

For Immediate Release
July 29, 2020

UPDATE - COVID-19 community outbreak on Haida Gwaii

Ongoing contact tracing and testing for COVID-19 on Haida Gwaii has identified six additional lab-confirmed cases related to a community outbreak declared on July 24th. Northern Health public health staff are currently following up on a total of 20 cases; 13 are considered active, while seven individuals have recovered, at this time.

The additional cases do not represent a significant expansion of the outbreak, nor do they suggest wider spread of COVID-19 in Haida Gwaii communities. While contact tracing work continues, it is believed the new cases are also epidemiologically linked to the original outbreak cases.

The recently-identified Haida Gwaii cases are from exposures that took place prior to last week's outbreak declaration. It would not be unexpected to identify additional cases in coming days, where exposure also occurred within the same COVID-19 incubation period.

All of the active cases continue to self-isolate at home, and none have required hospital care, to date. Northern Health and the First Nations Health Authority continue to work with Council of the Haida Nation and municipal governments on Haida Gwaii, to coordinate the community response to the outbreak. This includes ensuring individuals who may need to self-isolate outside their home community, or nearer to a higher level of care, have the support they need.

Close contacts of any confirmed cases will be informed by public health officials, and supported in actions they should take, such as self-monitoring or self-isolating. It's very important that anyone experiencing [potential COVID-19 symptoms](#) self-isolate, and contact their primary care provider or the NH COVID-19 Online Clinic & Info Line ([1-844-645-7811](tel:1-844-645-7811)).

To help bend the curve on Haida Gwaii and stop the spread of COVID-19, we encourage community members to:

Be Safe:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Get tested if you have any COVID-19 symptoms or are feeling sick.
- Maintain **physical distancing** of greater than two metres – this is more important than ever.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a mask when physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Have Safe Gatherings:

- Fewer faces in bigger spaces. Limit your gatherings to small groups and hold them outside.
- Keep gatherings to people you know and keep track of who attends, so we can contact them if someone gets infected. If you host a gathering, you are expected to have the names and contact information of those that attend.
- Limiting gathering size in private residences to six people.

Be Kind:

- Maintain the confidentiality of those who are sick or who are contacts
- Show support and caring to those who are sick or who are contacts

Media Contact: NH media line – 877-961-7724