



Chief & Council Update

TIMISKAMING FIRST NATION

24 Algonquin Ave.
Notre Dame du Nord, QC J0Z 3B0

Tel: (819) 723-2370
Fax: (819) 723-2799
Email : tfncouncil@parolink.net



October 22, 2020

Community Members,

We hope everyone is getting the chance to take part in the fall hunt and if you didn't get the chance to participate, hopefully friends and family are sharing their bounty with you. With the Covid-19 pandemic continuing to present us with challenges, being out on our land is a great place to be.

Chief Sacha is now back at work and we want to provide you with an update since the open letter dated August 24, 2020 was sent to the community. We realize the contents of that letter might have been hurtful and that some considered sending the letter to the membership a mistake. The intention was never to hurt anyone or to cause division.

We discussed the letter at the Council table and what we have learned is that we have opportunities for improvement. If we work together better as a team, enhance our communication skills and become more active listeners, we will all benefit. An Elder from a neighboring Algonquin community will be enlisted to facilitate as we work through this process of continuing improvement and to assist us with defining our roles and responsibilities as leaders in our community.

As part of our five-year strategic planning process, we have also signed a Band Council Resolution outlining the mandate of each portfolio and the guidelines that must be respected by the council portfolio holder.

We look forward to emerging individually as better leaders and collectively as a solid and successful team, committed to good governance and working together in collaboration for the betterment of Timiskaming First Nation.

In closing, we'll leave you with some wise words spoken by none other than Willie Nelson: "Once you replace negative thoughts with positive ones, you'll start having positive results."

We look forward to your positive support as we work together to achieve positive results for our community. Meegwetch!

TFN Chief & Council

TIMISKAMING FIRST NATION

24 Algonquin Ave.
Notre Dame du Nord, QC J0Z 3B0



Tel: (819) 723-2370
Fax: (819) 723-2799
Email : tfncouncil@parolink.net

Message from Chief Sacha Wabie

Kwe Community Members,

I hope everyone is staying safe and taking the extra precaution when it comes to the pandemic that we are currently faced with.

Council first planned to hold a general meeting in 3 phases (Seniors/elders, Youth and to the general public). The organization of this turned out to be quite difficult and because of the short notice, we were unable to host a general assembly. We are working on holding a General Assembly via Zoom. We have our communications officer working out the details on how this will work. We want to be able to reach all community members. This will also allow for the members who live in the urban settings, outside of the community to take part in the general assembly as well. Once the minor details are worked out, we will have that information out to everyone on how that will work.

As many of you know, I took a leave of absence for 5 weeks. I am now back in the office full time and taking the time to catch up with the ongoing files at the regional and national level, also with the important issues right here in our community.

At this time, I would like to welcome the new member to our team, the TFN General Director, Elissa Marcil. After seven months of seeking to hire a General Director we were final able to fill this position. Some of you may remember her, she was the former O&M Director for us a couple of years back. We look forward to working with Elissa.

As we have reported to the community previously, the Administrative team at the Band office is working diligently on the 5-year Strategic Plan. They are now in the finals stages of accepting documents, final review is being completed by all departments. The tentative date set to present the plan to the Council Portfolio holders is the first week of November, followed by a complete plan presentation to Council. Once that is complete, it is then presented to the community for ratification. I would like to say meegwetch to the Directors and Managers for working so diligently on our plan. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

The audit is near completion and will be presented to the community in the coming weeks. Stay tuned for the specific date, time and place.

A package was sent to the community some months ago regarding the 1849 Land Claim informing the members that this claim has been filed. The claim was filed at the Tribunal on July 3, 2020. Canada has since filed their response September 21, 2020. There is a case management conference scheduled for November 27, 2020. I will have more detailed information about this claim at our Algonquin Nation Annual General Assembly, with the tentative date being November 19, 2020.

At the Nation level, the Algonquin communities are working together on many files. Research is currently being conducted to document what our traditional governance and citizenship looked like prior to the Band Councils being implemented by the Indian Act. If there are any seniors and elders who would like to take part in this research, please contact me.

Another important file being worked on with the Algonquin leadership is the Indigenous People's Space. An inclusive space is being set a side for the Algonquins in Ottawa. We are currently working on a planning and design agreement with Canada. Once this is finalized, it will be presented to the community.

In closing, I would like to thank the members for your patience with us. We have been living through a pandemic for the past 7 months, which brings on many more trials and tribulations. As I've said since the start, together, we will get through this. Stay safe.

Meegwetch,
Chief Sacha Wabie

Marché Bonichoix (a.k.a. Saguay's)

Chief and Council would also like to shed some light on the events that happened in regards to Mr. Ghislain Aylwin, Owner of Marché Bonichoix in Notre-Dame-du-Nord. Due to a possible misinterpretation and/or language barrier, Mr. Aylwin's words and intent might have been misinterpreted.

After meeting with Mr. Aylwin, TFN Leadership have accepted Mr Aylwin's apology and have decided to possibly resume some transactions with Marché Bonichoix.

In this time of worldwide strife and pandemics, we believe that is essential to communicate clearly and foster better relationships with our neighbours in order to forge a better future for all who live within our territory.



20 Ontario Street
Notre-Dame-du-Nord, Quebec J0Z 3B0

*Rec Oct 16, 2020
KMC*

October 14, 2020

Timiskaming First Nation
Chief and Council Members
6 Kateri Street
Notre-Dame-du-Nord, Quebec J0Z 3B0

Re: Clarification of events

Dear Council members,

Please accept my sincere apologies for the comments I made a few days ago. I would like to clarify what occurred following the meeting with the Timiskaming First Nation Council on October 9, 2020.

I recently tasked a member of my team with preparing and delivering refreshments for Timiskaming First Nation members. Unfortunately, this individual left my company without warning and failed to fulfill her commitments. As a result, she did not deliver the refreshments as planned. The Health Centre therefore decided to terminate our agreement.

To express my displeasure, I mentioned that this situation was "disgusting" for both my company and Timiskaming First Nation members who could not receive their products on time. I would like to reiterate that I never intended to be disrespectful to you or behave in a racist or discriminatory way toward your community. I agree that my choice of words was inappropriate. I also take full responsibility for the late delivery that occurred the week of September 20, 2020.

This unfortunate event undermined your members' confidence in my grocery store, a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978 and has served your community for many years without incident. At the meeting with your community's Council members, I told them that I was ready to start working with them again and would listen to their needs as I have always done in the past. I will also continue to follow our agreement on vouchers for future mothers and new mothers.

Again, please accept my sincerest apologies.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ghislain Aylwin

Owner

Marché Bonichoix

20 Ontario Street
Notre-Dame-du-Nord, Quebec J0Z 3B0

Community Development Update

Portfolio Holder: Jennilee Wahsquonaikzhik

Economic Development

Gas Bar- There is a delay due to COVID-19 so some materials are on backorder. However, it is coming along nicely. We are aiming to be open in the beginning of December 2020. We welcomed Richard Kearney who was the successful candidate as the Gar Bar Manager. His start date was on October 26th, 2020 and currently his office is situated at the Widjikiwe office until his office in the Gas Bar is complete.

Covid funding: TFN Economic Development received a budget of \$132,576 identified as the Indigenous Community Business Fund. This fund is intended to relieve financial pressure and allow businesses and microbusinesses to strengthen operations and support their viability during the pandemic, with the goal of positioning them for recovery.

It is a non-repayable contribution that is provided for the following activities to support communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic: -supporting businesses and microbusinesses with minimal employees: home-based single proprietorship or family-run businesses.

The Ec. Dev. Department met with the registered business on reserve and has allocated the funds to the qualifying businesses.

ATR Additions to Reserve (Paquette's lots): The completion of the environmental assessment Phase 2 with Story Environmental will be finalised by mid-November and we should be moving on to the conclusion of this lengthy process. Other steps include: remediation if needed, a title search of the lots, a letter of support from NDDN and a Ministerial order from ISC. The remainder of this process should take approximately 1 year.

Restructuring: The department of Economic Development and Natural Resources will be merging to facilitate opportunities for TFN and to overcome previous challenges. This new Department will be known as Economic and Sustainable Development. The merger of the 2 departments will allow for a better alignment of the activities of each, which are very independent. At the same time, though the departments deal largely with the same third parties, the focus of the work is quite different. This is why economic development will not override the proper care and protection of a healthy ecology and environment on TFN territory. A policy framework will be developed to guide the protection of ecology and environmental health of its lands and the eco-system. In conjunction with this merger 2 new managerial positions will be created, Sustainable Development Manager and Natural Resource Manager. In the new fiscal year a Community Economic Development Coordinator will also be hired.

Forestry: Economic Development sub-contracts all forestry work to TFN Construction LP. This year we received \$300,000 worth of site preparation work. TFN holds a 'Bureau de Normalisation du Quebec' certification for forestry on which we are audited every year. The program certification specifically targets occupational health and safety violations and the lack of transparency to the workers, and it places great importance on the quality of work. This year's audit was held on October 21st by zoom meeting.

Private entrepreneurs: Cherie has had a few meetings and e-mail correspondence with community members concerning business start-up. Assistance is provided for business planning and funding.

Widjikiwe- Conrad Polson was hired as the Manager of the company back in late August for a 6-month Contract but was recently changed to TFN Construction and Forestry Manager. He has many projects that they have ongoing and continues to fulfill the contracts with the TFN Housing Director for the 2 new houses on Makwa (which will be complete by the end of next week) and the repairs. They got an additional \$120,000 in contracts for home repairs and further contracts to come. Forestry \$300,000 in contract with additional \$70,000 + to complete the forestry season. They are looking into bush road repairs for the winter months. They have been unable to fund a dependable driver for the tractor trailer. Detailed financial accountability is now being set up and hopefully we will be able to provide accurate information for the community in the New Year.

Ni Dakinan, Lands and Natural Resources

Portfolio Holder: Jennilee Wahsquonaikeshik

The Wild Basket- Harvesting season is at a halt and the harvesters are done their placement. They did a cooking presentation during the Cultural days using wild mushrooms, teas and gave teachings about wild foods. Mobile processing unit has been built in Collaboration with Canadore College; it should be delivered in November. They are waiting on a freeze dryer unit to be delivered as well as packaging for the freeze-dried products. The guidebook and website should be published in the spring of 2021.

Water Sampling Project- They worked on a water sampling project this summer with Agriculture Canada. They took water and forest product samples before and after the herbicide spraying that took place this year. Their goal is to collect their own data around the effects of herbicide spraying in the forest as they continue to fight for reduced spraying in forestry operations.

They have put in a proposal to participate in a water sampling project with OBVT from Ville-Marie. They want to see if pesticide or other chemical imbalance has affected our drinking water e.g. Tap water as well as spring water on the territory.

The Haskap Plantation- Cheryl Chevrier was managing the field and its workers. They did a great job with field maintenance and planting. We also installed draining tiles to help with rain water.

The Climate Change Project- As part of the land stewardship initiative, they gave tree sapplings to community members to help offset carbon. They are working on a website that highlights local elders and medicinal plants in TFN Traditional Territory. They are also creating a virtual “Herbarium” that states the name of the plant with its Algonquin name, displays an actual specimen, and details about the plant. They are also hoping to add any Anishnabe stories, legends, and teachings about the plants that we can find as well.

Candace Polson is researching the effects herbicides have on medicinal plants. She is also looking for child-friendly activities to do with students at Kiwetin School to help them think about climate change issues in the community. She has also been researching many ways that adults can learn to being environmentally friendly.

Forestry- We are on the Forest management planning team for Timiskaming Forest Unit in Ontario. They have created a group called the First Nations Forestry Collective. They meet on their own to voice their concerns. As FN Forestry Collective, Field Technicians are all working together towards a common goal. They feel that they are stronger collectively and plan to keep working together to raise the standards in which First Nations communities can meaningfully benefit from forests.

On the Quebec side, Firewood will be delivered to the community in the next coming weeks from RYAM. We will be working on making a process and organization of selling the firewood for community members.

Mining Exploration- Clifton Polson has been coordinating with the MNR on exploration permits that occur on TFN Territory. We have exploration agreements with 4 companies. He keeps a database on all mining activities in Ontario.

Other Consultations- The Gadzoduc project is still ongoing and is in integrated review panel Terms of reference stage. This project at the moment has lack of funding but may move forward with the governments help. It's a natural gas pipeline project located North of our territory in Pikogan territory and runs East.

The Temiscaming dam project is in Environmental Assessment stage. They are getting consultations of bridge replacement near Ottawa/Gatineau but it is too far for us to participate. As well as a Roy's bridge in Twp of Harley, Ontario for which we don't usually participate in due to lack of funding allocated from province of Ontario.

General Information- They continue to document and update land use activities on their database. They are keeping a close eye on the moose moratorium in La Parc Verendrye. We support the Algonquin Nation to engage with MNR on measures to enhance moose population.

Should you require further information or have any questions about any of the departments or projects please do not hesitate to contact myself on my cell at (819) 629-1206 or by email at council3@parolink.net

Health and Social Services Council Update

Portfolio Holder: Christine Chevrier



Pandemic Response

The Health Center has acquired a COVID-19 rapid testing machine called a GENEXPERT. It lets tests be done instantly in our community with quick results. There are people from the health centre who are trained to use the machine, and others are being trained as back up.

We are probably looking at another 6 months to a year of work until a COVID 19 vaccine is approved

Community Drug Strategy/ Prescription Drug Abuse Plan

Our current outreach worker is addressing addiction as a response to the stress and emotional pain beyond the actual substance through accompanying them to clinics, meeting them for coffee and continuing to access the user and fulfill the need in our community for some type of creative outreach.

Culture

This year's edition of culture days at Bullrock was a success with many in attendance and a wide variety of activities!

Proposals presently being made for future funding

Cancer Control Program – The Community Health Representative is currently working on a project plan to address cervical cancer promotion, screening and education sessions with the plan
Quebec Domestic Violence – We are receiving funds for this which should help us to do a joint project with Income Assistance
New Horizons – we are empowering the seniors to engage in their own project proposal to encourage elder engagement and address various senior needs with finance workshops etc.
The Program for delinquency prevention through sports, art, and culture (PDPSAC) - This is for 4 years and was submitted our psycho-educator lead. It focuses on 12 – 18-year old's and physical activity strategies. We await the approval.

Other programs

Maternal Child Health Committee – is being coordinated by our Community Mobilization Coordinator, Samantha and they are focusing all efforts between social workers, brighter futures and the nurses to address Child Abuse Awareness. The psycho-educators also have a chance to update the team on their progress with the Toy Library for parents to lend out child development toys – this is thanks to our Avenir d'enfant funding
Tobacco Cessation Committee – We are presently putting together a plan to address the smoking rates here which are twice the Quebec rate. This presently involves nurses receiving training so that they can refer clients and practice case management with social workers.
Elders Engagement Meeting – we will resume these meetings since February thanks to remote technology to ensure we share resources between ALTCC and home care, coordinate for discharge issues and share training opportunities and awareness campaigns such as elder abuse and Alzheimer's awareness to more efficiently serve our seniors.

Public Works Update

Portfolio Holder: Gerald Hanbury

- **Water softener:** The plans and specification for the water softening system are in the final phase and we should be going into the tendering process by the end of November.
- **Waste management:** We have distributed the green compost bins to the community members. The new collection calendar will be distributed within the next few weeks and following this TFN will start waste collection for the community. More information will be sent out through the newsletter and radio, regarding the different types of waste for each bin, as we approach the start of the new collection calendar.
- **Eco-centre relocation:** The new eco-centre construction has progressed significantly and the remaining work will be completed in the spring 2021. The temporary eco-centre will remain open during the winter and the schedule will be posted in the newsletter.
- **Insurance and community hall rebuild:** The call for proposals for the engineering companies for this project will close on October 29th 2020. Following this process, we will be starting the plans and specifications for the new building. We estimate construction to start spring 2021.
- **School ext/reno:** A second tendering process has been started for the school extension/renovation project. The closing date for the bids is 19th of November 2020. We may have some construction work completed by early winter, such as the pilings. However, the full construction schedule will start in the spring 2021.

Housing Department Update

Portfolio Holder: Karen McKenzie

5-year Strategic plan

1. Deliver the planned housing, on time and within budget and in conformance with all quality standards
2. Reduce the arrears' debt
3. Housing allocation update with community input
4. Mold and maintenance - educate and improve

Housing Initiative (ISC) 19 band owned homes: \$359,800.00

RAPP (CMHC) private home: \$37,500.00

100% completed RAPP from 2018

2020-2021 Conditional Funding (CMHC) Allocation Section 95 for non-profit Housing Program:

Loan subsidy: \$141,588.00 -

TFN Construction contract:

Landscaping - 14 units

Rehabilitation of 3 basements on private homes (ISC): \$125,000.00

2019-2020 Section 95 Allocation (CMHC): 2 units being constructed, approximately 80% completed

Education Update

Portfolio Holder: Elijah Polson-Groulx

- Approximately 60 students are registered in post-secondary – a couple have difficulty adjusting to distance education and are stepping back for a semester or year. Changes have made prior to penalties being incurred for tuition. Due to COVID, we are allowing for these temporary halts – in the meantime, it is freeing up some funding dollars and we will be considering requests for students wishing to either start in second semester, or who paid first semester out of their own pocket and who we can now support.
- TDSS began second course of the semester on October 13 and will end mid November. The school is asking that students make a choice to either complete the semester online or in person Audrey (title??) is monitoring attendance and issues closely and staying in constant contact with Caitlin Campbell, the Indigenous Student Advisor.
- Kiwetin School transitioned to Phase 2 of COVID protocol on Monday, October 19, 2020.
- The Reciprocal Education Agreement with DSB Ontario North East has been signed.
- The Post-Secondary policy ready for review by Chief & Council.
- The education department policy will be worked on in the coming months.

Income Assistance Update

Portfolio Holder: Karen McKenzie

85 active files October 21

Self esteem and career goals workshop set for end of October and beginning of November. Mandatory for clients 18-30, will be taking a few clients over 30 if room becomes available. Haileybury campus Northern College.

Monthly meetings are occurring with clients with a push toward goal setting and creating a pathway to employment or education.

Workshops to be facilitated by the health centre on important topics such as stress, anxiety, grief, and self esteem

ISC has added emergency COVID funding to the block funding;

1) We are paying \$500/client toward hydro payments, for those that pay hydro. (Average cost for the months of March-June)

2) Will be purchasing and distributing Presidents Choice Gift cards; \$400 for clients with dependents, \$300 for single clients

Winter clothing allowance is now available for clients without dependents, every 3 years, max \$200/client

Winter clothing allowance for dependent children is every year, max \$200/child

Contact information

Sacha Wabie

Chief

819-723-2370

819-629-7091

tfnchief@parolink.net

Elijah Polson

Vice-Chief

819-723-2370

819-723-5470

council1@parolink.net

Christine Chevrier

819-723-2370

council2@parolink.net

Jennilee Wahsquonaikézhik

819-723-2370

819-629-1206

council3@parolink.net

Karen McKenzie

819-723-2370

819-629-1208

council4@parolink.net

Gerald Hanbury

819-723-2370

819-290-9118

council5@parolink.net

Colleen Polson

819-723-2370

council6@parolink.net

Support for Indigenous Peoples during COVID-19



SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

- On May 29, 2020, the Government of Canada announced \$285.1 million to support the ongoing public health response to COVID-19 in Indigenous communities. This funds community-led responses to the pandemic and provides targeted increases to primary health care for First Nations communities.
- In case of outbreaks, this funding can be used to provide surge capacity and additional support for community-based services in First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.
- Communities can access this funding through their **First Nations and Inuit Health regional offices**. Please consult **Accessing additional public health support for First Nations and Inuit communities during COVID-19** for more information.
- In addition to this, on October 30th, the Government of Canada announced \$59 million for First Nations to adapt their on reserve community infrastructure. First Nations can use the funds to implement public health and safety measures in community buildings by adding hand washing stations, buying hand sanitizers, personal protective equipment for staff, and cleaning supplies, installing signage and barriers to promote physical distancing, and doing safety checks and upgrades to existing ventilation systems. The funds will be made available via Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) through existing funding agreements to First Nations Band communities or Tribal Councils, as well as self-governing First Nations.



ON-RESERVE INCOME ASSISTANCE

- The Government of Canada has invested \$270 million to supplement the **On-reserve Income Assistance Program**, which will support individuals and families with the help they need to meet essential living expenses.
- The funding will help the program meet increased demand for income assistance for individuals on reserve who find themselves without a job, and may not be eligible for, or have easy access to, Employment Insurance. It will also help hire additional staff to better serve First Nations communities.
- To apply for the On-Reserve Income Assistance Program, individuals can contact their community's band office or the **Yukon regional office** for more details.



SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS AND EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE FACILITIES

- The Government of Canada has provided \$112 million to First Nations communities to support a safe return to elementary and secondary schools on reserve.
- First Nations can use this funding to support school and education program reopening needs, which could include salaries for teachers, custodians and bus drivers (who may have to work additional hours during this period), access to technology, purchasing e-learning software and the development of take-home learning materials. As part of this funding, \$12 million can be used for physical changes to schools required to respond to COVID-19.
- First Nations can and will make decisions about their own schools reopening based on what they feel is safest for students and families. This funding, provided directly to First Nations through existing programs, is intended to support their work.
- On October 30th, the Government of Canada announced \$120.7 million to help Indigenous early learning and child care facilities safely operate during the pandemic. The investment is expected to support over 35,000 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation children who access culturally relevant Indigenous early learning and child care programs. This funding will be co-managed through existing early learning and child care partnerships. It will assist Indigenous communities in addressing their most critical needs, including implementing enhanced cleaning protocols, hiring additional staff, and offering training.
- This allocation also includes a base of \$5 million to ensure a minimum threshold to support emergency Indigenous early learning and child care needs. Of the \$120 million in new federal investments for Indigenous early learning and child care:
 - over \$71 million will be managed in partnership with First Nations;
 - over \$10 million will be managed in partnership with Inuit;
 - over \$29 million will be managed in partnership with the Métis Nation; and,
 - over \$8 million will enhance Indigenous early learning and child care services through the Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities program.



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND

- The **Indigenous Community Support Fund** was created in March 2020 to support Indigenous communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since its creation, the Government has committed \$685 million to the Fund. Funding is distributed through a combination of allocations directly to First Nations, Inuit and Métis leadership; proposal-based funding for urban and off-reserve Indigenous organizations and communities; and needs-based funding, which is application driven.
- This funding can be used in a wide variety of measures, for example: supporting Elders and vulnerable community members, addressing food security, educational and other support for children, mental health assistance and emergency response services, and preparedness measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Of the \$685 million committed to the Fund, on August 12, 2020, the Government of Canada announced that additional needs-based funding will be available through an application driven process. \$159,827,361 is available to First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, as well as organizations serving Indigenous peoples, including First Nations living off-reserve and Indigenous Peoples living in urban centres. For information on how to apply, please visit the **Indigenous Community Support Fund: Needs-based application**.



MENTAL WELLNESS

- The Government of Canada announced \$82.5 million in mental health and wellness supports on August 25, 2020, to help Indigenous communities adapt and expand mental wellness services, improve access and address growing demand, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of this funding will also go towards national organizations and services, such as the Hope for Wellness Help Line.
- This funding supports the Government of Canada's work with Indigenous partners and communities and is distinctions-based:
 - The First Nations portion is \$55.5 million, and has been allocated based on discussion among regional partnership tables.
 - The Inuit portion is \$12 million, and has been allocated in discussions with Inuit national and regional representatives.
 - The Métis Nation portion is \$7.5 million, and has been allocated through regional Métis Nation governing members.
- The remaining funding is approximately \$7.5 million, and will support coordination and inter-regional activities, such as work with national Indigenous mental wellness organizations and other national organizations that advance the development of resources and tools, as well as addressing the increased call volume of the Hope for Wellness Help Line.
- Individuals who are experiencing depression, anxiety, or excessive stress can contact the **Hope for Wellness Help Line** or their local First Nation, Inuit, or Métis service provider to see what supports may be available in their community.



SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S SHELTERS AND SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRES

- \$10 million was provided to ISC's existing network of 46 emergency shelters on reserve and in Yukon to support Indigenous women and children fleeing violence.
- An additional \$44.8 million over 5 years has been provided to build 12 new shelters through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's **Shelter Enhancement Program**.
- The government will also provide \$40.8 million to support operational costs for these new shelters over the first five years, and \$10.2 million annually ongoing. These new investments will bring the total number of program-funded shelters to 58.
- Starting this year, \$1 million per year ongoing will also be provided to support engagement with Métis leaders and service providers on shelter provision and community-led violence prevention projects for Métis women, girls, LGBTQ and two-spirit people.



SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES

- The Government of Canada is providing up to \$306.8 million in relief measures for small and medium-sized Indigenous businesses in the form of interest-free loans and non-repayable contributions.
- With support from ISC, financial supports are available through Aboriginal Financial Institutions (AFIs), administered by the National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association, and through Métis Capital Corporations (MCCs).
- Businesses can contact their **Aboriginal Financial Institution or Métis Capital Corporation** to apply for support.
- The Government of Canada has also announced the Indigenous Community Business Fund (ICBF), which provides \$117 million in new funding to support community-owned and micro-businesses whose revenues have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Business can apply for ICBF funding by completing the ICBF application form available on the dedicated ISC **webpage** and submitting their application package to the ISC Regional Office representative by email.
- The Government of Canada also created the COVID-19 Indigenous Tourism Stimulus Development Fund which provided \$16 million in new funding to support Indigenous tourism through the pandemic into recovery.
- The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) administered this fund to Indigenous tourism businesses across the country that have lost revenue due to COVID-19.
- The above funding compliments the suite of relief measures available to Canadian workers and businesses through Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan.



SUPPORT FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

- The Government of Canada is providing an additional \$75.2 million to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation students pursuing post-secondary education.
- How students can determine their eligibility:
 - o First Nations students: contact your band council office or the organization that administers the **Post-Secondary Student Support Program**
 - o Inuit students: contact your respective Inuit land-claim organization
 - o Métis Nation students: contact your respective Governing Member
- On October 30, the Government of Canada announced \$25.9 million to provide immediate support to Indigenous post-secondary institutions in 2020-21. The investment will help these institutions address increased costs and financial uncertainty resulting from the pandemic, including putting in place supports to retain staff, automating services to process student applications and registrations, adapting courses for online learning, and implementing public health and safety measures for in-person services.
- This one-time funding will be administered through existing Indigenous post-secondary education strategies including the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program, the Inuit Post-Secondary Education Strategy and the Métis Nation Post-Secondary Education Strategy – and will support Indigenous post-secondary institutions to offset costs and financial uncertainty caused by the pandemic.



OTHER SUPPORTS

- The Government of Canada transitioned from the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to a simplified and more accessible **Employment Insurance (EI)** program. In most cases, those who were previously receiving the CERB through Service Canada, do not need to apply for EI benefits. Those who are eligible for EI, will receive a minimum benefit rate of \$500 per week before taxes, or \$300 per week before taxes for extended parental benefits but could receive more.
- The **Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB)** provides \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks, to workers who have stopped working or had their employment/self-employment income reduced by at least 50% due to COVID-19 and who are not eligible for EI. These workers must be available and looking for work, and must accept work where it is reasonable to do so.
- The **Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit (CRSB)** provides \$500 per week for up to two weeks (can be split into two one-week portions), for workers who are unable to work because they contracted COVID-19; self-isolated for reasons related to COVID-19; or have underlying conditions that would make them more susceptible to COVID-19.
- The **Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit (CRCB)** provides \$500 per week for up to 26 weeks per household, for eligible workers unable to work because they must care for a child under the age of 12 or family member because schools, day-cares or care facilities are closed due to COVID-19 or because the child or family member is sick and/or required to quarantine.
- For information about these benefits including eligibility requirements, how to apply, and eligibility period dates, we encourage Canadians to visit the **CRA's webpages**.
- There are additional measures to support individuals and businesses. Visit the Government of Canada's **COVID-19 Economic Response Plan** for details.