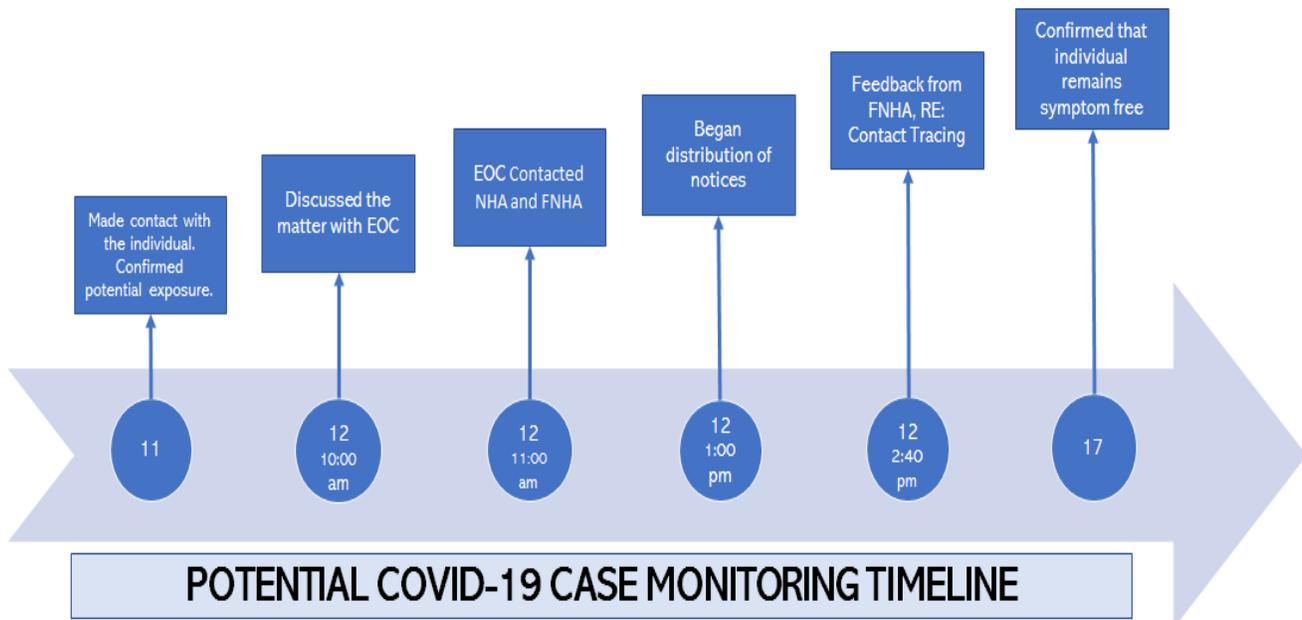




It has been 32 days since all Haida and Municipal leadership declared a local state of emergency on Haida Gwaii. We've all worked hard to do our part to keep Haida Gwaii safe from potential spread of COVID-19. This has meant having to live with some restrictions on our positive liberty; limiting our way of life; and significantly modifying certain cultural protocols. In many respects, the days just kind of meld together and we're left asking, "Is today Tuesday? Or is it Friday?" It can get tough telling one day apart from the other! On 22 April I got up nice and early to monitor our checkpoints and the ferry traffic. I arrived on site just after 5:30AM only to see nobody there . . . no checkpoint crew, no ferry traffic, no ferry. And then it hit me . . . it's WEDNESDAY and there is no ferry!

I want to provide our community with an update on the Skidegate EOC bulletin that was distributed on April 12th, RE: COVID-19. In that notice, we mentioned that a part-time resident of Sandspit had been exposed to a person who tested positive for COVID-19. The intervening period was a stressful time for all of us and really made the pandemic that much more real. The individual in question departed Haida Gwaii last week and has remained symptom free two weeks since potential exposure. I think we can all breathe a sigh of relief with that news, but I must stress that we should not lower our guard; we should continue to practice social distancing until such time as the Provincial Health Officer declares it is okay to do otherwise. We can also reflect on this incident as a positive learning exercise:



Getting accurate information and following a rigorous process is of paramount importance to the Skidegate EOC.

In closing, I want to ask our members to please refrain from large social gatherings – parties – because this poses an unnecessary risk to all. We can celebrate after this pandemic passes but, until then, we must remain vigilant in our commitment to social distancing for the safety of our community.

Haawa,

Bill Yovanovich, Chief Councillor