



Nisga'a Lisims Government

T 250 633 3000 / F 250 633 2367

TF 1 866 633 0888

PO Box 231 / 2000 Lisims Dr

New Aiyansh BC / Canada V0J 1A0

NISGAANATION.CA

President Eva Clayton's Address to the Nisga'a Nation On Coronavirus (COVID-19) – March 23, 2020

Greetings to the Nisga'a Nation.

It gives me great pleasure to address you today albeit on the very serious matter of the COVID-19 – Coronavirus Pandemic. Although currently the Nisga'a Nation is at a very low risk, this COVID-19 Pandemic has been evolving rapidly every hour of every day. The Nation is at a very critical time right now and has the opportunity to greatly reduce members' exposure and potential complications of COVID-19.

It is critically important that each of us do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within Nisga'a Lands.

We know that many families that ordinarily reside in major urban centres such as Vancouver have made the decision to come home to Nisga'a Lands. If you have done so, we cannot emphasize enough how important it is for you to self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days.

We have many Nisga'a elders and other citizens within each of our Nisga'a Villages with compromised immune systems and underlying health issues that if they were potentially exposed to COVID-19 – may not overcome.

If you recently made your way home to the Nass Valley from any major urban centre – please self-isolate.

President Eva Clayton Address to Nisga'a Nation on COVID-19 March 23, 2020

As you see in the media, we receive daily reports from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry.

This morning Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry reported that there are now 492 confirmed cases in British Columbia with an alarming 13 deaths. There are now 5 confirmed cases in the Northern Health Region.

What can we do to stop the spread?

STAY HOME – we all must do our part to stop the spread of COVID-19 and the best way we can do this is by social distancing. Ways to practice social distancing are to

- Limit activities outside your home
- If you are out in public, try keep two meters between yourself and others
- Cough into your elbow or sleeve

WASH YOUR HANDS – follow health official recommendations and wash your hands frequently with hot soapy water for a minimum of 20 seconds. Follow up with hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

SELF-ISOLATE – if you have travelled long distance either by road or air – take the pre-cautionary measure to self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days. The minimum 14 day isolation “resets” every time a member leaves the community. This can help prevent the spread of infections. Self-isolation is one of the most important activities that lowers the chance of spreading illness to other people, including our Elders and vulnerable.

Additionally, while it is important to ensure that not only those that have travelled, but others residing in the home are following the precautions and self isolating.

On March 18, 2020 Nisga'a Lisims Government announced among other things that the Provincial Lava Bed Park, the Hlgu Isgwit Hot Springs and all other Nass Valley Tourist Destinations are CLOSED. We made the decision to close these attractions because they are places that encourage gathering of many people in small spaces – we want to discourage this, so please obey the signage and the blockade at the Hot Springs as it is CLOSED to the general public – both Nisga'a and Non-Nisga'a alike.

NLG's Emergency Preparedness Committee comprised of representatives of NLG, the 4 Nisga'a Villages and RCMP and Nisga'a Valley Health Authority have been working together to implement necessary measures to promote public education about COVID-19.

This morning the Committee met with a representative of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to have signage installed at various points along Nisga'a Highway 113, including the outskirts of Terrace, Rosswood, the Lava Beds and the lower Nass Valley with strategic messaging, such as:

- All Nass Valley Tourist destinations are CLOSED
- Promoting social distancing (maintaining 6 feet minimum from others at all times).
- Promoting self-isolation for those returning to Nisga'a Lands (regardless of travel points (including Terrace)

Nisga'a Highway 113 is a provincial highway maintained by the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure. We will continue to work with them to limit the amount of traffic coming in to the Nass Valley while still maintaining access to suppliers from Terrace that provide frequent delivery of fuel, propane, janitorial supplies and other critical goods and services essential for our economy to continue operating.

We all can and should do our part to flatten the curve. While we remain under no immediate threat, in order to stay this way we must follow these measures as I've outlined above. As the situation evolves, our Emergency Preparedness Committee will continue providing periodic updates through our website www.nisgaanation.ca – please check our site frequently for new information as it becomes available.

In the Spirit of Sayt-K'ilim-Goot – I wish each and every Nisga'a citizen wherever you reside – good health, safety and Godspeed as we endure this difficult time in our lives.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and your families.
GABIIHL HIY - T'OOYAQSIY NISIM