



## Pimicikamak Cree Nation

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### **Pimicikamak Update on COVID-19: First Nation Hosts Vaccination Clinic at Cross Lake Arena This Week**

**Treaty Five Territory, Cross Lake, MB** – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. is issuing this statement on behalf of the Pimicikamak Cree Nation (also referred to as Cross Lake) to provide an update on COVID-19 and vaccines.

There are currently three cases in Pimicikamak Cree Nation and no hospitalizations due to COVID-19. It is estimated that about 65 per cent of the First Nation's adult population has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, with another 650 plus people receiving their vaccines at a clinic yesterday.

“The goal of our leadership and pandemic team in Cross Lake is to stop the spread of this virus and protect our people, especially our children, who are most vulnerable during this third wave,” shared **Chief David Monias**. “The first and foremost objective is to vaccinate our people 18 years and up. I am urging all residents who are 18 and older to get vaccinated to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID-19.”

Following a successful off-reserve vaccine clinic in Thompson earlier this month, the First Nation is hosting another vaccine clinic this week. It runs daily until April 28. This clinic is being held at the Cross Lake Arena from 10 am to 6 pm each day. The clinic is for second doses of the Moderna vaccine, however, residents are being asked to advise if they need a first dose. Citizens are asked to attend according to identified districts on Tuesday, April 27 while the clinic on Wednesday, April 28 is open to all districts and off reserve members, including post-secondary students. If there are residents who need to leave the community for medical or essential travel, they are asked to let organizers know so they may be set up to be vaccinated sooner or later. If there are any questions about the clinic, people can call **1-204-590-6739**.

“For this clinic, we are asking people to wear a short-sleeved shirt and be prepared to wait 15 minutes so the clinic staff can monitor you after you get the vaccine,” said Chief Monias. “This is our second mass vaccination clinic in our community. I want to thank everyone who has helped us deliver these vaccines both here and in Thompson. Having our members vaccinated provides hope for us that we will overcome this pandemic.”

During Pimicikamak's vaccine clinic in Thompson from April 14 to 17, a total of 850 vaccines were administered. Many front line workers and service providers who interact with Pimicikamak membership were invited to receive their vaccines as well, such as members of the RCMP, medivac staff, members of the fire department, and others who come into contact with our people and our children. This included foster parents and teachers. Teachers publicly expressed their appreciation to leadership for the opportunity to receive their vaccines.

"We had a total of 850 vaccines, which is more than the number of our people residing in Thompson, so that is why it was opened up to the other nations," shared Chief Monias. I am sure that once other pop up clinics are opened, they will also offer to vaccinate our people. We were able to vaccinate other First Nations people who presented themselves at our clinic. We actually received vaccines from another First Nation (Nelson House) so that their people living in Thompson could be vaccinated as well."

"The only First Nations people we couldn't vaccinate are the children," stated Chief Monias. "They are left vulnerable to this virus. We decided to look at their bubble or circle of life and make it safer! Our children have not been vaccinated and we must do everything we can to save them from this virus. We must look at their bubble and do what we can to make that bubble strong. As you know, the bubble of a child is primarily at home, hence the reason why parents must be vaccinated. But when you force a child to leave their home, you weaken that bubble so now you must enlarge that bubble to protect them. The teachers have shared their heartfelt appreciation and we thank them for getting vaccinated to protect our children."

"I just wish we could all attack this virus the way it attacks everyone and that is indiscriminately! It recognizes no boundaries, whether it is by race, age, and/or gender. It doesn't matter if you are poor or rich, which political entity you belong to, or what your occupation is," concluded Chief Monias. "Get vaccinated please. Book your appointments! If not for yourself, do it for the kids!"

Cross Lake's vaccination team will return to Thompson in mid-May to provide second doses of the Moderna vaccine to those who received their first dose in April. The First Nation is also looking to partner with Peguis First Nation to deliver a pop-up vaccine clinic in Winnipeg in the coming weeks.

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