



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

INFORMATION UPDATE | FEBRUARY 24, 2020

CORONAVIRUS

UPDATE

FNHA Novel Coronavirus FEBRUARY 24, 2020

There have been a total number of seven confirmed coronavirus cases in the province to date. Of these seven cases, the first case has recovered and the others remain in self-isolation and under care from public health teams.

While the risk to First Nations people in British Columbia from this virus continues to be low, the threat is being taken seriously. The First Nations Health Authority is working with our provincial partners and the Public Health Agency of Canada to actively monitor the situation. Protocols are in place to screen for infections in any returning travelers and follow up on any identified cases. The Public Health Agency of Canada continues to reassure Canadians that our public health system is well positioned to identify and manage any additional cases.

The novel coronavirus causes a respiratory disease that has similar symptoms to other respiratory illnesses, including fever, dry cough, sore throat and headache. The virus is spread by droplets produced when a person with the infection coughs or sneezes. There is no reason for travelers returning from Hubei province or other locations in China who have been screened and found to be without symptoms, to be prevented from working, going to school or attending events unless instructed to do so by public health officers.

We are reminding everyone to take the following measures, which can also protect against other respiratory illnesses such as influenza:

- Frequent and thorough handwashing
- Cover your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
- Stay home when sick

We have received some questions regarding the need for community members to wear face masks for protection from coronavirus. We do not recommend that the general public wear masks. Surgical masks are not designed for this purpose and are unlikely to provide significant protection.

More information about novel coronavirus can be found on the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) website:

www.bccdc.ca/about/news-stories/stories/2020/information-on-novel-coronavirus.

Anyone who is concerned they have been exposed to – or are experiencing symptoms of – COVID-19 should contact their primary care provider, local public health office, or call 811