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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 *

August 04, 2020

Dear Tribal Members and Tribal employees:

We have now all heard that Swinomish has seven (7) positive cases of COVID-19. And we also know that several of these individuals did not experience any symptoms of the illness -- they did not even know that they had been infected by the coronavirus.

This shows us why we have to strictly follow the COVID-19 safety rules that the Senate has repeated for months -- because we do not know whether we might have been infected, even if we feel fine. So we have to just assume we might be carrying the coronavirus, and every day be careful to protect our families and community.

It is not hard to do that work to protect the community -- we know what we have to do. What can be hard is that we have to do it every day, until this pandemic is over. So we just have to make it our new habit, the way we do with so many other things to keep each other safe.

Here are the steps that every one of us has to take to keep our family, our elders, our community and each other safe:

Elders, especially those over the age of 65 or with underlying health conditions **should stay safely at home**. This is the way you can best protect yourself. Your family can help you, so you can protect yourself.

All Reservation residents should also continue to stay home, except for:

- essential activities, such as to get groceries or prescriptions, or medical care, engage in activities essential for the health and safety of family, household members and pets, and participate in outdoor activities such as bike riding, walking, jogging, gardening or golf.,
- **essential employment** that you cannot do remotely,
- visiting **essential businesses**, and/or

- participating in **essential** programs and receive services, as available.

If you **must** go out for one of these **essential** reasons, then these are the habits we have to follow every time:

- Wear a face mask when we are outside our home
- Wash our hands many times throughout the day
- Maintain social distancing of 6 feet from anyone outside our household
- Only allow household members in our home, and avoid going in other homes.

I know we can do this. But we need to work at it every day. We cannot cut corners, we cannot let down our guard. If we do not keep up these good habits, every day, the virus will spread further through our community. None of us want that.

And we have to help each other. If you see someone who has forgotten a mask, offer to get one. If you see an elder going out, offer to help them so they can stay home. We need to come together as the community we are to keep each other safe. So, if you have questions, call the Medical Clinic and talk to our providers for guidance. And if you should find you're not sure what is the right choice, just play it safe and be extra careful and stay home.

We can do what we need to. We know that case numbers go down in places where everyone comes together and uses their masks, keeps social distancing, and avoids 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