

The Maritime Community is preparing for the reopening of the territory announced yesterday by the Government of Quebec

Îles-de-la-Madeleine, April 30 2020 – Following the government’s announcement concerning the reopening of the regions, the Mayor Jonathan Lapierre and the President-Director General of the CISSS des Îles Jasmine Martineau are developing a game plan to facilitate the transition towards a reopening of the territory. They give themselves three weeks to finalize the plan.

The Maritime Community of the Islands, the CISSS and their partners have identified three spheres where measures must be taken in order to manage the risks of spreading the virus within the context of reopening activities.

The first sphere: the fisheries

Particular measures have already been put in place to ensure that the fishermen and workers are aware of the measures to be taken in order to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. With this being said, a team has been set up including staff members of the Municipalité des Îles, Public Health and the Sûreté du Québec in order to raise awareness at the Islands harbours.

The second sphere: the gradual recovery of business and industry activities

The Maritime Community and its partners, in collaboration with Public Health, is working on developing initiatives to support business owners during the reopening of their activities by offering them training sessions adapted to their reality and to help them organize their work spaces.

The third sphere: a program to greet visitors arriving on the territory

Due to the gradual opening of the region beginning on May 18th, awareness measures are being evaluated in order to inform people who arrive on the Islands of the precautions to maintain and the rules to be followed throughout the territory.

- A document outlining the provincial security directives as well as a specific protocol for the Islands. This document will be given to all individuals arriving on the Islands by airline or by ferry.
- A “reception brigade” will also be responsible for reminding visitors of the security guidelines and the Islands specific protocol during the COVID pandemic.

“It is important to be ready to welcome visitors while protecting the people here”, says Mayor Lapierre. “For now, we are not talking about a tourist season here, it is too soon. There is no question of that. But, you have to be aware that people will be coming to visit us, it could be our children, grandchildren, cousins or people who live on the Islands several months of the year. The motto is that we will be gradually moving forward in order to keep control of the situation. And I remind everybody that the directives continue to apply to everyone without exception”, adds Mayor Lapierre.

Since the beginning of this pandemic and the period of confinement, we have succeeded together by our mobilization to stop the spread of the virus. We are entering into a second phase as crucial as the first. Following the guidelines and the commitment of each and every one of us is essential for its smooth running.

Lastly, the next three weeks will allow us to take note of what is happening in the first regions where the access controls were lifted and for us to adjust accordingly. The Mayor is also committed to the population by agreeing to do a weekly update of the situation and that the Maritime Community will not hesitate to ask the government to go back to the way we are now should the situation deem necessary.

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