

COVID-19 COMMUNITY UPDATE: April 1, 2020

The Bois Forte Tribal Council have been participating in various conference calls today which included: Tribal Leaders; Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan, Senator Tina Smith, and Representative Betty McCollum; and the morning Tribal Emergency Response Committee.

This morning we decided to amend our current policy on employees wearing medical and homemade masks. This is not the recommendation from MDH, it is our decision, which was advised by our medical professionals.

The new mask recommendation advised that Tribal Government employees should be wearing masks when they are in direct contact with the public and out in the community. We do want to mention that masks will not be provided by Health and Human Services at this time as supplies are extremely limited and difficult to replenish.

We do want to recommend that members of the community wear masks while out in the public as well. We have patterns with instructions available on our website www.boisforte.com, if people want to make some for themselves.

We are looking for volunteers to make cloth masks, if you are willing to help please contact the Vermilion Center at 218-753-4542 or the Tribal Center in Nett Lake at 218-757-3261 to sign up. We have ordered supplies and masks will go to employees and members of the community. At this time, we do not have the distribution procedure for the masks completed. We will keep you informed of the distribution timeframe.

We are currently finalizing the amended leave policies for employees as it pertains to issues with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fortune Bay Resort Casino will remain closed until April 17, 2020, at which time we will evaluate the situation and go from there.

We had a conference call with the Minnesota Indian Gaming Association (MIGA) today and most of the call covered distribution of funds from the eight-billion-dollars of the CARES Act. We have a follow up call tomorrow with the BIA and the Department of Treasury.

Our medical clinic is looking into providing virtual visits. This will allow patients to be seen by their provider through video. The clinic is currently testing the software and equipment, hopefully we will have more information for you later this week.

We are preparing for the COVID-19 virus to arrive in our community. We continuously monitor the situation and take the best course of action based on the information that is available to us at the time. To protect our community, we will need to make difficult decisions in the coming days. We ask for your patience and understanding.

Changes are happening daily if not hourly regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. We will continue to keep our employees and members of the community informed. We will do our best to protect those who are most vulnerable to the virus. Please remember to practice social distancing. stay safe and stay healthy.

The Tribal Government created a COVID-19 Email address to help address public and employee concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus. Please note that the email address is for general questions only, not for patient care. Please email and include the following in the subject line of the email that best addresses your concerns.

COVID-19@BOISFORTE-NSN.GOV

“Public Health” “Emergency Response” “HR” “Behavioral Health” “Medical” “Dental” “Pharmacy”