



# COVID-19 GN Update

May 4, 2020

## Premier's update:

Good afternoon. As we announced earlier, there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Nunavut. Last week's result was a false positive.

I'm sure many people are very relieved, especially the individual, their family and community of Pond Inlet. I'll ask Dr. Patterson to explain how he and his team determined it was a false positive, and the system in place to capture this.

Today, the total number of people under investigation to date is 703. 266 people are currently under investigation and 437 people are no longer under investigation.

As I announced last week, any Nunavut resident who voluntarily leaves the territory after May 7 and wants to return will need to pay for their 14-day isolation stay until our travel restrictions are lifted. Medical travel patients will not be expected to pay.

COVID-19 has changed almost everything, and these are uncertain times. Most of us won't have the summer vacation we planned.

It's not a government responsibility to pay for isolation for those who choose to travel despite advice from our Chief Public Health Officer not to do so. We all have a role to play in keeping Nunavut safe.

Isolation hubs have cost this government over \$2 million so far. As we fight COVID-19 in Nunavut, we need to focus our funds on other things like keeping our airlines operating, procuring essential supplies, and ensuring our economy stays afloat.

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

At this time, I would like to inform Nunavummiut that the test result showing COVID-19 has turned out to be a false positive result. This means that although the first test result showed COVID-19 infection, further investigation and testing have not shown any other evidence of COVID-19 infection in Pond Inlet.

As I have previously mentioned, no lab test is perfect. There is always a chance of false positive or false negative results. When interpreting results and deciding on an appropriate course of action, we consider many pieces of information, of which test results are just one piece. We always aim to err on the side of caution.

Diagnostic tests are part of an entire system of measures to intervene on COVID-19 infection. In these circumstances the test gave an incorrect result, but the rest of the system (public health nurses, contact tracing, surveillance) have not identified any other cases of COVID-19 infection.

The information available so far includes:

- The individual involved has not been outside of Pond Inlet for some time.
- We have not identified an exposure to COVID-19.
- We have not found any other cases of COVID-19 in Pond Inlet.
- We have not noticed any increase in significant respiratory infections.

For all of the reasons above we believe that the individual in Pond Inlet does not, and never did have COVID-19. As a result, our rapid response team will stop operating in Pond Inlet and the members of the team will begin preparing for future deployments. All territorial orders under the Public Health Emergency remain in effect.

However, the additional measures specific to Pond Inlet as a result of the positive COVID-19 case are now lifted. Effective immediately, travel between Pond Inlet and other Nunavut communities may resume, and the community-specific restrictions on businesses and services in Pond Inlet are also rescinded.

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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 3
Medical Travel	187
Public	125
<b>Total</b>	<b>312</b>

### Traveller repatriation summary:

Departure Date	# of Travellers from Isolation Sites
May 3	14
May 4	58
May 5	11
May 6	17
May 7	23

### Critical Worker Requests

As of May 3, there are 840 requests, 643 of which are critical worker requests.

Request Status	#	%
Approved (includes critical and non-critical)	698	83.1%
Denied	100	11.9%
Pending	42	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>100%</b>

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## **Ongoing services:**

Access to health care services will remain available in all communities seven days a week. All non-urgent requests will be triaged daily. Immediate access to urgent and emergent health care services are and will continue to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All clients are asked to call before presenting at a health facility.

- In Iqaluit, public health, the emergency room and inpatient unit will remain open.
- Well baby clinics, prenatal visits and immunizations are continuing across Nunavut.
- Physicians will continue community visits. If this is not possible, the visits will be conducted by telehealth or by phone.

## **Adjusted services:**

Appointments at health facilities are being triaged, this means the appointment may be over the phone or in person.

Medical travel services have been reduced to urgent medical travel only. Clients will be advised of these changes and involved in discussions.

In Iqaluit, outpatient clinics and rehab are triaging all appointments and conducting appointments. Lab and Diagnostic Imaging services at QGH are on reduced services. All upcoming appointments are being triaged.

MHA has moved to telephone check in and support for some clients. Scheduled appointments for medication pick up and administration remain the same. If you are in crisis, present to the health centre. Home visits to administer medications will be treated on a case by case basis.

## **Closed /Cancelled/Suspended services:**

Only emergency dental services will be provided in until further notice.

Speciality clinics have been cancelled. Work is underway to determine which clients can be seen by phone/virtual care.

All non-essential travel for mental health clients and families are cancelled. All non-essential travel for families visiting clients in care is cancelled.

No visitors will be allowed at long term care facilities in Nunavut – Continuing Care Centres (CCCs) and Elders' Homes.

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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