

Advisory to the Residents of Lax Kw'alaams

COVID-19 – Advisory #28



The Emergency Measures Committee (EMC) met with Council on March 2nd, 2021 and have jointly decided for Lax Kw'alaams to be brought under a semi-lock down, effective March 4th, 2021. Our approved corridor at this time will be travel no farther than Terrace. We will revisit this in the next several weeks, depending on the cases presenting in the area.

The Lax Kw'alaams Band continues to monitor the current situation in both the Northern Region as well as throughout the Province of BC. It is noted that there has been a steady increase in Prince Rupert. On a brighter note, the numbers have been falling in BC slowly, Terrace is presently at an all time low. There are no cases presently of COVID in the community of Lax Kw'alaams.

Our First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) representative and the local Nurse In Charge (NIC) has recommended that members that have completed both series of Moderna vaccines should be able to leave Lax Kw'alaams and return safely. Additionally, BCCDC currently allows for BC residents to be able to travel for reasons of essential services within their regions.

To keep our community as safe, we all need to do our part and help each other through this new transition. We are encouraging all vaccinated residents to please be responsible, always wear your mask, wash your hands, sanitize your hands as often as possible, and when you get home, change your clothes.

Herd immunity is classified as a population of 70% or greater that have been vaccinated for COVID-19. Lax Kw'alaams has reached that threshold and has hit approximately 75% of adults.

A common misunderstanding is that 95% efficacy means that in the clinical trial, 5% of those vaccinated got COVID. This is not true; the actual percentage of vaccinated people in the Moderna and Pfizer trials who got COVID-19 was about a hundred times less than that: 0.04% and their symptoms were mild. However, information changes daily, and it is still important to wear masks and wash/sanitize your hands regularly.

Many residents have now completed the second dose of the Moderna vaccine between February 11 – 22, 2020. As everyone was informed, you will be at maximum coverage 14 days post vaccination date. Starting February 25, for the ones that were vaccinated on February 11, are at maximum coverage against the main strain of COVID-19.

We feel it is safe for our vaccinated residents to leave the community safely, but please **NOTE:**

- Until children can be vaccinated, it is not recommended that children leave the community, as they can pick up and transmit COVID to our elders, their friends and members that are not vaccinated
- If a child must travel with their vaccinated parent(s) or guardian(s), upon their return - children will be required to isolate for 14-days. Since our school is already set up for home school, children can do their school from home for the 14-day period.
- Parents that are vaccinated and have surpassed the 14 day threshold following their 2nd dose, are not required to isolate.



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Even though you have been vaccinated it is imperative to wear your mask at all times, and sanitize your hands at every opportunity. **Masks are required in all public buildings in Lax Kw'alaams.**

We strongly suggest that until a vaccine is available for children, or the threat of contracting COVID-19 from Prince Rupert and surrounding areas has diminished, and we are declared clear, that children do not travel.

Please understand we are one of only a few communities in BC that has not contracted COVID-19 and we would like to keep everyone safe. We are encouraging all members to not travel if you do not have to, until Prince Rupert is declared clear.

Residents that have been vaccinated may travel, however:

- Only vaccinated residents will be allowed to travel.
- It is advised to keep travel to a minimum.
- If you don't need to travel, please stay home.
- If you must travel for medical, and you have not made your 14 days post 2nd vaccination, you must isolate on return up the 14 day post vaccination date.
- Any resident that has not been vaccinated but wishes to be vaccinated, will get another opportunity when vaccines are made available
- FNHA and Northern health are working diligently with BCCDC to have the vaccine available ASAP
- We will let you know when our next vaccine campaign will happen.

Currently there is no confirmed variants reported in the North. This will be closely monitored and if the variant does arrive in the North, we will meet again immediately to discuss the next possible steps.

- Any resident that is not vaccinated and is in need of medical attention will be followed by medical staff and have appropriate patient travel forms for passage on the ferry. Please remember if you fall into this category you are expected to follow the 14 day isolation upon return. The violations of this restriction will remain in place, and fines will be levied as per EMC committee agreement.
- Any resident traveling must have their Vaccine Card present and be able to verify they have passed their 14 days. \$750.00 fine will be applicable for violations.

BCCDC is an important web site to refer to if you have questions or concerns, or come to the clinic and ask a nurse, as this site can be difficult to navigate.

Please be kind, and please keep our community safe. If we all watch out for each other, we will get through this. There is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Members are encouraged to wear masks AT ALL TIMES outside of the household (including public buildings), and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer frequently.

If you have further questions, please contact Lisa Green, Assistant to the CAO, at 250-625-3293 ext. 242

Be safe,

Garry Reece
Mayor



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