



Tseshahst First Nation

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Safe Operating Plan | March 31, 2021

Response Overview

The novel Coronavirus COVID-19 continues to 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 Tseshahst 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 Tseshahst First Nation administration office is striving to mitigate the risk for our team, their families, and the community. It is vital to continue to take proactive steps to prevent spread of the virus.

On March 30, 2021 the Tseshahst Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) updated administration on recommendations to promote safety for community and staff. The recommendations were accepted by administration and are implemented starting at midnight on Tuesday, March 30, 2021 as outlined in this plan as follows.

This plan will continue to be re-evaluated over the course of the pandemic as new information becomes known and when measures adapt for the safety of staff and the Tseshahst community.

Tseshahst First Nation

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

Office Plan

The Administration Office is closed to non-essential staff and all visitors; essential services to members continue to be provided.

Non-medical masks MUST be put on before exiting a vehicle in the parking lot and at all times in common areas within the administration office. Staff do not need to wear masks while alone in their offices.

Office Staffing

1. The office will be limited to 10 staff members in the building to ensure staff whose duties can only be conducted at the office may do so with minimal risk.
2. Staff will work from home and maintain contact with their supervisor/manager.
3. Staff are expected to respond to phone calls, voicemails and emails from coworkers and community members as usual.
4. Supervisors/managers are responsible for setting work expectations with their staff.

Welcome Center

1. The Welcome Center will be staffed during regular office hours to receive and direct phone calls, receive deliveries, and perform other duties as necessary.
2. Welcome Center staff will ensure the contact tracing sheets are filled out by anyone entering the building; first and last names as well as telephone numbers, and administer a health check questionnaire including using an infrared thermometer to check for fever.
3. Only Welcome Center (WC) staff are permitted in the WC desk space. This is considered an office space and WC staff do not need to wear masks while at the desk. WC staff will pass items from mail slots to staff as needed.

Guidelines for staff that work in the office

- Only two staff members may be in an office at the same time and masks must be worn.
- Wash 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.
- When working in the office, use sanitizing wipes or spray to disinfect your door handle, light switch and high-touch areas in your office at least once per day.
- Avoid touching face, mouth or eyes.
- Do not shake hands and maintain a distance of 6 feet between coworkers.
- If feeling unwell, notification will be made to supervisor/manager and leave the office as appropriate. Staff are not to attend the office if unwell and will notify

supervisor/manager. Symptoms will be reported immediately to be able to take necessary steps to prevent further spread of the virus.

- Executive Director will maintain contact with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) for regular updates on the status of the pandemic and provide updates to the management team.

Working remotely

We are taking this unusual time as an opportunity to experiment with new ways of working. All staff should be prepared to work at home if directed to do so and should speak to their manager/supervisor if they require equipment or need support learning how to work in this way.

- Meetings – We will replace in-person meetings with video conference/teleconference with coworkers as well as community members. Utilize Zoom, Skype, Workplace Chat, etc.
- Managers will meet remotely to check in on a regular basis.
- Collaboration – We will be using email and other technology to keep everyone up-to-date.

We want to be successful working remotely; some best practices to ensure this:

- Communication – Consistent communication with supervisor/manager and appropriate coworkers.
- Scheduling – Communicate with your supervisor/manager/team about availability when it changes outside of regular office hours.
- Tolerance – Assume the best of intentions with written messaging. Without in-person interaction, it may be harder to interpret the meaning and tone of a message. If you are unsure, follow up by telephone. It is times like these when we should be especially careful to maintain positive communications.

Sanitization schedule

1. High-touch areas will be sanitized on a regular basis with appropriate cleansers/disinfectants.
2. Cleaning staff (evening cleaning) will 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.

Tseshah facilities

- Tseshah facilities are closed for public use, including meetings during or after office hours.
- All meetings with non-Administration persons are encouraged to be held remotely, at an alternate location, or after regular office hours.

Travel postponement

All work-related travel is postponed unless absolutely essential. We recommend that both members and staff postpone all non-essential personal travel. If travel is unavoidable, please take necessary precautions recommended by health authorities to prevent being infected by COVID-19.

COVID-19 testing and positive results

If experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, particularly a fever and cough, or have been to an area with an outbreak or if close contact has been made with an infected person, use the BCCDC self-assessment tool to determine whether you need to get tested:

While waiting for results:

- 1) **Monitor your health.** If you feel unwell, call your own health care provider, Community Health Nurse (CHN), provincial nurse line (8-1-1 24 hours a day, seven days a week) or the First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day program (call 1-855-344-3800, appointments seven days per week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).
- 2) **Self-isolate.**

If you test positive:

- 1) You and the people you live with need to self-isolate now. Public health will contact you.
- 2) Monitor your health. Contact your health care provider, 8-1-1 or the First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day program (1-855-344-3800) if you are concerned about your symptoms.

Returning to work

I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms

You can be with others after

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving

Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation

If you had severe illness from COVID-19 (you were admitted to a hospital and needed oxygen), your healthcare provider may recommend that you stay in isolation for longer than 10 days after your symptoms first appeared (possibly up to 20 days) and you may need to finish your period of isolation at home.

I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after:

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- 10 days have passed since the date you had your positive test

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for “I think or know I had COVID, and I had symptoms.”

I had COVID-19 or I tested positive for COVID-19 and I have a weakened immune system

If you have a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) due to a health condition or medication, you might need to stay home and isolate longer than 10 days. Talk to your healthcare provider for more information.

Your doctor may work with an infectious disease expert at your local health department to determine when you can be around others.

I had symptoms of COVID-19 and tested negative

If you have symptoms continue to isolate until your symptoms resolve. If your symptoms worsen, contact your health care provider or call 8-1-1.

If you were exposed to a case of COVID-19 continue to self-isolate for 14 days from your last contact with a case of COVID-19. If you develop symptoms, continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started OR 14 days from when you started self-isolating, whichever is longer. If your symptoms worsen, contact your health care provider or call 8-1-1.

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.
- Signage will be posted in common gathering areas alerting staff to the risks. This will include the Welcome Center, copy room and coffee room, and other areas identified during the course of time. While there is a cleaning routine in place to disinfect high-touch areas throughout the day, staff are reminded to be personally responsible for their own safety. E.g., do not assume that the copy machine has been cleaned in between your use and use by someone before you. Wash your hands after touching commonly touched items such as the copy machine, washroom doors, coffee room supplies, etc.
- Supervisors/managers are responsible for ensuring their staff are familiar with this plan.

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.”

Services to members

Social Assistance cheques will be handed out to members in front of the Administration Office on the last day of the month.

Maht Mahs is closed for all activities.

Fitness gym is closed for all activities.

Family Center is open for counselling only, two people maximum in the building at all times.

Food boxes will continue to be provided while funding permits.

Programs that were currently scheduled are now cancelled unless otherwise advertised.

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 revise our plan as information is updated.

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 community.

Thank you for your continued patience and help.

Chris Anderson,
Acting Executive Director

Resources

- Tseshahat COVID-19 information web page:
<https://tseshaht.com/covid-19-pandemic/>

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- 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>