

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

February 19, 2021

Update on Kenora area COVID-19 situation – Joint release

We understand that seeing a large number of new COVID-19 cases in the Kenora area is unsettling and may cause concern for some people. Be assured that health care providers and other sectors are working together to ensure public safety. An outbreak situation like what is currently being seen is serious, but we must remain calm and logical. At this time, there is no evidence of spread within the municipality of Kenora.

How transmission is being prevented:

When new cases are identified, they are told to isolate and all of their high risk close contacts are asked to get tested and also told to self-isolate. As expected, some of the close contacts who get tested may also then get positive test results. The process then continues with them, to ensure their close contacts isolate and get tested. If prevention measures are followed, after a few weeks, the transmission should slow as all contacts isolate and the spread to more people is stopped. Since the outbreak began, the majority of new cases have been close contacts of previous cases. Those who have been told to self-isolate have been given clear instructions and are being monitored to support any health needs they may have, and ensure compliance. The recent [Class Section 22 Order](#) put in place by Northwestern Health Unit allows for enforcement of anyone who does not self-isolate.

Isolation centres:

Isolation centres have been set up to accommodate people who are unable to self-isolate at home. These centres follow strict measures and protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The centres pose no harm to the public's safety and the risk of spreading COVID-19 from an isolation centre is extremely low. It's important to remember that not all people who are staying at hotels have COVID-19. Some people require the accommodations for other medical reasons.

How to stay safe:

COVID-19 remains a risk in all of our communities. The good news is that there are things you can do to help prevent getting COVID-19. It is very unlikely that a person will get COVID-19 if they do not get near a case. Prevention measures are proven to work and this is a good example of why we ask that people stay 2 metres from anyone they do not live with. Continue to wear a mask, wash your hands often, and do not gather indoors with anyone other than members of your household. By doing this, you significantly lower your chance of getting COVID-19.

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Be COVID-kind:

Lastly, we encourage kindness at this time and remind the public that this situation is not unique to our area and can happen anywhere. Communities across Ontario have seen outbreaks in various population groups. No one should be blamed or mistreated for having COVID-19. As residents of northwestern Ontario, we must come together to be supportive and caring, especially to those who need it the most.

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Sent on behalf of:

City of Kenora
Kenora Chiefs Advisory
Kenora District Services Board
Lake of the Woods District Hospital
Northwestern Health Unit
Ontario Provincial Police
Treaty 3 Police
Waasegiizhig Nanaandawe'iyewigamig
(WNHAC)

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