



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

Local Containment Verbal Order Issued by Chief Public Health Officer; Update on Public Health Investigation in Fort Liard

Two week containment order in Fort Liard to prevent further transmission

YELLOWKNIFE January 16, 2021 – The Chief Public Health Officer is issuing a verbal Public Health Order pursuant to s.29 of the *Public Health Act* mandating containment measures in the Hamlet of Fort Liard for 14 days to prevent further COVID-19 transmission.

What that means

Effective immediately, and continuing for 14 days following from the date of this Order, the following measures are in effect within the Hamlet of Fort Liard:

- No gatherings of any kind at a private residence – with the exception of caregivers providing care to an individual in a private residence or regularly-scheduled childcare arrangements in a private residence . This includes indoor and outdoor gatherings.
- Non-essential businesses and facilities must close – including community centres.
- Essential businesses and facilities shall remain open with no more than 10 persons are permitted in an indoor location at one time.
- Offices may remain open provided they have no more than 10 persons in an indoor location, and physical distance of 2 metres can be maintained.
- Daycares may remain open to essential workers only.
- Schools shall close to in-person learning.
- All persons shall wear masks in any public indoor spaces, unless otherwise approved by the Chief Public Health Officer.

While not part of the containment order, non-essential travel into and out of the community of Fort Liard is strongly discouraged.

Remote work should be encouraged wherever possible.

What needs to close?

The following types of businesses and facilities must close:

- All non-essential businesses and facilities, including community and youth centres.

What is an essential business or facility?

Under the containment order, essential businesses and facilities which may remain open are:

- Grocery stores
- Gas stations
- Facilities offering health services, social support, and childcare (including home-based childcare)

Essential businesses or facilities shall follow any further directions or orders of the Chief Public Health Officer as may be provided from time to time.

Rationale for issuing containment order

Public health has assessed the risk for further transmission in the community as high due to a significant number of close contacts for confirmed cases of COVID-19.

With larger numbers of contacts comes more chances for infection and outbreak.

While contact tracing and targeted testing is ongoing, the large number of contacts in the community requires strong, decisive action to bring the situation under control through at least one incubation period.

Supports in community

These measures are not easy.

The GNWT is working with the Hamlet of Fort Liard to support emergency response needs in the event residents need support during this time.

If you need groceries, call the grocery store to make your order and pay for them, and curbside pick-up will be available.

For those who may not have the resources to pay for groceries or essentials, Income Support (ECE) has an arrangement in-place to assist those who need it.

Residents can contact the Hamlet office at 770-4103 to access the income support services.

Residents can also continue to access mental health and addictions support they regularly access. They should contact their care provider to discuss how accessing those services may change to protect against COVID-19 transmission.

Notice of verbal order

This advisory includes a verbal Public Health Order issued under s. 29 of the *Public Health Act*. A written order will be produced and published at the earliest possible time.

Update on Investigation in Fort Liard

Caseload update

There have been two additional cases of COVID-19 detected in Fort Liard.

Both are linked to the first identified case of COVID-19 – which was linked to travel outside the NWT.

This brings the total caseload in the community to three, and the NWT's to 28.

Actions taken

A rapid response team is on-the-ground in the community supporting local health officials on contact tracing and targeted testing to identify any potential exposures to, and cases of, COVID-19 in Fort Liard.

Public risk

There are no active public exposure notifications at this point. However, as the investigation unfolds, this guidance may change.

What you can do to stay safe

The two most important things to do are follow the requirements of this public health order, and be especially vigilant in sticking to the healthy habits we know work to stop COVID-19 in its tracks:

- Self-isolate whenever required
- Prioritize physical distance of at least six feet between yourself and others
- Wear your mask when you're in public
- Stay home even if you're a little bit sick
- Call the local health centre and get tested for COVID-19 at the first sign of sickness
- Wash your hands frequently
- Cough or sneeze into a flexed elbow or tissue

Reporting back

As the COVID-19 situation has shifted in the NWT, residents can expect daily written updates via Public Health Advisory summarizing new developments on all regular work days.

Attribution

All commentary is attributable to Dr. Kami Kandola, Chief Public Health Officer for the Northwest Territories.

Relevant links

- [NWT COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
- [GNWT COVID-19 Website](#)
- [Health and Social Services Public Health Advisories](#)

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