



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER

Closure of all city schools including Ndilq, and Dettah due to seven confirmed COVID-19 infections in Yellowknife

YELLOWKNIFE - May 2, 2021 – The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer (OCPHO) confirms there are six people with COVID-19 in Yellowknife from the outbreak at N.J. Macpherson School and 10 probable cases awaiting lab confirmation.

This brings the total number of active cases among NWT residents to eight, all in Yellowknife.

Order changes include the closure of all Yellowknife schools, including Dettah and Ndilq, and the implementation of mandatory indoor masking in the City of Yellowknife effective 8 am on May 3, 2021.

Public Exposure Risks

There are currently multiple exposure locations in Yellowknife. Please pay close attention to the required actions if you or any of your household members were at the following locations during the following times.

Exposure location	Date and times	Required actions
Birthday Party At Multiplex DND gym	May 1, 2021 between 1 and 3 pm	Isolate immediately as a contact of COVID-19 for 14 days Contact Public Health to disclose you attended a birthday party with an exposure
School bus exposure (Route 2)	April 26-29 2021 (Inclusive) Morning and/or Afternoon	Isolate immediately as a contact of COVID-19 for 14 days
School bus exposure (Route 12)	April 29 and 30, 2021 Morning and/or afternoon	Isolate immediately as a contact of COVID-19 for 14 days
Sushi North	April 30, 2021 6 - 6:30 pm	Individuals who were at this location should self-monitor and are not required to self-isolate unless they have symptoms
Walmart	May 1, 2021 12-12:30 pm	Individuals who were at this location should self-monitor and are not required to self-isolate unless they have symptoms

Investigation

The OCPHO continues to investigate and manage the N.J. Macpherson school outbreak.



The OCPHO is not declaring a community outbreak (i.e. community transmission) in Yellowknife at present. A community outbreak occurs when there are one or more cases of COVID-19 in a community with no exposure chains clearly identified.

The six new confirmed cases over the weekend are connected and considered a cluster. To be clear, all of the new cases are linked by time, location and common exposures.

School closures

However, as a result of this large number of cases and contacts involving schools, the CPHO is introducing temporary public health measures in Yellowknife, Ndilo, and Dettah.

This is meant to stop transmission in the highest risk areas. The following measures and advice apply to all Yellowknife, Ndilo, and Dettah residents, and reflect a verbal order made by the Chief Public Health Officer pursuant to s.29 of the *Public Health Act*.

- All Yellowknife, Ndilo, and Dettah schools shall close until further notice with remote learning options being made available. Please get in touch with your child's school for more information.

Other changes

- Daycare and day homes may remain open
- All organized extracurricular activities, clubs and sports for those under 18 shall be cancelled (including those unrelated to schools)
- **Wearing masks in indoor public spaces is now mandatory (in accordance with the face mask order)**

Recommendations and advice

- Non-essential travel in and out of Yellowknife, Ndilo, and Dettah should be suspended/deferred until further notice. Please continue to attend all necessary medical appointments.
- Remote work is highly encouraged for any employees who are able at this time.

New directions

For persons isolating as a result of N.J. Macpherson school cluster outbreak:

- All students, staff and volunteers attending during the exposure week of April 26-30 are now considered close contacts. There have been multiple exposures at each grade level in the school.

Testing

Please be aware that if public health has not been in contact to ask that you be tested, and you do not have symptoms, there is no reason to be tested unless you develop symptoms.



Please do not take away an appointment from someone who needs one at this time. The OCPHO will communicate to the public if testing recommendations change.

What you can do

- Keep gatherings small
 - Indoor household gatherings must be limited to no more than five visitors to a maximum of 10 people in the household at any given time.
- Get vaccinated
- Get tested only if you have symptoms or required by public health
- Stick to healthy habits we know work to stop COVID-19 in its tracks, it will also help you take some control of your risk.
 - Self-isolate whenever required
 - Prioritize physical distancing of at least two metres
 - Wear non-medical masks in all public places
 - If you're feeling even a little sick, stay home,
 - Call your health centre or public health unit at the first sign of any sickness to get tested for COVID-19
 - Wash your hands frequently
 - Keep coughs and sneezes to yourself
 - Public health may issue additional local guidance when more data becomes available. There will be further updates as we learn more.
 - And, look for ways you can assist others in the community through your support. Be kind.

Attribution

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

Relevant links

- [COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [PHAC- Vaccines for children](#)
- [COVID-19 Variants of Concern](#)
- [COVID-19 – Education and Childcare](#)
- [Care in the home for people with COVID-19](#)
- PRINTABLE PDFs FOR KIDS:
 - [Sometimes I Don't Feel Well](#)
 - [Getting Tested is Easy](#)

Media Contact

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