



## Press Release

*For immediate release*

### COVID-19: CONCERNS RAISED OVER MINE REOPENINGS IN NUNAVIK

**Kuujuuaq, April 16, 2020** – The announcement on Monday by the Québec government allowing mining activities to resume in the province has given Nunavik mines the green light to reopen this week.

The Director of Public Health in Nunavik Dr. Marie Rochette and the Chief of Police and Director of Civil Security Jean-Pierre Larose had to make a specific exemption for the mining companies and partially lifted the travel restrictions applicable since April 4 in Nunavik. In order to protect the region, they insisted that the following measures be maintained until further notice.

- Only workers from the South are authorized to travel to the mining sites.
- The workers' travel route will follow a North-South corridor with no contact with Nunavik communities.
- The installations at Deception Bay will not be accessible to Nunavik residents.

The lockdown in Nunavik, which has succeeded so far in containing the spread of the COVID-19 virus, has the unfortunate consequence of preventing only Inuit miners from going back to work without any form of compensation or job protection.

Nonetheless, despite this specific exemption granted to the mining companies, Nunavik remains under lockdown. Mining companies will be required to follow strict travel restrictions and public health protocol. Flights to the mines resumed Thursday April 16 2020.

For more information regarding the preventive measures mining companies must follow in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic please follow the link to the following French language Quebec government site at <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/covid/2976-travailleur-secteur-exploitation-mini%C3%A8re-covid19.pdf>.

*The Kativik Regional Government is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The organization has jurisdiction over nearly the entire territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel in areas such as municipal matters, transportation, the environment, policing, employment, labour training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use planning, civil security and economic development.*

*The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services is a public agency created in 1978 under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. It is responsible for nearly the entire Quebec territory located north of the 55<sup>th</sup> parallel in terms of the provision of health and social services for the inhabitants of the 14 communities.*

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**Source:** **Nunavik-Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee**

**For information:** Jean Barcelo  
Communication Officer KRG  
Tel: 819-964-2962 ext. 2400

**Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services**

Josée Levesque  
Communication Officer NRBHSS  
Tel.: 819 964-2222

**(UNE VERSION FRANÇAISE SUIVRA)**