



# Pic Mobert First Nation

## UPDATE ON COVID CONDITIONS – DECEMBER 22, 2020

This will provide our citizens an update on current COVID conditions as of December 22, 2020.

### **Ontario is Going to a Lock-Down Effective on midnight, December 26, 2020 at 12:01 a.m.**

Although the situation in our area has been improving, the virus is still circulating extensively in Ontario and each day the Province is recording well over 2,000 new cases and an increasing number of new hospitalizations and deaths.

Provincial authorities are especially worried about the possible impacts of holiday travel and gatherings, and they want to try to interrupt and slow the current high growth rates.

This lockdown includes the entire Province including all of Northern Ontario. In Northern Ontario, including Mobert, the lockdown will continue for 14 days until January 9, 2020, and then be re-evaluated.

### **What does this mean for Mobert residents?**

Perhaps the most important new rules to remember are those around who you can and cannot interact with:

- Indoor organized public events and social gatherings are not permitted except with members of the same household
- Families should not visit any other household or allow visitors in their homes
- Individuals who live alone and single parents may consider having exclusive, close contact with another household to help reduce the negative impacts of social isolation
- Maintain two metres of physical distancing from everyone outside of your household (who you do not live with)
- Wear a face covering indoors; outdoors if physical distancing cannot be maintained; or if wearing one is required
- Avoid all non-essential travel to other communities until further notice
- Grocery stores will remain open (and you are allowed to go grocery shopping to Marathon, White River, and other area communities), although most other businesses will be closed to in person shopping, or completely closed, during the lockdown
  - Stores will be limiting the number of people allowed in at any time, so lineups may happen – please try to limit shopping trips to only one person from your household – stores may only allow one person per family in the store

We understand that this is Christmas, and it is a time that we traditionally gather with our families. However, the pandemic is continuing to make people sick and take lives and we need to continue to keep our community safe.

**Please be keep yourself, your family, and your community safe by limiting contact with persons outside of your immediate household.**

*Please click this link for further guidelines on holiday gatherings. <doc attached>*

*A complete description of all the procedures can be found by clicking on this link. <doc attached>*

In Mobert, our COVID by-law and all our existing rules and guidelines will remain in effect (see below for a reminder of the most recent rules and guidelines).

Our Council has entered into an agreement with the Anishinabek Police Service and the Public Prosecution Service of Canada to enforce, places charges and prosecute charges under our COVID bylaw.

If you are genuinely concerned that someone is not following the rules and putting you, your family, and the community at a serious risk, please call the Anishinabek Police Service (1 888 310 1122) and report it, or send an email to [covidhelp@picmobert.ca](mailto:covidhelp@picmobert.ca)

In addition:

- All our offices, public buildings and the gym will remain closed to the public until January 11, 2021.
- All scheduled meetings, events, workshops, etc. are cancelled until the week of January 11, 2021.
- Elementary and secondary school students will participate in remote learning from January 4-January 8, 2021 – in-person instruction will start again on January 11, 2021 for both elementary and secondary schools

The pandemic team will continue to monitor Ontario's measures over the holidays and will update as required.

As a reminder, here are some of the other measures that are currently in place for Mobert:

1. All non-essential staff who reside outside of Mobert will be working home until January 11, 2021 – essential staff will be working from home commencing January 4, and some will continue to work through the holidays
2. Any employees who are experiencing any of the symptoms associated with COVID are required to stay away from work until their symptoms resolve (this has been effect for several months now)
3. Essential service providers will be allowed to enter the community but will be subject to strict screening procedures
4. Any visits to Mobert by non-residents, including immediate family and friends, is strongly discouraged, and should be avoided if possible

5. All Mobert residents should continue to avoid all non-essential travel to Thunder Bay and outside of Northern Ontario until further notice.
  - Essential travel would include trips to attend an important medical appointment, access counselling or other similar services that you cannot complete over a video or conference call, to visit someone in your immediate family who is seriously ill (if you can confirm that you will be allowed to visit them in hospital, etc.), to attend a funeral, and others (please consult with our Health Dept. for further guidance)
6. Persons who need to make an essential trip to Thunder Bay or outside of Northern Ontario must:
  - Contact our Health Department (Shelly Livingston, Manager) before the travel to receive instructions and guidance.
  - Provide us with information on your travel plans including departure and return dates.
  - On return, complete a COVID screening questionnaire and temperature scan; and
  - Contact the Health Manager immediately on your return for further instructions, which may include self-isolation and/or a COVID test, if precautions and conditions of travel were not followed.
7. Persons who make non-essential trips (e.g., shopping, visits) to Thunder Bay or outside of Northern Ontario will be required to self-isolate for 14 days or until such time as they have provided a negative COVID test.
8. ***No non-essential visitors from Thunder Bay or outside of Northern Ontario are permitted, and in the event of an essential visitor, non-residents must self-isolate for 14 days or until such time as they have provided a negative COVID test.***
9. All persons entering Mobert for an essential will be subjected to a full screening including completing a COVID questionnaire and temperature screening

**Note – hospitals and health units have put in new rules about travelling outside of their districts:**

If you are planning to go to the doctor in Marathon or Thunder Bay, you will be asked if you have travelled outside of Thunder Bay District – if you have, you will fail the COVID screening and you will not be allowed to enter.

There is a similar situation for health care facilities in the Algoma District – you will be asked if you have travelled outside of the Algoma District – therefore, if you have been in Marathon and are screened at the hospital in Wawa, then you will also fail the screening.

Patients experiencing emergencies are of course exempted, but their families will be screened and could be denied entry.

In addition to these measures, our citizens who are under a physician's care should consult with their physician on any additional measures that they should follow.

### **Barrick Workers Have Returned to Work**

All the 300+ persons who had been placed into precautionary self-isolation have now completed their isolation with no positive results - all are now back to work. As of today, all the 7 cases attributed to Barrick are resolved and all persons are back to work.

Barrick has implemented very strict rules and procedures working closely with and inspected by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit and the Ministry of Labour. All mine workers assigned to Barrick and Barmarco have now returned to work and are working regular hours.

### **Vaccinations to Commence in Mobert in mid-late January 2021**

Vaccines will be available to our community commencing in mid-late January 2021. Vaccinations will be managed by Dilico and coordinated locally by our Health Department.

We are expecting to be utilizing the Moderna vaccine, however this is not yet confirmed and depends on what is made available by Canada and/or Ontario. All our citizens will be eligible for vaccinations, except for persons under 16 years of age and expectant mothers, who health authorities have advised against vaccination at this time.

We are unsure at this time when vaccines arrive, and it seems that we will not receive enough vaccine at one time to vaccinate all our citizens – as such, there may be several clinics carried out over several weeks or even months. Each community is expected to provide a priority list as vaccines become available – as per national and provincial priorities, the first priority will be given to Elders, persons with compromised immunity/health conditions and front-line workers, including our health and social teams. Eventually, everyone will be given the opportunity to be vaccinated. It is also important to understand that each person will need to have two doses, and that the second dose will be administered 28 days after the first.

In order to manage traffic and keep everyone safe, the Health Centre will be confirming specific dates and times for individual appointments.

We are very pleased to be able to provide this service to our citizens in our community. Please watch our Facebook pages and postings in the community for more information in the new year.

## **Rapid Testing will be Available in January**

Barrick has recently purchased a rapid testing system for COVID that will be available to Mobert. Tests will be by appointment and managed by the Health Centre.

Test results will be available within an hour of the test being given and we will be using this for precautionary testing for employees and persons travelling out of the area for essential medical services. Further details will be provided as they become available.

## **Merry Christmas!**

This will not be a normal Christmas by any means but let us celebrate the fact that our community has worked very hard to keep the virus out and our families safe. We appreciate your sacrifices and patience.

Our health and social teams did a wonderful job with the Christmas gifts and hampers this year, and we hope that this brought some relief and joy to your homes.

Merry Christmas to our beautiful citizens!

Gimaa Kwe and Council  
Management and Staff  
Pandemic Team  
Netmizaagamig Nishnaabeg