

Dear Community,

Last week we lost two of our Elders. It is with the blessing of their families that we write the following message. The coronavirus creates a unique situation to address from a public health perspective, while at the same time honoring the culture and passing of loved ones.

Please note the attached information on community gatherings, which recommends minimizing contact with others to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Despite the risk, we respect the importance of this ceremony and should you wish to attend, we write to notify you of how we are managing this situation.

Most importantly, if you are experiencing a cough, runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, or fever, we respectfully ask that you remain at home. This is both for your own safety, as you will have a compromised immune system, and for the safety of the community. Travelling to Tla'amin from out of the community is not recommended, as coronavirus can be infectious without causing symptoms for a period of days.

Some of the changes you may notice and experience at the ceremonies include additional handwashing stations, signage, and a limited food menu (we ask that there are no food donations provided). There will be an opportunity to have soup and bread following the service. This food will be prepared by professionals in an approved kitchen. Please follow the guidelines of 30 seconds of hand washing every hour at minimum.

Furthermore, typical greetings and protocol surrounding paying respects to the family will not be practiced. This means there will be no line ups to shake hands or embrace the family of the deceased following the ceremony. It is recommended that a 2-meter (6.5 feet) distance between individuals be respected whenever possible. As an alternative, a basket will be available to place letters, cards, or notes to the family. Public viewing of the deceased, if applicable, will be available at the wake only at the discretion of the family.

We view this unique situation as an opportunity for the community to support each other in overcoming this threat to our health. The resilience of this community gives complete confidence that we can manage this situation with decisive culturally appropriate care and public health protocols. Please view our website: www.tlaaminhealth.com for up to date information on coronavirus.

Emote

Tla'amin Health Management, Tla'amin Nursing staff, and Families of the Departed