



Update on COVID-19: BOC Remains Committed to Health and Safety

March 13th, 2020

For Immediate Release

Update on COVID-19: BOC Remains Committed to the Health and Safety of Eeyou Istchee and its Employees

As the international population increasingly copes with containing COVID-19, the Board of Compensation (BOC) remains highly committed to the health and safety of its employees, Board members, their families and communities. With the declaration by the World Health Organization that COVID-19 has become a global health pandemic, the BOC has implemented measures within the BOC and CREECO group to protect each and every one of our employees and to contain the spread of the virus until the public health risk is reduced. These measures include:

- **Transparent and regular communication with the community, including updates on the situation as it relates to the CREECO community;**
- **Cancelling all business travel for the next month;**
- **Postponing all client events scheduled for the next month;**
- **Limiting in-person meetings and strongly encouraging the use of the telephone or videoconferencing;**
- **Actually, half of our employees are now working from home;**
- **Increasing how often we clean our offices spaces and workstations.**

Members of the CREECO community who attended the PDAC conference in Toronto, Ontario, from March 1st to the 4th, were asked to watch for any signs or symptoms, given that a participant from Sudbury tested positive for COVID-19 after returning home. Even though Ontario Public Health confirmed that the individual was not infectious at the time, it is important to practice caution and responsibility for the sake of the greater community where we work and live. Please note that an attendee from the Cree Nation who was at the PDAC conference has been experiencing flu-like symptoms and is currently awaiting test results in voluntary self- isolation.

On Monday and Tuesday, March 9th and 10th, 15 BOC directors travelled to Eastmain to attend a board meeting on Wednesday, March 11. Due to a couple of employees with a cough, no handshakes were made, and contact was avoided. As word spread to COVID-19 increased throughout the day, employees of the Lodge became concerned about the coughing in the restaurant and Public Health contacted the meeting and instructed that anyone who was at the PDAC conference remain in their hotel rooms in self isolation. On the morning of March 12th, the Board consulted with the CBHSSJB via video conferencing on their recommendations to the meeting regarding COVID-19 and it was deemed that it was low. The representatives from the Cree Health Board advised that self-isolation and handwashing were best practices, therefore the Board of Compensation chartered an Air Creebec plane for attendees to return home, to avoid creating widespread panic in the community. The situation was immediately communicated to our board and staff, and security measures such as masks and gloves were put in place.

We are currently working directly with the CBHSSJB Regional Director of Public Health to address any issues or concerns related to the community. The health and safety of Eastmain and every other community remains our top priority. As far as we are aware, none of our Board members, employees, clients, or suppliers have tested positive for the virus. This is a rapidly evolving situation and we are committed to keeping you informed and will continue to provide information as required.

For your personal safety and that of those around you, please practice the following best practices:

- **Wash your hands often, and for 20 seconds with soap and water;**
- **Use a tissue when sneezing and coughing;**
- **Avoid touching your face and personal contact with others;**
- **Work from home if possible;**
- **Avoid large crowds and gatherings;**
- **Avoid all unnecessary travel;**
- **Self-isolate for two weeks upon return from international travel;**
- **Seek medical attention to get tested, should you experience flu-like symptoms.**

For more information, please consult:

Cree Public Health Department: <http://www.creehealth.org/coronavirus>

Quebec: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/>

Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>

Air Creebec measures: <https://www.aircreebec.ca/2020/03/10/covid-19-new-corona-virus-information/>

The BOC will continue to monitor the situation closely and provided updates to the community in a transparent and efficient manner. Once again, the health and safety of our members is our top priority until the current situation changes. Thank you to the community of Eastmain and lodge for providing meals and warm hospitality during isolation in the rooms.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at DNeeposh@boc-creeco.ca should you have any questions or concerns.

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Chairman/President
Board of Compensation/CREECO