. ISC will work with you to resolve the issue and will provide assistance based on your community's need.

- ISC Ontario Regional Office

    o Email: covid-19fnihbontario@sac-isc.gc.ca

How to request additional funding supports

Consult:

- Accessing additional public health support for First Nations and Inuit communities during COVID-19 (sac-isc.gc.ca)