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# SQUAMISH NATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO COVID-19 - UPDATE #7

**April 30, 2020**

The following is an update on the Squamish Nation response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) health crisis and information for the Squamish Nation community. **Please ensure you and other members in your household understand the information contained in this update.**

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**\$1.3 MILLION COVID-19 EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND**

On April 27, 2020, the Squamish Nation Council approved sending COVID-19 relief funds to every Nation member from own source revenue. Each member can expect to receive \$315.

The disbursement will take place on June 9, 2020 for direct deposit, with cheque pickup available on June 10 & 11. A letter and notice containing additional details will be sent to all members on and off-reserve in the coming days.



## COMMUNITY MEMBER RELIEF PROGRAM

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Council passed a motion directing staff to develop a detailed budget for a Community Member Relief Program to spend up to \$1.3 million in federal Emergency Management Assistance funding to respond to the COVID-19 crisis in the community.

The funding is intended to be used for measures including:

- Support for Elders
- Food insecurity
- Educational and other support for children
- Financial assistance for those without work
- Mental health assistance and emergency response services

### Council's mandate included the following objectives:

- a. Provides resources to ensure the health, safety, security or economic well-being of S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh people and the effective functioning of Squamish Nation government.
- b. Prioritizes equitably those with greatest risk and greatest need in the health, safety, security or economic well-being of S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh people.
- c. Takes into account survey results from the Squamish Nation Covid-19 Risk and Needs Assessment.
- d. Is guided by three principles:
  - i. How do we want to be remembered?
  - ii. Think in the long term
  - iii. Make decisions based on our values as contained in our Strategic Plan

The Directors of Ayás Méh men Child & Family Services, Ta7lnewás Education, Employment, and Training, Ta na wa Ch'awát ta S̓x̓w̓éx̓wel Squamish Valley Operations, Ta na wa Ns7éy̓x̓ nitm ta Snewiyálh Language & Cultural Affairs, Ts'ixwts'ixwnítway Member Services, Est̓x̓w̓áyusem Finance, and Yúustway Health & Wellness, under the guidance of the Managing Director, prepared the proposed plan and budget.

To formulate the plan the team considered:

- the priorities set out in the motion by Council
- the survey results from the Squamish Nation COVID-19 Risk and Needs Assessment



- other sources of feedback such as comments and concerns that staff on the ground are hearing from members
- prioritizing equitably those with greatest risk and greatest need in the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh people
- Squamish Nation values as identified in the Strategic Plan

**The Community Member Relief Plan will provide support to members during the COVID-19 crisis to ensure the health, safety, security and economic well-being of Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh people and the effective functioning of the Squamish Nation government.**

### ***Overview of the Approved Community Member Relief Program Plan***

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Council approved the Relief Program Plan as presented. The total cost of the Plan is **\$1,292,212**, broken down as follows:

- **Elder support: \$255,475**
  - Includes grocery shopping program, tax preparation, meal programs, garden boxes, and more for Elders aged 60+.
- **Food insecurity: \$415,000**
  - Includes soup kitchen/food bank, grocery distribution, community gardens, and farming/greenhouses.
- **Educational & other support for children: \$63,495**
  - Includes electronic support for K-12 students, learning and activity kits, protective gear, one-on-one support, tutoring program, and more.
- **Financial assistance for those out of work: \$247,647**
  - Includes Band Member Emergency, emergency shelter, community delivery of supplies, job mentorship, and more.
- **Mental health assistance & emergency response service (homelessness): \$60,000**
  - Includes temporary housing for homeless Nation members.
- **Emergency management: \$163,395**
  - Includes contracted Guardians to educate community about physical distancing and remind non-residents of restrictions on visitors, as well as funding to set up an Emergency Operations Centre and training staff on emergency management practices.

*More information about the programs and services under the Community Member Relief Program will be shared with membership in the coming weeks.*



## RESULTS OF THE COVID-19 RISK & NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

### BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has already had a significant impact on many Squamish Nation members, with a marked increase in requests for emergency financial support, food distribution, cleaning supplies, assistance with groceries and medication for Elders, and more.

Emergency Support Services exhausted their budget within the first few weeks of the crisis, and an additional \$200,000 was transferred from the Communications budget to help meet the immediate emergency financial needs of members.

The Squamish Nation has received close to \$1.5 million in emergency funding from the Government of Canada. To help inform decision-making around how these funds, as well as additional Squamish Nation funding, should be allocated to best meet the needs of Squamish members, the Nation developed a COVID-19 Risk & Needs Assessment Survey.

The survey was launched on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, and closed the evening of Thursday, April 9, 2020. The survey was administered online only out of consideration for health and safety, but staff also reached out to a list of over 150 Elders who were identified as possibly requiring support to conduct the survey by telephone.

In total, 632 individuals aged 16 and older completed the survey.

***It is important to note that the support for which members may be eligible does not depend on how/if they responded to the survey questions.*** We recognize that the situation continues to evolve, and although someone may have not been in need at the time the survey was conducted, their needs could change drastically in just a few weeks' time. The purpose of the survey was to give us a snapshot look at the situation at the time and see where the areas of greatest need were.

### RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Survey results have been compiled and presented in a way that protects the identities of respondents.

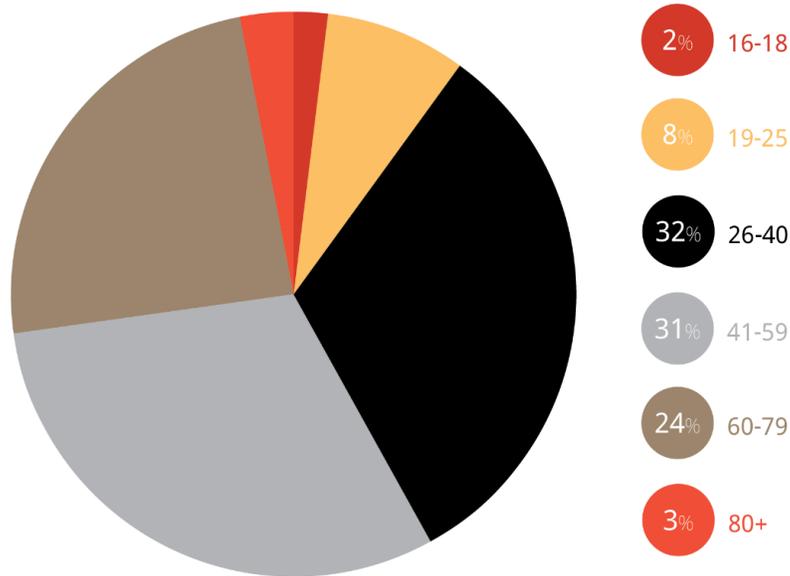
#### ***Demographics:***

- **Age:** The majority of respondents were adults (over the age of 25 and under the age of 60) — 63%, comprised of the 26-40 and 41-59 year old



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age groups. There were also a considerable number of Elders, with 27% of respondents falling into either of the 60-79 or 80+ age groups.



• **Location:**



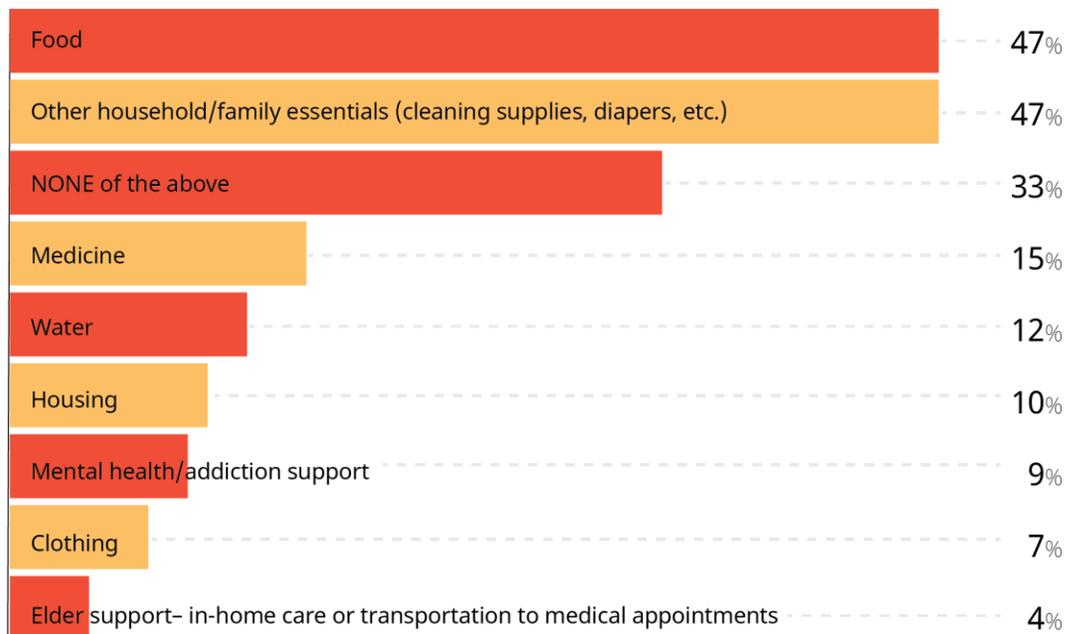


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**Risk Factors**

29% of respondents selected one or more of the factors identified as putting an individual at greater risk of contracting COVID-19, or being more severely impacted by COVID-19. (The risk factors listed were: Heart disease, Hypertension (high blood pressure), Lung disease, Diabetes, Cancer, Pregnant, People with weakened immune systems from a medical condition or treatment (such as chemotherapy), Over the age of 80.)

**"What basic needs are you at risk of being without in the next few weeks as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?"**



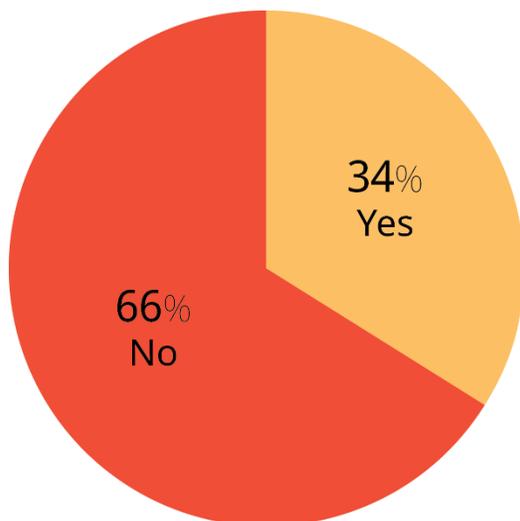
**"Do you have family or friends who are able to help support you?"**

- 58%: Yes
- 16%: No
- 27%: A bit, but not enough to meet my needs



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**"Do you have any pressing concerns for you or your immediate family's health and safety as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis?"**



Respondents who answered "yes" to the above question were prompted to write their concerns. Almost half of the responses cited health concerns (e.g., personal/family member health conditions). Other concerns that were shared by 15 or more respondents included: financial concerns, cleaning, testing, family members in need of support, enforcing social distancing, Elder support, food/ability to shop for essentials, and mental health.

**"Have you been laid off a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?"**

- 21%: Yes
- 79%: No

**"Are you a self-employed entrepreneur or business owner?"**

- 14%: Yes
  - **"Is your business of self-employed income in financial trouble as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic?"**
    - 74%: Yes
    - 26%: No
- 86%: No

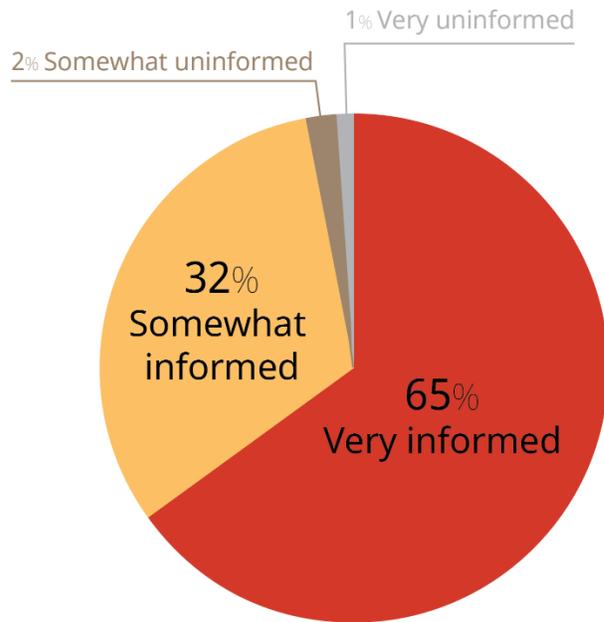
**Inability to Pay Bills**

- 6% will not be able to pay a student loan
- 5% will not be able to pay their mortgage
- 22% will not be able to pay their auto loan
- 18% will not be able to pay their full rent on May 1



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**"How informed do you feel on the most up-to-date information on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) issue?"**



**"What information are you looking for on the Coronavirus (COVID-19)?"**

The top areas that respondents indicated they would like to learn/know more about are as follows:

- **268 comments:** General COVID-19 information (symptoms, prevention, what to do once you are sick/recovered, daily updates, cleaning practices, immunity once recovered, origin of virus, virus on surfaces, statistics, how it affects at risk people with health conditions)
- **56 comments:** Where the COVID-19 infections/cases are in the province (what areas/towns, # of cases, # recovered, # deaths)
- **46 comments:** Financial Supports and Information (Government and SN; what if you don't qualify for EI/CERB; long-term plan if this goes longer than 4 months; support for members with disabilities/health issues)
- **37 comments:** Timeline for COVID-19 measures/bans (expected end date)



## FOLLOW-UP/NEXT STEPS

In some instances, survey respondents shared details of specific concerns and requests for support (“Do you have any pressing concerns for yourself or your immediate family’s health and safety as a result of the COVID-19 crisis?”) from one or more of our departments. If they indicated that they would like to be contacted if the Squamish Nation is able to help, their requests for support were forwarded to the appropriate departments for follow-up.

We are doing our best to triage requests for assistance based on the urgency and level of need, but endeavor to follow up with all those who expressed concerns that can be addressed by staff.

***If you or your family is in urgent need of emergency support, please do not wait for a call/email; phone 604-980-4553 and ask to speak to an Intake Officer.***

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## REDUCTIONS IN REMUNERATION AND TRAVEL ALLOWANCE FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

The Squamish Nation is anticipating a reduction in revenue for the 2020-2021 fiscal year due to impacts to the economy from COVID-19 public health orders. The Squamish Nation administration is implementing cost-saving measures as a result of the anticipated loss of revenue, including but not limited suspension of regular travel allowances, changes in pay, hours, and layoffs.

Given the circumstances, the Squamish Nation Council feel it is important to demonstrate leadership by implementing additional cost-saving measures during the COVID-19 crisis.

On April 24, Council approved a motion to temporarily amend Section

8.18 of the Governance Policy by implementing a 10% reduction in remuneration (pay) for all Squamish Nation Elected Officials for 90 days starting April 20, 2020, or until the Squamish Nation administration offices fully re-open, for an approximate savings of \$30,420.

The Squamish Nation Council also approved a suspension of travel and incidentals allowance for three monthly payments, except for situations where travel is absolutely required and approved by Co-Chairs and will be processed as mileage as per the Squamish Nation Administrative Policy, or until the Squamish Nation administration offices fully re-open for an approximate savings of \$33,600.



## **SUPPORT FOR ELDERLY (65+) DURING COVID-19**

### ***North Vancouver (on-reserve):***

Call 604-505-3776 or 604-374-1126 for assistance with:

- Grocery pick-up and delivery
- Pharmacy/prescription pick-up and delivery

Call Barb Baker or Nadine Reginald at Yuustway Health Department (604-982-0332) to schedule a ride to any medical or specialist appointments.

### ***Squamish Valley (on and off-reserve):***

Please call Justine Jordan (604-848-5190) or Gwen Baker (604-815-3445) for assistance with:

- Grocery pick-up and delivery
- Pharmacy/prescription pick up
- Medical appointments (in town and out of town) if there is no one in your household that can take you.

**Any member in urgent need of emergency financial support is asked to phone 604-980-4553 and speak to an Intake Officer.**

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## **"ARE THERE ANY COVID-19 CASES IN OUR COMMUNITY?"**

A question we've been hearing from a lot of members is "are there any COVID-19 cases in our community?"

We are not aware of any active cases on our reserves; however, the health authorities also don't share that information with us, as it cannot be disclosed under the BC Privacy Act.

*We do know* that COVID-19 is out there in the wider community, with new cases being reported every day. Even though the virus may not have reached Squamish Nation members yet, it is important to remain vigilant and take every precaution to protect yourselves and those in your household. Medical experts believe that, until a vaccine is created, nobody is immune to COVID-19.

Please continue to exercise great caution when running essential errands, wash your hands and disinfect thoroughly, and practice physical and social distancing from anyone who does not reside in your household.



## SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

If you are in a crisis and require Emergency (financial) Assistance please call the main office at 604-980-4553 during office hours and ask to speak to an Intake Officer. After hours, please call our emergency lines at 604-505-3776 or 604-374-1126

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## TAX PREPARATION SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

- Until April 30<sup>th</sup>, Elders and Income Assistance clients will be prioritized. Service will be opened up to other members after April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- All services will be provided remotely (telephone and/or online) by the Finance Department, with support from PWC (tax firm), due to COVID-19 safety measures.

### How to access tax preparation support:

- Call Robert Michels at 604-982-8612 (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am–4:30 pm ONLY), or Ryan Rowat (PWC) at 604-806-7000, ext 4074, or Dominic Terrado (PWC) at 604-495-8966 ext 3642. PWC calls will be answered during regular working hours. If leaving a voicemail for PWC, please indicate that it is related to the tax returns.

*OR*

- Visit [www.squamish.net/taxreturnsupport](http://www.squamish.net/taxreturnsupport) to complete an online intake form

**NOTE:** The federal government announced that the regular April 30<sup>th</sup> filing deadline for personal tax returns has been extended to June 1<sup>st</sup>. However, for individuals who are eligible for the GST Credit and/or the Canada Child Benefit (both of which have been enhanced by the federal government as part of their COVID-19 relief measures), it is important to still meet the April 30 deadline to ensure quicker access to the enhanced benefits.

**For more information, visit [www.squamish.net/taxreturnsupport](http://www.squamish.net/taxreturnsupport)**



## COVID-19 BENEFIT RESOURCES GUIDE

North Vancouver-Lonsdale MLA Bowinn Ma has put together an excellent summary of the COVID-19-related resources available through the Province of British Columbia and Government of Canada.

Learn about what supports you and your family may be eligible for, and how to access them. Info available at:

<http://bowinnmama.ca/covid19/supports/> (page updated regularly)

***If you require support with applications, contact Frances: 604-345-2126 or Barb: 604-365-8826 at Stitsma.***

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## SERVICE UPDATES

***This section contains new information only. You can find details of all active programs and services listed by department at [www.squamish.net/covid-19](http://www.squamish.net/covid-19)***

### AYÁS MÉN̓MEN CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

#### **Mother Bear Child Development for Essential Workers**

Ayas Men Men will open Mother Bear Child Development on April 27, 2020 to provide child care in order to support essential workers who need to return to work.

The Province, in consultation with the Provincial Health Officer, defined a list of essential services that people rely on in their daily lives in the context of COVID-19 response and recovery. Child care will be prioritized for Squamish Nation members and staff who meet the provinces criteria as an essential worker.

Child care spaces will be prioritized in the following way:

- Tier 1 (highest priority): families employed in Health and Health Services, Social Services, Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Emergency Response. For child care, Tier 1 also includes children referred by MCFD and Delegated Aboriginal Agency social workers.
- Tier 2 (second priority): families in all other occupations not included in Tier 1 that are listed in the Essential Services Workers list.
- Tier 3 (third priority): all other families not employed in an occupation listed in the Essential Service Workers list. Accepting families in the third tier is not required but providers may at their discretion.

***Child Care COVID-19 Resources:***

For Childcare BC's Covid-19 Updates: [www.gov.bc.ca/ChildCareCovid-19Response](http://www.gov.bc.ca/ChildCareCovid-19Response)

- For the essential workers matching form: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/essential-service-child-care>

We will operate at half capacity to reduce the numbers of children and staff to increase our ability to physically distance. We have developed policies for staff and families to comply with in order to ensure we are meeting the guidelines recommended by Dr. Bonnie Henry Provincial Health Officer.

***Physical Distancing in a child care program:***

Physical distancing is challenging in a childcare setting especially with children 0-5 years of age. We will take a common sense approach.

***Procedures we have implemented:***

- Reduce contact with parents/guardians and other staff in the program
- Ensure the health, safety and dignity of children by attending to their individual needs (eg. diapering, feeding, comforting etc.)
- Children might need comfort toys, use your best judgement as how to meet this need
- Take children outside more often
- Set up small group activities.
- Increase the space between children during activities such as snack and lunch by moving or separating tables and chairs so they are farther apart.
- Make use of all the space in your facility for napping to increase space between children.
- Set up distinct areas for children who may have symptoms of illness until they can be picked.
- Discourage any food or drink sharing

If you have questions or if families are interested in accessing child care spaces please direct questions to Tanya Brown, Manager, Mother Bear Child Development, at 604-319-7286 or [Tanya\\_Brown@squamish.net](mailto:Tanya_Brown@squamish.net).

**EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

The ASA Team has received notice of approval for one of our funding applications and a small order of electronic devices has been placed, however, we do not have a delivery date at this time. Currently, we will not have the resources to meet all requests and we encourage families to continue to reach outside of the Nation for current COVID-19 supports that are in place (University support for students, public library supports, student's school). Please email [sn\\_asa@squamish.net](mailto:sn_asa@squamish.net) with any questions.



## DEPARTMENT CONTACTS

### AYÁS MÉNMEM CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES

To contact any staff member or intake service, call 604-985-4111 8:30 am-4:00 pm Monday to Friday (closed 12-1 for lunch) and leave your name, phone number, address with Reception or email [amm\\_reception@squamish.net](mailto:amm_reception@squamish.net).

After hours contact MCFD at 604-660-4927.

### BUSINESS REVENUE & SERVICES

Call 604-982-0510.

### COMMUNITY OPERATIONS

Call 604-980-8655 during regular office hours and 604-690-0729 for emergencies after hours.

### EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

**Income Assistance:** Call 604-988-8807 or 604-985-7711 and the receptionist will set up a phone appointment with an IA Officer.

**Eslha7an Learning Centre:** Call 604-985-7711 for a phone appointment.

**Stitsma Career Centre:** Call 604-985-7711 to make phone appointment for Frances Stegner or Barb Vincent in North Vancouver. For Squamish Valley services, call Devan Williams at 778-327-8129.

**Trades & Training Centre:** Call 604-980-7946 to contact staff during regular business hours.

**Xwémelch'stn Etsimxwawtxw (Capilano Littlest Ones School):** Please contact Jody Miki, Principal or Melina Joseph, Admin Assistant, at 604-985-1515 during this time.

Parents, please visit [www.capilanolittleones.weebly.com](http://www.capilanolittleones.weebly.com) for learning community updates.

**Post secondary program:** Support available remotely, contact Lisa Newman (nee Paull) 604-338-4129.

**K-12 supports:** Contact Cherie Baker for High School 778-939-9148; Vanessa Small Legs for Elementary 604-908-3265; Inclusive Education Catherine Wairimu 604-318-1569.

### FINANCE

Call 604-980-4553 to contact the Finance Department.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

Leave a voicemail at 604-985-8335 and your call will be returned, or email [hrhelpdesk@squamish.net](mailto:hrhelpdesk@squamish.net)

### LANGUAGE & CULTURAL AFFAIRS

**General Inquires:** Tracy Williams – [tracy\\_williams@squamish.net](mailto:tracy_williams@squamish.net) 604-341-8247

**Department Facebook page:** Lorraine Louis –



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[lorraine\\_louis@squamish.net](mailto:lorraine_louis@squamish.net)  
604-615-6162

**Language Nest sign-up:**

Cara Jefferson –  
[cara\\_jefferson@squamish.net](mailto:cara_jefferson@squamish.net)  
604-367-9129

**MEMBER SERVICES**

Call 604-980-4553 from 10 am-3 pm to speak to an Intake Officer. After hours emergencies or Elder requests, please call our emergency lines at 604-505-3776 or 604-374-1126.

**PLANNING & CAPITAL PROJECTS**

Call 604-649-0418 or email [housing\\_office@squamish.net](mailto:housing_office@squamish.net)

**RIGHTS & TITLE**

Call 604-982-0510 or email [Consultation\\_RightsandTitle@squamish.net](mailto:Consultation_RightsandTitle@squamish.net)

**SQUAMISH VALLEY**

Call reception at 604-892-5166 from 9:00 am-3:00 pm, Monday-Friday. For urgent requests, please contact Michelle George, Squamish Valley Administrator, at 604-356-4418

**Yuustway Home Care Workers:**

- Home Care Manager  
Samantha Clarke 604-982-0332
- Sasha Nahanee, Health Benefits Manager 604-848-4322
- Shayna Sander, Wellness Clinician 604-374-0759

- Christine Baker, Manager 604-849-3223

**Band Member Services:** Patricia Brown 604-815-9099 & Josie Harry 604-815-1936

**Education:** Call 604-892-5166 from 9:00 am-3:00 pm, Monday-Friday.

**Elders:** contact Justine 604-848-5190 or Gwen Baker 604-815-3445 for any support required.

**Employment & Training:** Devan Williams 778-327-8129

**Ayas Men Men:** To contact any staff member or intake service, call 604-985-4111 8:30 am-4:00 pm Monday to Friday (closed 12-1 for lunch) and leave your name, phone number, address with Reception or email [amm\\_reception@squamish.net](mailto:amm_reception@squamish.net).

After hours contact MCFD at 604-660-4927.

**Ayas Lam Family Program:**

- For Families - Carmen Hartle cell 604-849-3330
- Public Health Nurse Liz Grant cell 604-815-3899
- Samantha Tanas 604-848-2278

**SV Community Operations:**

Emergency Contact 604-815-7116 or [svcommopsworkorders@squamish.net](mailto:svcommopsworkorders@squamish.net)

**YÚUSTWAY HEALTH & WELLNESS**

Call 604-982-0332.



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If you are experiencing personal crisis, we recommend that you call Kuu-Us Crisis Line:

- Adults/Elders: 250-723-4050
- Child/Youth: 250-723-2040
- Toll Free Line: 1-800-588-8717

**Public Health Nurse Hours:** Laura Tayler-Hanson – Mon-Wed 9-5, [laura.tayler-hanson@vch.ca](mailto:laura.tayler-hanson@vch.ca); Karen Jorgensen – Th-Fri, 8:30-4:45, [Karen.jorgensen@vch.ca](mailto:Karen.jorgensen@vch.ca)

**FRONTLINE WORKERS:  
CHET KW'ENMANTÚMI  
(WE THANK YOU)**

Our hands go up to all the dedicated frontline and essential service workers, both those who are working for our Nation, and the Squamish Nation members who are working to keep the world turning during these challenging times.

We're in this together. We'll get through this together.

**#SquamishNationStrong**