



NESKANTAGA FIRST NATION  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AND COUNCIL

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MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Neskantaga First Nation Declares of State of Emergency Off Reserve Member COVID-19 Outbreak

**THUNDER BAY, ON:** Neskantaga First Nation (NFN) Chief and Council have issued a declaration of state of emergency with respect to a large number of off-reserve members in Thunder Bay testing positive for COVID-19. “We are experiencing an outbreak among Neskantaga First Nation members with 6% of our off-reserve membership testing positive for COVID-19,” said Chief Chris Moonias, of Neskantaga First Nation. “With 12 members being positively identified, including 1 in critical condition at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre—we are deeply troubled by this trend we are seeing among our off-reserve membership.”

Within the [Declaration of Emergency](#), factors are identified as attributing to the outbreak including the high rates of COVID-19 cases in Thunder Bay and homeless. The state of emergency calls for Indigenous Services Canada to fund emergency housing to accommodate the homeless population who have been forced off-reserve due to a lack of housing, in order to lower their risk of contracting COVID-19 and further support their health and safety.

For the information of the public, the community put together a preliminary outline of issues Neskantaga First Nation is challenged with during the COVID-19 pandemic in a [Fact Sheet](#).

**For more information, please contact:** Chief Christopher Moonias at: [chief@neskantaga.com](mailto:chief@neskantaga.com)

**Neskantaga First Nation** is remote Oji-Cree community situated in Northern Ontario on Attawapiskat Lake, 430 kms north east of Thunder Bay, Ontario. Approximately 217 members live off-reserve.