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Swinomish Indian Tribal Community

A Federally Recognized Indian Tribe Organized Pursuant to 25 U.S.C. § 476
* 11404 Moorage Way * La Conner, Washington 98257 *

July 22, 2020

Dear Tribal Members, Reservation Residents, and Tribal employees:

Thanks to each of you for continuing to do your part to keep our community and Reservation safe and healthy in this pandemic.

We have been fortunate here at Swinomish. We have not had one positive coronavirus test result at our Medical Clinic. But we cannot ignore what is happening around us. Here in Skagit County, we have seen a concerning rate of newly diagnosed COVID-19 cases. And across the State, the situation is very serious. Washington's Secretary of Health has just shared a new COVID-19 situation report from the Institute for Disease Modeling with very troubling information. According to that report,

Washington State as a whole is in an explosive situation. Transmission continues to increase or accelerate across most of Washington state and will continue to do so unless concrete steps are taken to stop the spread.

That report also said that **“Washington State is in the early stages of an exponential statewide outbreak that has zero chance of being reversed without changes to our collective behavior and policies to support that change.”** You can read the full report online at:

https://covid.idmod.org/data/WA_Situation_Report_9_COVID19_transmission_across_Washington_State.pdf

The Swinomish Senate agrees that we all must do even more to contain this outbreak and protect our community and ourselves. Yesterday, the Senate passed a COVID-19 Resolution requiring that, *effective immediately*, all Tribal and community members, all Reservation residents, and anyone employed by or conducting a business within the Reservation ***must wear a cloth face covering that covers their nose and mouth in any indoor or outdoor public setting.*** A cloth face covering must be worn:

- Inside any building that is open to the public;
- In outdoor public areas when a distance of at least six feet cannot be maintained from any non-household member, including but not limited to streets, sidewalks, docks, beaches, sports fields or courts, parks and trails;

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You can read the details in the Resolution, which is posted on the Swinomish at:
http://swinomish-nsn.gov/media/98777/20200721_resappfacemaskrequirement.pdf.

We must all take this situation very seriously. We can continue to be safe here at Swinomish, but only if we all wear our cloth face coverings, practice social distancing to keep six feet apart, and limit our contact with people outside our households. We need to stay close to home. When we must interact with others, we need to stay outside and keep six feet apart. This is especially true for elders and for those at high-risk. And as always, if you aren't sure what is the right decision, just play it safe and be careful.

We can do what we need to. We've seen case numbers go down in places where everyone comes together and uses their masks, keeps social distancing, and limits travel and contacts. We can do the same thing here.

So please wear your mask, stay safe, stay healthy and let's take care of one another.

Sincerely,



Steve Edwards
Chairman