



## **Press Release**

### ***For immediate release***

#### **COVID-19: First Meeting of the Nunavik Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee**

**Kuuujuaq, March 18, 2020-** Various stakeholders in Nunavik met on Tuesday March 17 as the Kativik Regional Government activated for the first time the Nunavik Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee stems from the Civil Protection Act. It was created in compliance with the regulations that oversee civil security and public emergencies in Québec.

The Committee's initial meeting was held under the supervision of the Kativik Regional Police Force's Chief of Police and Director of Public Security Jean-Pierre Larose. The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services was called upon to play a key role in setting up the emergency response unit to the pandemic. Canadian North and Air Inuit airlines were invited as special participants in this initial meeting considering their role in these early stages of the pandemic.

KRG Director General Michael Gordon, who under the law can exercise special powers to counter the pandemic, insisted on the importance of creating a climate of cooperation among the various regional groups as well as municipalities, which will eventually be asked to participate. The committee is under the leadership of the KRG, which is actively monitoring the situation and working closely with its partners in the region to contain the virus.

The committee will meet daily to examine the options and adopt the best practices in fighting the spread of the coronavirus. The goal of the committee is to take action and anticipate different scenarios on a day-to-day basis in order to protect the Nunavimmiut and contain the pandemic. Sub-committees have been created to examine specific operational needs such as housing, internet access, communications and daycare.

The Executive Director of the NNRBHSS Minnie Grey explained during the meeting that there were presently no positive cases of COVID-19 in Nunavik.

The KRG Director of Public Security Jean-Pierre Larose mentioned that we are not at the moment in a state of emergency, but that we have entered an "emergency watch" that will prepare the region against any potential spread of the virus. The key words in guiding the committee's response are ANTICIPATION, ACTION and COMMUNICATION.

Canadian North and Air Inuit will also make sure that passengers will not be allowed to take a flight to Nunavik if:

- He or she has been outside Canada in the last 14 days;

- He or she has been in contact in the last 14 days with someone infected with the coronavirus COVID-19.

Both airline companies have already decided to limit their flights, starting March 21. The committee will inform the population on a daily basis as the situation unfolds.

## Julien Viau-Petit

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P.O. Box 9, Kuujjuaq, QC, J0M 1C0

Tel: (819) 964-2961 ext. 2388

[www.krg.ca](http://www.krg.ca)

*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.*