

Updated July 2021

# GUIDANCE FOR WAKES/FUNERALS IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES DURING COVID-19



The goals of this guidance are to protect people attending gatherings from COVID-19 infection; and to reduce community transmission and introductions of COVID-19 into new communities.

**FUNERALS HAVE SHOWN TO LEAD TO OUTBREAKS IN FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES. IF AT ALL POSSIBLE THE FUNERAL SHOULD BE DELAYED AND TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AT AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM!**

**ATTENDEES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO BE FULLY VACCINATED AGAINST COVID.**

## LET YOUR GUESTS KNOW AHEAD OF TIME WHAT TO EXPECT:

- 1) Requesting ill guests not to come if they have been in contact with someone with COVID-19.
- 2) Masks are **strongly recommended** and attendees should bring their own.
- 3) Anyone who is a close contact, supposed to be isolating, is symptomatic, or has been in close contact with a suspect or presumptive COVID-19 case should not attend.
- 4) Have a sign in sheet to track the names of individual coming to the service (see second page).
- 5) Posting signage to encourage social distancing.
- 6) Limit the amount of time for the funeral.
- 7) Household family members can sit together as a group.
- 8) People should be at least 2m or more from each other at the event.
- 9) Guests should not visit elders for 14 days after the event.
- 10) Guests should self-monitor for 14 days after a wake service.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Have an usher/greeter to monitor people and someone in charge of organizing the event to ensure COVID precautions are in place.**
  - For hand sanitizing- Have hand sanitizers readily available, encourage guest to bring their own. Hand sanitizer needs to be at least 70% alcohol minimum with a DIN or NPN on the label to be effective.
  - For pre-screening guests, ask if they are sick or should be isolating, or have been in contact with someone with COVID-19.
  - Monitoring the sign in book and keeping track of names and phone numbers of guests who come.
  - To ensure masks are worn and to ensure physical distancing is maintained.
- **If food and drinks are provided, we would recommend:**
  - a) have a designated area away from the actual event; **and**
  - b) the food or drink is only consumed in that designated area; **and**
  - c) the food or drink can only be consumed while seated; **and**
  - d) have hand sanitizer available at the start of any food service/buffet.
- **As difficult as it is, no hugging, kissing or handshakes should occur during the procession.**
- **Have a separate enter/exit door at event venue, with one way flow through venue.**
- **Microphones should not be shared by multiple people and should be disinfected between uses.**
- **Congregational singing is not recommended** (If someone wishes to sing a song they should be greater than 3 metres from the congregation).
- **Ensure bathrooms are monitored for crowd gathering and is well stocked with hand soap and paper towels and disinfected regularly.**
- **Increased disinfection of high touch surfaces should occur (door knobs/handles, faucet handles, seats etc...)**
- **During the procession for paying last respects to the departed and family, hand sanitizer should be readily available.**

**We know that you are facing an incredibly difficult time with the loss of a loved one but following this guidance will protect loved ones from getting sick after attending the funeral.**



# Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority Inc.



## Participant Attendance List

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event \_\_\_\_\_

	Last Name	First Name	Phone Contact	Community of Resident
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Please fax completed list to NITHA Public Health at (306) 953-5020

Mailing Address: Box #787, 2300 – 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, PBCN Office Complex- Main Floor  
Chief Joseph Custer Reserve #201 – Prince Albert, SK S6V 6Z1, Canada  
Telephone: (306) 953-5000 Fax: (306) 953-5010