



# Tseshahat First Nation

## NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Safe Operating Plan | May 29, 2020

### Response Overview

The novel Coronavirus COVID-19 has spread very rapidly worldwide and is the cause of an unprecedented number of deaths. Many countries have insufficient capacity for testing. At the same time, many people are infectious before they show symptoms with some carrying the virus and showing no symptoms and able to transmit it to others. Therefore, it is likely that communities have a large number of people with undetected COVID-19. This is a risk for Tseshahat staff members, their families and your community.

According to the research, social distancing and frequent hand washing are the most effective methods to slow down and halt the spread of COVID-19. Given the serious threat this virus poses to our vulnerable population and healthcare systems, the Tseshahat First Nation administration office is striving to mitigate the risk for our team, their families, and the community. Although the number of cases on the island is low, it is vital to continue to take proactive steps to prevent spread of the virus.

*“For many, the transition brings anticipation, but it also, for many brings further apprehension and anxiety,” provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry said.*

*“Once again, we are still learning new ways of safe social interactions and doing things that we’ve never had to do.”*

*“As we enter this phase, (we need to) continue to think about consideration and generosity and respect for others,” she said. “That is what will get us through, with the easing of restrictions and the added social interaction and the potential for a flare-up in new cases.”*

The Tseshahat Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) advised council on May 14, 2020 that it is not opposed to the administration office reopening for staff only starting the first week of June, provided that infection numbers remain the same on the island and that appropriate precautions are taken as outlined in this plan which follows recommendations made by WorkSafe BC.

*This plan will change over time as new information becomes known and when measures adapt for the safety of staff and the Tseshahat community.*

### Tseshahat First Nation

5091 Tsuma-as Drive  
Port Alberni, BC, V9Y 8X9  
Phone: (250) 724-1225  
Fax: (250) 724-4385  
Tseshahat.com

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## Office Plan

Office is closed to non-essential staff and all visitors.

### Office Staffing

1. The office will be limited to 10 staff members in the building as best as possible on a rotating schedule.
2. Staff are encouraged to work from home and maintain contact with their supervisor/manager.
3. A regular sanitization schedule will be kept in high-touch areas in the office.

### Guidelines for staff that work in the office

- Wash your hands immediately after arriving at the office for at least 20 seconds with soap or by using the hand sanitizer available at the Welcome Center and to do so frequently while in the building.
- Avoid touching your face, mouth or eyes.
- Do not shake hands and maintain a distance of 6 feet between co-workers.
- If you are feeling unwell, please notify your supervisor/manager and leave the office as appropriate. If you are unwell, contact your supervisor/manager and stay home. Report symptoms immediately so others you may have come in contact with are aware and able to take necessary steps to prevent further spread of the virus.

### Working Remotely

We are taking this unusual time as an opportunity to experiment with new ways of working.

- Meetings – We will replace in-person meetings with video conference/teleconference as often as possible, with coworkers as well as community members. Utilize Zoom, Skype, Workplace Chat, etc.
- Collaboration – We will be using email and other technology to keep everyone up-to-date.

We want to be successful working remotely and here are some best practices to ensure this:

- Communication – Consistently communicate with your supervisor/manager what you are working on and from where you are working.
- Scheduling – Communicate with your supervisor/manager/team about your availability when it changes outside of regular office hours.

### Welcome Center

1. Welcome Center will be staffed to receive phone calls, receive and distribute mail and perform sanitization tasks including, but not limited to, wiping high-touch areas and ensuring hand sanitizer is available at the Welcome Center. This sanitization schedule to be developed by Communications Coordinator and posted within the Welcome Center. Welcome Center staff to be familiarized with cleaning products anytime there is a change (e.g. various sprays or wipes).

2. Welcome Center staff will scan incoming correspondence and forward to applicable personnel. Hard copies will be available after a 4-day quarantine period.
3. A plexiglass shield will be put up at the Welcome Center to protect staff.
4. Welcome Center staff will keep a daily record of non-staff visitors; first and last names as well as telephone numbers. Staff arranging in-person meetings (only if absolutely necessary) at the office are to notify the Welcome Center in advance.

### Meetings

1. Meetings with community members will only be held in person if it is absolutely necessary upon approval by supervisor//manager and by appointment only.
2. If an in-person meeting must be held, Boardroom 1 or the Great Room may be used according to number of people attending the meeting and space availability and the staff member's comfort level for distancing purposes.
3. Meeting spaces are to be cleaned with appropriate sanitizer after meetings by Welcome Center staff if available, and if no Welcome Center staff available will be cleaned by meeting organizer or delegate.

### Sanitization schedule

1. High-touch areas will be sanitized at minimum every 2 hours in designated areas with appropriate cleansers/ disinfectants by Welcome Center staff.
2. Cleaning staff (evening cleaning) to disinfect high-touch areas along with their regular cleaning duties.
3. If cleaning supplies run low and become unavailable, the Executive Director will take measures to reduce number of staff in the office.

### Travel Postponement

We are postponing all work-related travel unless absolutely essential. We recommend that you also postpone all non-essential personal travel. If you must travel, take necessary precautions recommended by health authorities to prevent being infected by COVID-19.

### Sickness

If you experience symptoms of COVID-19, particularly a fever and cough, if you have been to an area with an outbreak or if you have been in close contact with an infected person, please contact the health authorities for further advice.

### Staying Safe

Please be aware of your role in our community to help stop the spread:

- Contact - Avoid physical contact, such as handshakes, etc.
- Hygiene - Wash your hands. Avoid touching your face, eyes, mouth and nose.
- Events - Avoid events with 10 people or more and stay 6 feet away from others at events.
- Coughing/sneezing - Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, ideally with disposable paper.

## Mental Wellbeing

Please take the time to care for your mental wellbeing. Based on the World Health Organization's guidelines, here are some helpful principles to follow:

- Anxiety - If you are feeling anxiety, avoid watching, reading or listening to news that may increase your distress. Use news to take practical steps, and set aside a couple times per day to review the news, versus a continuous stream.
- Stress - If you are feeling stressed, take a break and do something relaxing, such as reading a book, going for a walk in nature or watching a television show.
- Empathy - If you are upset, be empathetic to the others around you that may also have higher levels of anxiety and stress.
- Language - Be careful in the language that you use by being thoughtful in your wording and by referring to “people who have COVID-19”, “people who are being treated for COVID-19”, and “people who are recovering from COVID-19.”

## Second Wave Strategy

In the event that a second wave is imminent or occurring, this office will resume the measures previously taken to close the office to all but the most essential staff to provide services to the community to the best of our ability and as safely as possible, with the rest of staff working from home.

## Conclusion

We believe these measures will help keep you, your family and our community safe. Our approach is based on learning what has worked in areas that have successfully contained COVID-19. We will continue to update our plan as information is updated as to when we will eventually settle into our “new normal”.

While this is an uncertain time, by working together and taking the measures needed, we can stop the spread of the virus and protect most vulnerable members of our society. Thank you for your help.

Darren Mead-Miller,  
Executive Director

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## Resources

- Tsshaht COVID-19 information web page: <https://tsshaht.com/covid-19-pandemic/>
- The B.C. Ministry of Health’s COVID-19 self assessment tool: <https://covid19.thrive.health/>
- The First Nations Health Authority: <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>
- Health Canada updates: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>
- NTC nurses are available by telephone for guidance: <https://hashilthsa.com/news/2020-03-19/nurses-now-available-phone-coronavirus-help>

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