



Office of Chief and Council Government of Siksika Nation

January 11, 2022

Siksika Nation Updates COVID-19 Risk Level from Yellow to Red

At the Special Called Council Meeting of Siksika Nation Chief and Council, held on January 11, 2022, the following motion was made:

*A **MOTION** was **MADE** and **SECONDED** to accept Siksika Health Services' recommendation to move Siksika's COVID-19 risk level from a yellow to a red risk level, effective January 14, 2022. The COVID-19 risk level will be reassessed on January 28, 2022 by Siksika Health Services' CDC team.*

Siksika's COVID-19 Risk Level is based on current local Siksika Nation context, and is subject to change. In an update provided today by Siksika Health Services, the Nation is currently managing 79 active cases of COVID-19; 21 new cases have been identified since Jan. 10, 2022, and 9 have recovered within the same timeframe. Since Omicron was first detected on Siksika Nation 3 ½ weeks ago on Dec. 18th, 261 cases of COVID-19 have been identified. This means that **of all COVID-19 cases to-date on Siksika, 25.4% are from the last 3 weeks.**

At this time, **factors that are being closely monitored** by Siksika's Public Health Team include:

- **COVID-19 cases on Siksika Nation** - There are presently consistent new cases with unknown sources, and/or overwhelming amount of COVID-19 activity managed by Siksika Health Services' Public Health team.
- **COVID-19 cases across Alberta** - as COVID-19 cases and hospitalization rates surge across Alberta, it is important for Siksika Nation to seriously consider our surrounding context as we are impacted by interactions with community from surrounding areas.
- **Protection of the Siksika Health Care system** - it is necessary to protect the health care system, that will give some time to monitor and take measures to address uncontrolled transmission.

Siksika's COVID-19 Risk Scale defines risk level associated with local COVID-19 activity, and the implications that a change in level of risk will have on gatherings, activities, etc.

Under the current RED - HIGH RISK level, the following guidance applies:

General:

- Siksika Nation members are encouraged to stay home.

Gatherings:

- Community members should refrain from both informal and formal gatherings.
- Non-essential gatherings are not encouraged at this time.
- Essential gatherings will be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that applicable public health measures can be ensured. Please contact Siksika Health Services for guidance on essential gatherings.

- Funerals/wakes – 10 people maximum.
- Cultural/spiritual gatherings advised to be temporarily suspended.

Masks:

- Masking and 2 metres physical distancing in all indoor public spaces, workplaces, and places of worship.
- While alone at private workstations, employees are not required to wear masks. If office spaces are shared, masking is essential with a medical grade mask.

Isolation:

New provincial COVID protocols on isolation were announced Jan. 1, 2022, reducing mandatory isolation to 5 days for fully vaccinated individuals for people who are symptomatic and/or test positive for COVID-19.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response, Siksika Nation has continuously provided higher level of service, and maintained more stringent protocols than Alberta because we have a higher risk of severe consequences in Siksika due to living circumstances, overcrowding, and the high prevalence of chronic conditions. Given this, at this time Siksika Health Services advises that:

- **People who test positive for COVID-19:**
 - **If fully vaccinated** - required to isolate for 5 days or until their symptoms have fully resolved, whichever is longer. Avoid large gatherings, elderly or high-risk individuals, and highly recommended to stay home from work for 10 days.
 - **If unvaccinated or partially vaccinated** – required to isolate for 10 days or until their symptoms have fully resolved, whichever is longer.
- **Close contacts of people who test positive for COVID-19:**
 - **If fully vaccinated** – Highly recommended to isolate at home for 5 days from last contact with the positive case, and to monitor for cold or flu symptoms for 14 days.
 - **If unvaccinated or partially vaccinated** – Strongly recommended to isolate at home for 14 days following exposure to positive case.
- **People with cold or flu symptoms:**
 - Required to isolate and are advised to get tested for COVID-19. If test is negative, isolate until symptoms resolve. If no test is done, or test is positive, requirements are the same for those who test positive.

Testing:

- **COVID-19 PCR testing** is available for eligible Siksika Nation members, and for those who live or work on Siksika Nation. Eligible individuals include:
 - People who are experiencing illness symptoms
 - People who have tested positive with a home COVID-19 rapid test
 - Close contacts of people who have tested positive for COVID-19
- PCR testing is available by drive-thru at the facility near the Deerfoot Sportsplex between 10:00am-1:00pm daily, or in-home by calling the COVID-19 Response Unit (CRU) dispatch at 403-734-5688, 7 days per week.
- **Home COVID-19 rapid testing** can help identify and prevent spread of COVID-19. Home rapid tests are recommended for:
 - People who are experiencing illness symptoms
 - Close contacts of people who have tested positive for COVID-19

- Home COVID-19 rapid test kits can be picked up at Siksika Health facilities, while supplies last. Stay tuned to Siksika Health official communications channels for up-to-date information on availability.

Congregate Care Facilities:

- Elder's Lodge - temporary suspension of visitors.

Workplaces:

- All non-essential businesses, workplaces, and services advised to close temporarily.
- Staff are encouraged to meet virtually to ensure necessary business continuity.
- For essential businesses, workplaces, and services, protective barriers (i.e. plexiglass) are recommended whenever possible between people, while still ensuring sufficient air flow.

Schools:

- Schools advised to be temporarily closed.

Sports & Activities:

- Sports leagues advised to close temporarily.
- Non-essential activities are not encouraged at this time.
- Essential activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that public health measures can be ensured. Please contact Siksika Health Services for guidance on essential activities.

It remains important at this time to continue following public health measures, which are proven to help protect both ourselves, and others, from spread of COVID-19 infection:

- Stay home when sick until your symptoms go away, and arrange a PCR test via the CRU
- Continue wearing a mask when indoors outside of your home
- Keep 2 metres distance from people not in your household/cohort
- Regularly wash/sanitize your hands
- Clean/disinfect commonly touched surfaces often

For more information, stay tuned to Siksika Health Services' official communications channels, including web at www.siksikahealth.com and www.siksikahealth.com/covid, Facebook @SHWCSiksika, Instagram @siksikahealth, and monthly newsletter (print).

Siksika Nation Chief and Council is committed to keeping Nation members and employees safe; we ask for your patience and understanding at this time as it may impact programs and services.