



## **UPDATE FROM CHIEF REG NIGANOBE**

**MARCH 18, 2020**

Aanii/Boozhoo,

The corona virus continues to spread across Canada and the world. Coronavirus is expected to continue to spread as these current actions being taken are only meant to slow the infection rate. Precautions are being taken by countries worldwide at this point. As you may have witnessed on the news today, all non-essential travel between the U.S and Canada was halted.

Mississauga First Nation leadership, managers and Health Care providers have been monitoring the situation and making adjustments as we receive information. Due to the nature of the virus and current data on COVID-19 we have asked all non-essential staff working for Mississauga First Nation to work from home for the remainder of the month. We will re-evaluate at the end of the month if staff will need to continue to work from home into throughout April. Staff will continue to be paid during this time and will still be expected to respond to emails and work within the limited abilities they will have. Nursing Staff will continue to be available at health clinic and will screen people for COVID-19 symptoms as they enter Health clinic as a precaution. Public Works will continue to operate to ensure the Water Treatment facility is operating properly as well as monitor road and melting snow conditions. Mississauga Daycare has closed and will be closed indefinitely until advised to reopen in April (or longer).

As indicated earlier, we have cancelled all travel for staff along with Chief and Council outside Mississaugi. We have also cancelled all visitors and presentations that were scheduled to visit Mississaugi. All community gatherings, meetings, and

activities have been cancelled until April, possibly longer depending on the spread of the virus. Chief and Council will continue to meet with the Director of Operations and Health Nurses to keep updated and make informed decisions as we continue through this.

Staff who travelled outside of Canada have been asked to quarantine themselves at home for 14 days prior to the office shutdown. The Government of Canada has stated, anyone who is currently outside of Canada and shows signs of COVID-19 infection will not be permitted to board planes. Additionally, anyone who is allowed to board planes is subject to 14-day quarantine upon returning home. If community members have travelled outside of Canada, to the U.S or otherwise, please quarantine yourself at home for the next 14 days and self-monitor your health.

We have, to this point, only one confirmed case of COVID-19 in the Algoma district, which was reported, and is being treated in Sault Ste. Marie, ON. As I write this message there are currently no other confirmed cases. We will continue to monitor this situation. Our Health Care providers within Mississaugi will continue to offer their services however we may alter the means of service. Soon you will receive info indicating that doctor appointments and visits will be conducted by telephone. Elders will soon have nurse Tanya Bates gathering information and developing ways to have medications and prescriptions picked up and delivered to their doorstep (with minimal contact) if she hasn't done so already. For those who are immuno-compromised and need the same assistance please contact Health and Social Services to make arrangements.

Food and grocery delivery are being implemented for Elders and immuno-compromised, contact numbers and food delivery direction will be given to you shortly. The food bank will also remain open and provide available service to those who will need it. Services will be conducted by order and delivery. We are currently looking for volunteers for future deliveries: please submit your name to [directorofoperations@mississaugi.com](mailto:directorofoperations@mississaugi.com)

Please follow the handouts which have been delivered to everyone previously and will continue to be delivered on precautions to take during this pandemic. It also provides phone numbers to call if you or family members feel you have contracted the virus. The Health Teams you reach through the phone number provided will direct you to next steps. This is not your ordinary flu and Mississauga leadership is not treating it as such. Please also use the same caution in dealing with this virus, visitors to your homes and interaction you may have when in public. Please practice social distancing at this time as indicated by health professionals.

During this time please use the same practice our ancestors would use during our winter migration to the inland territories. Be prepared to be isolated from others. Prepare meals in accordance to need. Utilize the time to prepare emotionally, physically and spiritually. Take the time to venture outdoors on your own, or with your family and reconnect with our territory. Explore some of significant areas within our territory. However, one thing that will be different from our ancestors' practices, you have access to outside communication and services. Plan your home activities to occupy your day. Utilize communication capabilities to reconnect with your loved ones. Make a plan to have people check-in on you and check-in on your loved ones to make sure everyone is doing well. This is expected to be an ongoing virus for the months to come, so please pace yourselves and remain occupied with a hobby or project.

Most importantly, however, please stay safe and use caution when dealing with the COVID-19 virus. We will continue to provide updates, monitor the situation, adjust to the ever changing and quickly changing times as we proceed throughout the following months. We are committed to keeping Mississauga citizens safe with a special emphasis on our children and Elders. Please continue to help one another, check on your friends, check on your family, and continue to lay *semaa* down for our community as we continue to remain COVID-19 free for the time being. Our stories and our teachings tell us that we've overcome many adversities and challenges. We will overcome this one too with our resourcefulness and

community unity. The other Mississauga Nations send their regards and are united through this time.

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Chief Reg Niganobe