

Administration Office
Finance & Administration
Capital Projects/Public Works
HUB:

- Ontario Works
- Education Department
- LDM

HIAH Economic Development/M.E.R.E



Administration Office
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PRESS RELEASE – NON ESSENTIAL TRAVEL BAN

On April 23, 2020, M'Chigeeng First Nation exercised its inherent authority and jurisdiction by implementing a Non-Essential Travel Ban and Border Closure in response to the risk of COVID19 to M'Chigeeng First Nation Citizens. The Council determined that it is the protection and preservation of life that must be the guiding principle in all decisions. On April 25, 2020, M'Chigeeng First Nation moved into a non-essential travel ban.

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Over the last several weeks, the number of known active COVID19 cases on Manitoulin and in the Sudbury District have declined and have been resolved. While there is still a growing number of cases in Southern Ontario, it is apparent that Northern Ontario has been successful in following the recommendations and protocols as recommended by Public Health, Provincial and Federal Governments.

Over the last several weeks the Emergency Operations Group and Non-Essential Travel Ban Advisory Group have been meeting on a weekly basis and working on various initiatives including a M'Chigeeng First Nation Reopening Strategy. On June 4, 2020, as part of Reopening strategy, both the EOG and NETB have made the recommendation to the Council to support a Checkpoint Decommissioning Strategy Process and finalize a level of activation protocol for checkpoints. Part of the recommendations are for local businesses to submit their ideas and COVID19 Policy/Protocols which have been requested. Most businesses on reserve do not have the same requirements as off reserve businesses and therefore it is important to have properly registered M'Chigeeng First Nation businesses provide assurances that they are committed to ensuring the safety of M'Chigeeng Citizens. These places of business are the locations where our members and non-member visitors intersect and are places that have greater risks of exposure. As the Checkpoint Decommissioning Strategy rolls out, MFN Businesses will become the front line of protection for M'Chigeeng First Nation Citizens. So far, there have been no submissions made to date either as requested or voluntarily.

As the Checkpoint Decommissioning Strategy rolls out, we are asking those who have obtained Essential Travel Passes to keep these passes in the event that the Checkpoints are re-activated.

In relation to the approximate 700+ seasonal residents that attend the First Nation, the Council is maintaining the position for these individuals to stay where they are rostered. This position of Council supports the messaging from Public Health and is supported by MFN Health Services Department and local physicians. M'Chigeeng First Nation does not have a database of individuals who have buckshee lease agreements with CP holders on reserve, these non-residents do not pay any type of fee to the First Nation to reside here either permanently or seasonally. Therefore, if in the event of an outbreak, contract tracing would be impossible. There is more work to be completed in relation to cottagers as part of the Reopening Strategy.

We thank everyone for their patience and understanding during this COVID19 pandemic. For more information or if you have any questions, please contact the Office Administrator at 705-377-5362 or via email at marlened@mchigeeng.ca.

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Notice to Community

Dear MFN Citizens;

First and foremost, we wish to acknowledge your support and patience through these unprecedented times. No one in our community has ever experienced a global health pandemic in our life time.

We are writing to inform you that we have now reached a low risk level of COVID19. There are currently no active cases that we know about on Manitoulin Island or in the Sudbury District. As a result of these developments, the Checkpoints at the entrances of our community will be decommissioned and we will move into a side road closure.

As we decommission our checkpoints and lift the non-essential travel ban, we remind all of our Citizens that it is still very important that everyone continues to abide by the COVID19 safety protocols:

- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently;
- Use hand sanitizer frequently, if available;
- Maintain Physical Distancing at all times;
- Wear a mask in public;
- Avoid unnecessary travel and avoid COVID19 hotspots such as southern Ontario;
- If you experience COVID19 symptoms, contact the local hospital to schedule a test.

An Emergency Operations Group and Non Essential Travel Ban Advisory Group has been established and are working on various initiatives as it relates to the pandemic. The Emergency Operations Group will be sending out a Newsletter on a bi-weekly basis to keep our community informed. Health Services will also continue to maintain their social media presence and work together with the Emergency Operations Group for website updates as well.

With respect to the approximate 700 seasonal cottagers that attend M'Chigeeng First Nation, the Council is maintaining and supporting recommendations from Health Services and Public Health to not allow attendance to M'Chigeeng at this time. We maintain the messaging that individuals need to stay where they are "rostered", meaning their permanent residence.

On June 3, 2020, we requested MFN Registered businesses to provide their COVID19 Safety Protocols submitted to the First Nation in writing so that Health Services and the Emergency Operations Group can review. As the Checkpoint Decommissioning Strategy rolls out, MFN Businesses will become the new frontline of defense to M'Chigeeng First Nation. Businesses who have requested a Special Council Meeting have been asked to submit their ideas in writing as M'Chigeeng prepares for re-opening.

We also invite our Citizens who are not business owners to submit any ideas that they may have as we work towards a reopening plan that keeps the health and safety of our Citizens as a priority. Submissions can be made in writing and sent to the Office Administrator, Marlene Debassige at marlened@mchigeeng.ca or dropped off at the Administration Office. Everyone's voice matters and will be taken into consideration.

Miigwech,


Ogimaa Kwe Linda Debassige


Roger Beaudin, Health Services Manager

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