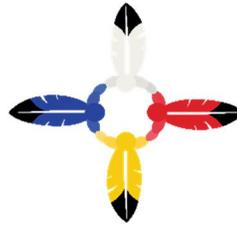




Assembly of
Manitoba Chiefs



Manitoba Keewatinowî
Okimakanak



First Nations Health and
Social Secretariat
of Manitoba

-For immediate release-

May 15, 2020

Sixteen Off-Reserve First Nations Citizens Diagnosed with COVID-19 in Manitoba

Treaty One Territory, Winnipeg, MB – The Manitoba First Nations Pandemic Response Coordination Team is sharing data today on confirmed cases of COVID-19 for First Nations citizens living in Manitoba. This data was gathered between March 27 to May 12, 2020.

The total number of COVID-19 tests performed for First Nations people living on reserve in Manitoba during this time is 1488. There are no positive cases of COVID-19 in First Nations.

There is no data available for the number of people tested off reserve. The number of First Nation people with confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 living off-reserve is 16. The majority (14) of these people lived within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority with one person living in each of the Interlake-Eastern Region and the Southern Health Region.

The most commonly reported age group for confirmed cases is 20 to 29 years old. There are significantly more cases in females (13) than in males (3). Twenty-seven per cent of the cases were acquired through travel while 73 per cent of cases were acquired through contact with a known positive case.

“I’m thankful to know there are no identified cases of First Nations people in the Northern Health Region. I commend the Chief and Councils of First Nations in Manitoba for working diligently to implement measures that have helped to keep COVID-19 out of our communities,” stated **Grand Chief Garrison Settee** of **Manitoba Keewatinowî Okimakanak**. “As we prepare for a long weekend, I want to encourage people to continue to limit their travel and be vigilant when it comes to observing public health measures that exist to help limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Let’s work together to keep this virus out of Northern Manitoba.”

“This is essential data to have for First Nations leaders as it helps to inform our response to the COVID-19 pandemic,” shared **Grand Chief Arlen Dumas** of the **Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs**. “While current data shows there are no cases in First Nations in Manitoba, there are confirmed cases for our citizens living off reserve. Thankfully the majority have recovered. I

encourage all First Nations people to get tested if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19. Continue to practice safety measures at home, in your First Nation and when you have to leave. And as part of that, listen to directions provided by Chiefs and Councils as well as public health officials as they are working to keep us all safe from this virus.”

First Nations people who have symptoms that could be from COVID-19 should not wait more than one to two days to get tested. Only those who test positive will be asked to voluntarily self-identify as First Nation. Manitoba residents can access testing by going to the closest regional health authority testing site, by calling their health care provider, or by calling the health facility in their community—if their community has a health facility. They can also access an online screening tool available here: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>

“Heading into the long weekend, we encourage people to continue to be diligent about following the effective public health measures to stop the spread and minimize the risks,” said **Chief Sheldon Kent**, Chairperson of the **First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba**. “I’d like to remind everyone of the public health measures, which include following physical distancing whenever you are outside of your home; limiting the size of your gatherings to less than 10 people; staying outside as much as possible if you are visiting with others (and still keep visits to less than 10 people); wash your hands frequently; and limit non-essential travel outside of or between communities.”

The Manitoba First Nations Pandemic Response Coordination Team will continue to work closely with the Province of Manitoba to gather and monitor data in relation to First Nations citizens being tested for the COVID-19 virus. The Team will work to share updates as they become available.

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