



The Nation, Wisconsin, and the Stockbridge-Munsee Community are seeing increases in the number of COVID cases. This last week, the number of new cases reported in Wisconsin, jumped dramatically from a weekly average of 3,600 cases every day to a weekly average of more than 7,637 new cases each day. On January 6, 2022, Wisconsin documented a new record with 12,293 new cases in a single day. Mohican Nation implemented a comprehensive strategy last fall which employed the same science-based approach that was used to successfully combat previous variants of COVID-19 earlier this year.

This plan included a policy which required our employees to be fully vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccination by January 4, 2022. We and have over the past almost two years made available every available tool to combat COVID-19 and save even more lives in the months ahead, while also keeping Community, and employees safe, and protecting our economy from lockdowns and damage. Our new 7 day % positive average is now at 20.4%. The last time our 7 day was over 20% was November 2020 during our last peak.

As of January 7, 2022, we are proud to report that we had 98% of our workforce comply with our vaccination mandate policy, with 16 voluntary separations in total. We are deeply grateful for everyone who is working day and night during this public health emergency. We prepared for these moments as much as a community can prepare. With this in mind, we are confident we will get through this together.

The SMHWC offered COVID-19 testing beginning in April, 2020. Since that time our Clinic and Occupational Health have conducted more than 8,200 tests. In addition to our clinic testing, the Tribe conducts bimonthly surveillance testing of all employees of a workforce of over 800 employees. Our bi-monthly surveillance testing is possible through a cooperation from Wisconsin National Guard and is open to the Public.

The Stockbridge-Munsee Community made great efforts to reduce spread of COVID-19 and to keep as many people safe as possible. The Community placed an emphasis on offering vaccinations to all people and provided vaccines at our clinic and through community style mass vaccination events. Since December 16th, 2021, our Tribe has given nearly 6,800 doses of COVID vaccine allowing more than 2,800 people to become fully vaccinated and more than 1,050 people to receive their booster dose. The Tribe was the first organization in Wisconsin to offer vaccination to teachers, in an event where we reached out to local schools to vaccinate more than 200 teachers.

As we continue work to ensure our Community, employees and especially our children are protected, we know that vaccination remains the best line of defense against COVID-19. For those adolescents aged 12 and above who are eligible for vaccination, the most important step parents can take is to get them vaccinated. To date, over half of the nation's adolescents have been vaccinated. For those too young to be vaccinated, it is especially critical that they are surrounded by vaccinated people and mask in public indoor spaces, including schools. Studies released by the CDC found that the rate of

hospitalization for children was nearly four times higher in states with the lowest vaccination rates compared to states with high vaccination rates.

As we continue to combat COVID-19, testing and vaccinations will be a key tool to identify infected individuals and prevent spread to others. Likewise, masking can also help slow and contain the spread of the virus—and the combination of increased vaccinations and masking will have a major impact on COVID-19 transmission.

This moment requires we work together now more than ever. For our elders, for our children, for the future of Stockbridge-Munsee and all who call it home—each and every one of us has a responsibility to monitor our activity. We are proud of our Community for banding together to do what we must for the greater good of our community. We would ask everyone to continue to observe public health recommendations and encourage others to do so as well. Please do so with respect and dignity for each other. If someone has the virus—please remember—it could just as easily be you.

The Tribal Council asks that everyone remain supportive and kind to others in our community as we enter these trying times together. The health and welfare of our community depends on our remaining diligent in following health guidelines in our interactions with one another and the ongoing monitoring for health changes so that we can quickly identify and flatten the curve of infection and getting our vaccinations and boosters.

We are in this together and will get through this pandemic together. We are a resilient people who overcome difficulty every day. Throughout our history, we've been counted out more times than we can remember. No matter the difficulty, we survive by continuing to keep our Community and workplace safe by working together.

“Onumunitheekw!” Be well!

Stockbridge-Munsee Tribal Council