
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE EMPLOYEES
FROM: BAABIITAW BOYD, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION
SUBJECT: COVID-19 EMPLOYEE UPDATE
DATE: MARCH 15, 2020



CC: PETER NAYQUONABE, ASST. COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION
MELANIE BENJAMIN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE
SHELDON BOYD, SECRETARY TREASURER
SANDI BLAKE, DISTRICT 1 REPRESENTATIVE
MARVIN BRUNEAU, DISTRICT 2 REPRESENTATIVE
WALLY ST. JOHN, DISTRICT 3 REPRESENTATIVE

With the news of confirmed cases of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) crossing the state of Minnesota, we understand the Mille Lacs Band Tribal Government and our employees have many questions about what this means for us. We are taking this situation seriously and our day-to-day operations are changing in response. The health and wellbeing of all employees is our top priority.

The Mille Lacs Band leadership as well as Health and Human Services, Emergency Management and the Tribal Emergency Response Committee (TERC) are currently meeting regularly. Health and Human Services is collecting data from Tribal, State, and Federal health authorities on a consistent basis that tell us how many confirmed cases are in the state. All available data is updated for the implementation of the Mille Lacs Band Emergency Response Plan. At this point, we are making every effort to keep our workplace sanitary and safe by increasing cleaning measures.

Currently, the Mille Lacs area remains to be in a *low-risk* level, and not in an area of *outbreak*. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, an area is considered an *outbreak* when there have been five or more confirmed cases within a close proximity. To date there are zero cases in our area. Our priority is to slow the transmission of COVID-19 and do the best we can to protect our employees through preparedness and proactive measures.

Note: Self-isolation is defined as staying home and limiting physical interaction with others.

To lessen the risk of exposure to our employees and staff, we are implementing the following:

- **In the event of illness, we want our employees to stay home and get the care they need and return to work happy and healthy. That is why we extended our sick leave to employees that are sick or have household members that are experiencing symptoms. This includes coverage of sick leave for up to 14 days which is the recommended self-isolation period, per health organizations. Employees will first use their available sick time, and the Band will cover the remaining balance of the required self-isolation. A doctor's note will be required to return to work if an employee tests positive.**
- **All supervisors are required to monitor and document their staff that are on a 14-day self-isolation and mark timesheets appropriately marked "COVID-19" next to hours worked.**
- **All non-essential Band Government travel has been temporarily suspended.**
- **When employees are returning from annual or personal out-of-state travel, they are required to contact their supervisor prior to returning to work. Self-isolation for 14 days will be the standard practice for returning from such travel.**
- **All Band government-sponsored events have been postponed until further notice.**
- **Access to the ALU in D1 and D3 have been restricted to residents only for the safety of elders.**
- **Elder meals will continue to be provided. Visitors will not have access.**
- **Elder employees 55+ and employees with compromised immune systems can self-isolate or work remotely if their job allows. Please discuss with your supervisor the ability to work remotely.**
- **Employees with children that are ordered to be home from school will be granted the time to be home with their children. This will be marked regular time with "COVID-19" next to hours worked.**

This Monday, March 16th, there will be a TERC meeting that will review the option of working remotely and sanitary practices in the work place and identifying people who are considered *essential staff*. Essential Staff will be required to report to work with the exception of those experiencing symptoms, Elders, and employees with compromised immune systems.

Please contact your healthcare provider if you experience symptoms, and communicate with your supervisor frequently. We will continue to send out updates as the situation progresses. Thank you all for your continued commitment to the Mille Lacs Band community.