

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT TO NUNATUKAVUT FOR COVID-19 MEASURES A START BUT MUCH MORE NEEDED

HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR, April 16, 2020 – The NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) today expressed its disappointment in the level of initial COVID-19 funding being provided by the Government of Canada. The funding is directed to address the urgent needs of NunatuKavut members and communities in responding to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The approved \$580,000 is less than 25 per cent of the funds requested by NCC.

While the initial federal funding being provided is inadequate, NCC will continue to focus its efforts in working with communities around responding to the critical resourcing needs related to COVID-19. Crucial programs and services are being developed and implemented to help NunatuKavut members who are most vulnerable. This includes the following initiatives:

- ongoing assistance for Black Tickle: assistance with water, food and heat security initiatives;
- elder support program: contributions for social and wellness activities and household and individual assistance;
- food and heat security relief program: voucher system, country food harvester support, firewood harvesting and community freezer enhancements; and
- cultural mental wellness supports: intergenerational program with a focus on elders, youth and children, community grants for wellness activities and outreach projects.

NCC is committed to continuing to work with the federal government to secure fair and equitable funding to help NunatuKavut Inuit and members adequately prepare and deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

QUOTE

“Our communities share many of the same realities as other Inuit communities in Labrador and in Canada. And we have faced these challenges and realities with limited and, in some instances, no access to resources. We implore the Government of Canada to live up to its responsibilities to provide the resources necessary for our communities to prepare for this crisis and not be hindered by policies that diminish NunatuKavut Inuit access to critical programs and services. We will not cease in our efforts to push for additional funding that is fair and equitable. Nor will we cease in carrying out the work that is necessary in ensuring our communities have access to the essential resources needed to help prevent the spread of this virus. The health and wellbeing of our people and communities are paramount.”

-- *Todd Russell, NCC President*

QUICK FACTS

- NCC is the representative governing body for approximately 6,000 Inuit who reside primarily in south and central Labrador.
- NunatuKavut means “Our Ancient Land” in Inuttitut and is the traditional territory of the Inuit who belong to this territory.
- In July 2018, NCC entered into talks with the Government of Canada on the Recognition of its Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination (RIRSD). In September 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed.

ASSOCIATED LINKS

- Credible and emerging information on COVID-19 is available online at www.gov.nl.ca/COVID-19.
- Here is a list of mental wellness supports available in Newfoundland and Labrador:
 - If you are finding it difficult to cope or feel anxious, Bridge the gapp offers many services to support you and your wellbeing. Please visit www.bridgethegapp.ca
 - If you are feeling isolated and alone during COVID-19, call the Provincial CHANNAL Warm Line at 1-855-753-2560 9:00am to 12:00am daily.
 - If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call the Mental Health Crisis Line at 1-888-737-4668 available 24 hours a day
- Further information on NCC can be found at www.nunatukavut.ca. Please also join in the conversation at [Facebook.com/nunatukavut](https://www.facebook.com/nunatukavut), Twitter [@nunatukavut](https://twitter.com/nunatukavut) and YouTube by searching NunatuKavut.

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