

GOVERNMENT OF NEW BRUNSWICK UPDATE
Bulletin #21e: COVID-19 GNB News Release from April 9
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The following update on COVID-19 (the novel coronavirus) was issued today:

Projected number of COVID-19 cases

FREDERICTON (GNB) – The provincial government has released COVID-19 modelling, showing the impact that actions by government and all New Brunswickers can have in a few scenarios.

These projections indicate that, with no public health measures, New Brunswick could have had up to 5,600 deaths over the course of the current outbreak. With the public health measures now in place – and adhered to by the public – the number of deaths could range from 550 to 1,750.

“I want to do everything in my power to make sure we keep the numbers as low as possible,” said Premier Blaine Higgs. “Together, we are already taking the steps to make the best-case scenario our reality.”

While there have been no COVID-19 deaths in the province to date, Health Minister Hugh J. Flemming emphasized that the eventual number of deaths is entirely dependent on the efforts that all New Brunswickers take to slow the spread of the virus.

“One death is one too many, but we must be realistic and expect that there will be deaths from COVID-19 in New Brunswick,” said Flemming. “Limiting the number of deaths requires that everyone follow the direction of the chief medical officer of health by staying home and maintaining physical distance from others when you have to go out.”

The pandemic modelling was developed by staff from the Department of Health, Public Health and the regional health authorities. It was inspired by similar modelling released by the governments of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Quebec and Ontario. The models will be revised as new information is provided during the outbreak.

Facts about the modelling:

- The scenarios are based on the experience of northern Italy, as a case where a large impact has been experienced, and on all of Italy, as a medium-impact scenario.
- The scenarios show potential outcomes up to April 30, beyond which projections become less reliable.
- In the large-impact scenario, New Brunswick could experience up to 132 deaths by the end of April; under the medium-impact scenario, the figure is estimated at 70 deaths. On its current trajectory, with all public health measures now in place and adhered to by the public, New Brunswick could have 15 COVID-19 deaths by April 30.
- The projected number of patients hospitalized on April 30, based on the current trajectory, is 28. That number could be as high as 125 under a large-impact scenario.
- The number of patients requiring admission to an intensive care unit, currently projected to rise to 13 by the end of the month, could peak at 84 on April 30 under the large-impact scenario.

The province's health system is preparing for any of these scenarios by securing personal protective equipment for health-care workers, pursuing expanded capacity for COVID-19 testing, and strengthening its ability to trace contacts and respond to potential clusters of the disease as quickly as possible.

Three new cases

Testing at the microbiology laboratory at the Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont Hospital Centre in Moncton has identified three new cases, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in New Brunswick to 111.

Of the 111 cases, 62 are travel-related, 33 are close contacts of confirmed cases, six are the result of community transmission and 10 remain under investigation.

Ten people have been hospitalized and five have since been discharged. Four of the five patients remaining in hospital are in an intensive care unit.

To date, 53 people have recovered.

The new cases are:

- An individual aged up to 10 in Zone 3 (Fredericton region)
- An individual aged 30-39 in Zone 3 (Fredericton region)
- An individual aged 40-49 in Zone 3 (Fredericton region)

Dr. Jennifer Russell, chief medical officer of health, directed New Brunswickers to continue to stay at home, practise physical distancing and maintain good hygiene practices to further slow the spread of the virus.

“The message is simple: keep doing what you are doing,” said Russell. “We cannot afford to let up, even for a moment.”

Applications for income benefit close at 8 p.m.

More than 66,000 applicants have registered for the New Brunswick Workers Emergency Income Benefit.

The one-time \$900 benefit was created for workers or self-employed people who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 situation. To date, the provincial government has provided more than \$27 million in benefit payments.

The purpose of the benefit has been to provide a bridge for those who would be applying for Employment Insurance or the new Canada Emergency Response

Benefit. As the federal program began on April 6, the provincial program funding is no longer required.

Applications close today at 8 p.m. and may be completed through the Red Cross, which is administering the program, at 1-800-863-6582. The applications will continue to be processed in the coming days.

Recreational fishing and bear hunting seasons delayed

The Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development has delayed, until at least May 1, the opening of all recreational fishing seasons and the spring bear hunting season due to COVID-19. Fishing season normally begins on April 15 and the spring bear hunt on April 20.

“As a government, we are committed to doing everything possible to protect our citizens,” said Higgs. “I am a fisherman and I love the outdoors. I know what this means, and I am hopeful conditions will change soon.”

This decision will be re-evaluated April 30.

Up-to-date information about COVID-19 [is available online](#).