



## Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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### **MKO Encourages Northern First Nations to Remain Vigilant Amongst Growing Rates of COVID-19 in Manitoba**

**Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB** – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) is issuing this update to remind First Nations in Northern Manitoba to remain vigilant as confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus grow in the Province of Manitoba.

As of this morning, 196 active cases were reported for Manitoba with 6 current hospitalizations and 3 people in the Intensive Care Unit. This brings the total number of lab-confirmed positive and probable positive cases in Manitoba to 558.

“Today I am reminding everyone to continue to be vigilant in response to growing rates of COVID-19 in Manitoba,” stated **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**. “Although we have no cases in Northern Manitoba for now, we want to remind everyone to follow recommended public health measures to help prevent the spread of this virus.”

Public health measures people can take to help slow the spread of COVID-19 include practicing frequent hand washing for 20 seconds; following physical distancing measures—stay six feet away from people who are outside of your household; wearing non-medical masks when in places where physical distancing cannot be maintained; staying home if having any symptoms that could be from COVID-19; cleaning/disinfecting commonly touched surfaces; following gathering size orders; and getting tested if experiencing symptoms that last more than 24 hours.

Manitoba residents can access testing by calling the health facility in their community, going to the testing site closest to them, or by calling their health care provider. People can also use the Screening Tool available online at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/> to find out when/where they can be tested.

Most MKO First Nations had restricted travel earlier this year in response to the pandemic. MKO encourages communities north of the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel to continue to monitor and consider restricting travellers coming in and out of their First Nations in an effort to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

As of August 4, 2020, the total number of lab-confirmed positive and probable positive cases in First Nations peoples in Manitoba is 17. There are no confirmed cases in First Nations communities. There have been 10,834 tests conducted for First Nations across Manitoba since the pandemic began.

“We are living through a pandemic. We all must work diligently to help protect the health of First Nations peoples,” said Grand Chief Settee. “I encourage First Nations citizens to remain calm and not panic. Do not feel embarrassed or ashamed to seek out a COVID test if you have symptoms. Encourage others around you to get tested if they are showing symptoms. Let’s continue working together and supporting each other to help keep ourselves and our loved ones safe.”

MKO provides updates on COVID-19 online at [www.mkonorth.com/updatesoncovid19](http://www.mkonorth.com/updatesoncovid19).

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*Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 26 First Nation communities in Manitoba’s North since 1981. The MKO represents more than 72,000 First Nations people.*

