

# Asymptomatic Testing for Travel to First Nations/Indigenous and Northern Relations Communities



Data has shown First Nations people experience severe outcomes from COVID-19 at higher rates and at younger ages compared to other Manitobans. To lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission in First Nations and Indigenous and Northern Relations communities, First Nations health experts and public health officials have developed a number of targeted testing recommendations.

Non-essential travel to and from First Nations and Indigenous and Northern Relations communities continues to be discouraged. However, public health officials recognize that some essential travel continues to take place.

## Testing Requirements

Effective March 19, 2021, public health officials strongly recommend COVID-19 testing occur before travel to First Nations and Indigenous and Northern Relations communities. Testing is also recommended before someone returns to a community if a resident has been away for more than 48 hours

Testing should not be done in individuals with a previous lab-confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis in the past three months. Testing is recommended for individuals who have received one or two doses of vaccine.

## Testing Locations

Individuals without symptoms of COVID-19 travelling to, or returning to, a First Nations or Indigenous and Northern Relations community can seek testing within three days of travel at no cost at the following locations. For hours and appointment information, visit: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/testing/locations.html>.

- **Winnipeg:**
  - Garry Centre – 330 Garry St.
  - Thunderbird House – 715 Main St.
  - MPI Drive-Thru Testing site – 125 King Edward St.
- **Thompson:**
  - Thompson Clinic Testing Centre – Plaza Mall
- **The Pas:**
  - The Pas Testing Centre – 328 Fischer Ave.

While public health is only recommending testing at this time, individuals should be familiar with testing and self-isolation (quarantine) requirements that may be in place in their destination community.

Provided they have no symptoms, individuals seeking testing prior to travel or return to a First Nations or Indigenous and Northern Relations community do not need to self-isolate (quarantine) while waiting for their test result. However, they are encouraged to continue self-monitoring for symptoms for 14 days after arriving in the community, using the online screening tool at: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>.

Even if an individual receives a negative test result, they need to continue to follow all public health measures including limiting non-household close contacts, wearing masks in indoor public places, following physical distancing measures, and practicing frequent hand hygiene.

If individuals develop symptoms after receiving negative test results they need to immediately self-isolate and be re-tested.