

# Your Yellowknife South Newsletter

summer edition 2021



Happy summer 2021! I admit that for me the return of long, sunny days came not a day too soon after a long year. I am thrilled to be able to get into NWT parks, pop in at Folk on the Rocks and contribute to the Old Town Ramble and Ride. Seeing these events rolling out, it feels like we may be entering what could be the new normal with COVID-19 for at least the near future. I am both proud and humble at the spirit of community that has been shown in weathering the various restrictions for over a year. I want to thank all of you who reached out to our office with your questions or concerns through a difficult year and your ideas about how the GNWT can do better. For those that hesitate to get in contact, please don't. Sarah and I are here to answer your questions, find potential solutions, or lend a listening ear to anyone who needs to voice frustrations at a situation they find themselves in.

This summer I again hosted public budget dialogues to hear directly from residents how public dollars should be spent, saved and managed. An online survey has also been created for all members of the public to respond to. If you would like to find out more information on these Sessions or to take the Budget Dialogue Survey to have your say please visit: <https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/services/budget-2021/budget-dialogues-2021>

## Coming this fall...

The Procurement Review Report with a review of public procurement best practices and recommendations is due out while discussions with Indigenous Governments about the development of an Indigenous Procurement Policy are underway. Also expected by this fall are the Business Services Review Report looking at ways to improve the efficiency and accessibility of such services across departments and agencies as well as the Human Resources: Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework that will include more structured guidance for departments to help the GNWT be ever more reflective of the population it services. The Government Renewal Initiative is underway and the initial rounds of evaluations and research will be coming in will support evidence-based choices as part of upcoming budget cycles.

Through my role as Industry, Tourism, and Investment Minister, I anticipate rolling out the engagement process for the Mineral Resources Act and Regulations which includes a review of our royalty system. I am also looking at ways to bring focus to critical minerals and opportunities within remediation.

I am very conscious of the process and contents of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the Calls for Justice. It will be four years ago this November where I presented a final submission to the Inquiry while in my previous role as a lawyer. What I did not know then, is that I was advocating to my present self as a now Minister for the GNWT. This fall I will be having engagements on the draft MMIWG Action Plan for the NWT through my role as the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

While MMIWG is at the forefront of my work as the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, through my role as the Minister of Finance, I have been working on how the GNWT can address the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. This past year the Department of Finance released the Living Well Together training program which is an 8 module interactive Indigenous Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training course. The goals of this training are:

1. To create awareness and understanding of the impact of colonization.
2. To have all GNWT employees understand their individual and collective role in reconciliation.
3. To provide the necessary foundation and tools to move towards cultural competency.

This training is mandatory for all GNWT staff, and is also available free to any member of the public who wishes to participate. To find out more about this training program or to participate, please visit: <https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/services/diversity-and-inclusion/living-well-together>

### **Employment Standards**

Changes to the Employment Standards Act and Regulations came into effect on July 1, 2021. The changes provide protection to NWT workers and flexibility to employers during a pandemic with the creation of Emergency Leave. Emergency Leave provides protection to workers by providing unpaid leave when they are unable to attend work because of a public health emergency. This leave is retroactive to March 18, 2020 when the COVID-19 public health emergency was declared. Employees who were terminated from their employment because they were unable to work as a result of COVID-19 may have grounds to file a complaint with the Employment Standards Office. To find out if you have grounds to file a complaint, please contact the Employment Standards Office by phone (867)767-9351 ext. 71469 or email [employment\\_standards@gov.nt.ca](mailto:employment_standards@gov.nt.ca). For terminations due to COVID-19 that occurred between March 18, 2020 and June 30, 2021 must be received by the Employment Standards Office by January 2, 2022.

Beginning September 1, 2021, the minimum wage in the NWT will increase from \$13.46 per hour to \$15.20 per hour.

### **Culture and Heritage**

A new Tłıchǫ community exhibit 'Treaty 11 - 100 years' is now on display at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC). The exhibit commemorates the 100th anniversary of Chief Mq̄whì signing the treaty in Behchokǫ, NT, on August 22, 1921. The exhibit is open to the public and can be viewed during regular opening hours, Wednesday-Sunday, 1 to 5 pm.

Nominations are open for the 2021 NWT Ministerial Literacy Awards. Deadline to submit your nomination is August 20, 2021. For full information on how to nominate and the categories please visit: <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/literacy/nwt-literacy-awards>

### **DMV**

The Yellowknife Driver and Motor Vehicle office is now accepting walk-ins between 12:00pm and 4:00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. The other days will be for those who have booked appointments in advance, as in a recent survey most clients preferred to be able to book appointments rather than walk-in and wait.

### **Public Land Act**

The Department of Lands released a What We Heard Report following its first round of engagement on the development of the Public Land Act Regulations. The results from the public engagement and the cross-jurisdictional review and policy research will be used to help inform the development of the regulations to bring the new Public Land Act into force.

<https://www.lands.gov.nt.ca/sites/lands/files/resources/2021-plaregs-whatweheard.pdf> or you can find it on my website under Resources.

### **Nursing Profession Act**

The Department of Health and Social Services gathered feedback and recommendations in response to a Discussion Paper on proposed changes to the Nursing Profession Act. The feedback was positive and the Department will be moving forward with changes to the legislative framework as a response. To view the What We Heard Report:

<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/what-we-heard-amendments-nwt-nursing-profession-act-discussion-paper.pdf> or visit the Resources section on my website.

## **COVID Update**

### **Emerging Stronger**

Emerging Stronger is a document that was created by the GNWT to work as a guideline to provide opportunity to apply initial lessons learned from the past year of living through the pandemic. It builds on existing priorities as set out by the 19th Assembly to establish a foundation for social and economic recovery and long-term growth.

I have uploaded a copy of Emerging Stronger on my website and it can be found in the Resource section under 'For Constituents'.

The Premier is seeking feedback on Emerging Stronger and you can do so by visiting here:

<https://www.eia.gov.nt.ca/en/content/providing-feedback-emerging-stronger> or you can email the Yellowknife South Office and we can pass it on for you.

### **Emerging Wisely**

The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer recently released an updated version of Emerging Wisely called 'Step by Step Together'. This document provides the steps and guidelines for easing and ending pandemic restrictions.

To stay up to date on the phases of Emerging Wisely please visit: <https://www.gov.nt.ca/covid-19/en/emerging-wisely-2021>

## Getting in touch:

Our lines of communication are always open, to listen, support, and collaborate on your ideas for a prosperous and healthy NWT.



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### The situation as of July 26, 2021:

1. Leisure travel is not permitted into the territory, however, exemptions are considered for compassionate reasons, family reunification, exceptional circumstances, travel from Nunavut and Yukon, and remote tourism.
2. If you are traveling out of the territory, be sure to make yourself familiar with the guidelines of the jurisdiction you are traveling to as not all places are as open as we are within the territory.
3. If you travel you must submit a self-isolation plan for potential contact tracing purposes (yes, even if you are fully vaccinated).
4. If you are fully vaccinated (14 days after your second shot), you are no longer required to isolate for 14 days upon your arrival back into the NWT. However, you must follow the isolation guidance applicable to anyone in your household who is partially vaccinated or unvaccinated.
5. People who are partially vaccinated are still required to self-isolate for a minimum of 8 days with a day 8 negative test.
6. People who are unvaccinated, including children born after 2009, are required to self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days with a 10 day negative test. Children under 2 will not be required to get a test, but will need to isolate until day 10.
7. Indoor Gatherings: up to 200 people can gather indoors in one space without an exemption.
8. Outdoor Gatherings: You are allowed to go ahead with outdoor gatherings as long as they involve less than 200 people. Some gatherings however, are still considered high risk and require OCPHO approval (funerals/celebrations of life).

### Vaccine Clinics

Since our last newsletter vaccines have become available in the NWT. Moderna is being offered to those 18+ and Pfizer-BioNTec is being offered to children 12 years and older. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is also being offered to those younger than 12 if they will be turning 12 in the year of vaccine administration, e.g. a child born in 2009 would be eligible for a vaccination in 2021, regardless of their month of birth. Both of these vaccines were approved by Health Canada in December of 2020.

Getting vaccinated is your choice, but by being vaccinated against COVID-19 it helps reduce your risk of contracting COVID-19 and helps protect those in your community.

If you would like to get vaccinated you can either book your appointment online or call 767-9107 x.40151. All appointments are at the Centre Square Mall clinic.

### Protect NWT Contact information:

For general information about COVID-19, questions on public health orders, enforcement, travel restrictions, and self-isolation plans Available 8AM to 8PM, 7 days a week.

✉ protectnwt@gov.nt.ca 📞 8-1-1

### Door Knocking

We will be knocking on doors again this summer, this time on the north side of the riding. If you would like to ensure that we get to your door, or prefer that we do not come at all, particularly if you will be isolating during specific dates, please use the contacts above and we will do our best to accommodate you.