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Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

# COVID-19 GN Update

May 28, 2020

## Premier's update:

Good morning. There are still no confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19 in Nunavut.

Today, the total number of people under investigation to date is 1,044. 124 people are currently under investigation.

We have extended Nunavut's Public Health Emergency for an additional two weeks, until June 11.

Let's stay safe and aware as we head into another weekend. COVID-19 is still a threat, even as we ease restrictions and slowly work into our new normal. Wash your hands often, keep two metres apart and practice physical distancing, and stay home if you feel at all sick.

We all need to work together and be committed, to make sure we can continue on Nunavut's Path.

We have several updates from Dr. Patterson and my colleagues this morning, so I will let them get right to it.

For the latest COVID-19 information and GN Departments updates in all languages:

<https://www.gov.nu.ca/health/information/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>; <https://www.gov.nu.ca>



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## Chief Public Health Officer update

Good morning. I'd like to take this opportunity to clarify the conditions required in order for us to consider altering the current border measures in place. I have previously indicated that the border restrictions currently in place will likely be among the final public health measures that are lifted.

This is because right now travel into Nunavut from outside of the territory represents the highest risk. If we want to continue Nunavut's Path, and remove additional public health measures inside the territory, then we need to maintain our strict travel measures. This is our best chance to both return to the activities we enjoy and the programs we depend on, while still protecting the health and safety of Nunavummiut.

With that said, fulfillment of any of the following conditions may influence decisions to alter our border measures.

- Development of a vaccine for COVID-19. We've already discussed this, and though it is unlikely that a vaccine will be developed and readily available in the near future, it is still a factor that would greatly influence all of our public health measures;
- Development or discovery of an effective treatment for COVID-19;
- Indication that COVID-19 is under control in our neighboring jurisdictions. This means that beyond just decreasing case numbers, we would need to see evidence that community transmission in neighboring jurisdictions is minimal and contained;
- And finally, achievement of sustainable and on-going diagnostic capacity in every community in Nunavut.

Unfortunately, many of these factors are outside of our control, but we will continue to monitor the evolving global situation. As always, our decisions surrounding the border measures will be guided by evidence and will be designed to protect and preserve the health and safety of Nunavummiut throughout this global pandemic.

I would like to remind Nunavummiut that as of Monday, June 1, playgrounds, territorial parks, and daycares are permitted to open, and the size of outdoor gatherings may increase to 25. On June 1, we will also begin our bi-weekly announcements on the assessment and potential easing of additional public health measures. The reason we have chosen two weeks as our interval of choice is straightforward. All evidence suggests that 14 days is the maximum incubation time for COVID-19. So, this 14-day window will give us an opportunity to assess the situation around us and make informed decisions based on the latest information available.

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Please remember that if a threat is detected, we may need to react immediately. We will provide as much warning as possible, but we may need to introduce additional public health measures right away.

Finally, the Department is issuing a Public Health Advisory to the community of Sanikiluaq due to the detection of pertussis, also known as whooping cough. Whooping cough is a disease of the throat or lungs that is spread easily from person to person. Anyone can get whooping cough, but the most severe cases are in young children. For that reason, the daycare in Sanikiluaq must remain closed for the time being.

Thank you.

## **Minister of Community and Government Services update**

Ullaakkut,

With the construction season upon us the Government of Nunavut (GN) has undertaken necessary preparations for construction projects to proceed during the summer and fall of 2020 in 19 Nunavut communities.

This includes over 50 capital projects valued at approximately \$600 million. Given the significant size of our construction program, we rely on a certain level of skilled workers from southern Canada to work on these projects alongside our Inuit and Northern labour.

In consultation with Dr. Patterson, arrangements have been made to ensure that all southern workers comply with the strict requirement of the 14-day isolation period before travelling to Nunavut. The GN will control and monitor these measures at the isolation facilities in the south during the 14 days including up until workers board their flights.

This follows the procedures for residents and medical travellers already in place.

We need to balance the long-term infrastructure needs of communities with the current COVID-19 restrictions and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the municipalities, especially our mayors and councillors, for taking an active role in the decision to proceed with these projects during the 2020 construction season.

I also would like to acknowledge the construction companies for their understanding of, and the need to respect, the directives set by Dr. Patterson to ensure that the

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construction projects move ahead with an understanding of maintaining the health and well-being of the workers and all Nunavummiut.

Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are looking forward to a safe and productive construction season this summer.

Thank you.

## **Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the WSCC update**

Good morning everyone.

I am pleased to announce that the Government of Nunavut (GN) is launching a new program, the Nunavut Essential Workers Wage Premium. Through it, the GN will fund eligible employers to pay their lower-wage workers more for the hours they work.

Employees who earn \$20 or less per hour will be able to receive an extra \$5 per hour. Employees who earn between \$20 and \$25 per hour will receive enough to bring their wages up to \$25 per hour. Funding will be available for employers to support this higher pay for up to 16 weeks.

To start, our government is targeting employers who provide health and social services to vulnerable Nunavummiut. These include our shelters, group homes, food banks, boarding homes, and similar organizations. We are also opening this program to licensed daycare facilities.

The GN will consider expanding eligibility to employers in other sectors over time, depending on program take-up and funding availability.

The GN's Department of Finance will administer the program with funding from the Government of Canada. We will begin accepting applications from employers on Monday, June 1.

Application forms and more information about this program will be available on the Department of Finance's website starting Monday.

I strongly encourage employers in the sectors I mentioned to apply for the Nunavut Essential Workers Wage Premium.

As COVID-19 restrictions begin to loosen, and workplaces begin to reopen, I encourage employers to be proactive in their efforts to ensure their workplaces are safe and

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healthy for employees and the public and are following the public health advice for COVID-19.

I invite any employer or employee to visit the WSCC website at [www.wsccl.nu.ca](http://www.wsccl.nu.ca) to check out their COVID-19 resources for more information on how to plan to safely reopen their business or return to work.

This toolkit of practical resources, support and information for Nunavut employers and employees is based on current public health information related to COVID-19, and provides guidance on how to do risk assessments at your workplace to ensure you are complying with workplace safety standards and laws.

Any employers who have questions or need assistance with completing their workplace risk assessment are invited to contact the WSCC at 1-877-404-4407 or email [Covid-19@wsccl.nu.ca](mailto:Covid-19@wsccl.nu.ca)

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As part of the Government of Nunavut's (GN) effort to protect Nunavummiut against the risk of COVID-19, GN Departments are implementing the following:

## Department of Health Services

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### COVID Hotline and Self-Assessment Tool

Anyone who has reason to believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 is advised to call the COVID hotline at 1-888-975-8601 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., or notify their community health centre right away, and immediately isolate at home for 14 days.

Anyone with access to internet can also take the online self-assessment tool [nu.thrive.health](https://nu.thrive.health)

### Volumes

Total (All Isolation Locations)	
Traveler Type	Guests in Isolation as of May 27
Medical Travel	149
Public	96
Students	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>

### Traveller repatriation summary:

Departure Date	# of Travellers from Isolation Sites
May 28	24
May 29	6
May 30	0
May 31	9
June 1	35

### Critical Worker Requests

As of May 24, there are 1,192 requests, 913 of which are critical worker requests.

Request Status	#	%
Approved (includes critical and non-critical)	1018	85.9%
Denied	135	11.3%
Pending	39	3.3%
Total	1192	100%

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## Department of Education Services

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The Department of Education has developed guidelines for child-care facility reopening, including information on enhanced cleaning and hygiene, and physical distancing during drop-off and pick-up. For more information go to:

English - <https://gov.nu.ca/education/information/child-care-facility-guidelines-re-opening-june-1-2020>

Inuktitut - <https://gov.nu.ca/iu/education/information/pairivvinnut-atuagait-matuikanniqpata-juuni-1-2020mit>

Inuinnaqtun - <https://gov.nu.ca/in/ilinniagtuliqiyikkut/information/nutaqqiqiviit-igluqpaini-maligahat-angmaffaaqata-imarugtirviani-1>

French - <https://gov.nu.ca/fr/education/information/directives-pour-la-reouverture-des-etablissements-de-garde-denfants-le-1er>

## Department of Environment Services

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Territorial parks in Nunavut will reopen on June 1, 2020. All park buildings will remain closed, and the parks will be available for outdoor activities only. The Nunavut limits on outdoor gatherings of more than 25 people will apply in territorial parks as well.

Nunavummiut's health is our shared responsibility! Remember: wash your hands and surfaces, practice social distancing, listen to the advice of health officials, and stay home if you're sick.

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