

SKOWKALE FIRST NATION

*COVID EMERGENCY  
PROTECTION LAW*

APRIL, 2020



**April 9, 2020**

Skowkale has traditional laws and teachings including:

Éy kws hákw'elestset te s'í:wes te siyólexwálh,

Xaxastexw te mekw'stam,

Éwe chexw qelqelit te mekw'stam lóy kw'es li hokwex yexw lamexw kwú:t,

S'ólh téméxw te íkw'élò xólhmet te mekw' stám ít kwelát

These cannot be exactly translated into English but they include the following concepts:

It is good to remember the teachings of our ancestors;

Respect all things;

Don't waste, ruin, destroy everything, only take what you need;

This is our land we have to take care of everything that belongs to us;

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## **PART 1. BACKGROUND**

Whereas:

- A. Skowkale First Nation has an inherent right to self-government which emanates from our people, culture and land and which is recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*;
- B. Skowkale has traditional teachings, laws and mechanisms for taking care of the community, including vulnerable members;
- C. Skowkale has taken over control and management of Skowkale Reserve lands and resources pursuant to the *Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management* and has enacted the *Skowkale Land Code* effective May 1, 2014;
- D. An emergency exists as a result of the potential presence of novel coronavirus COVID 19 (“COVID 19”) on Skowkale Lands and elsewhere in British Columbia which poses risks to Skowkale Lands, the environment and the health of Members;
- E. COVID 19 is a disease that is readily communicable from person to person and carries risks of fever, pneumonia, and in the most serious cases, death;
- F. The spread of COVID 19 has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization;
- G. Health experts have advised Council of the need to adopt social distancing, restrictions on public gatherings, and restrictions on the use of Skowkale Lands to reduce the risk of spreading the virus on Skowkale Lands and amongst Members and their families;
- H. Under section 3.3 of the *Skowkale Land Code*, Skowkale Council is authorized to pass various laws including laws relating to
  - (a) the regulation, control, authorization and prohibition of access and occupation of Skowkale Reserve Lands,
  - (b) the removal and punishment of persons trespassing upon Skowkale Reserve Lands or frequenting Skowkale Reserve Lands for prohibited purposes,
  - (c) public and private nuisance;
- I. Under section 3.8 of the *Land Code*, Council has the authority to pass short-term urgent laws “to protect Skowkale Lands or Members”
- J. Based on recent events, Council reasonably believes this Law is urgently required to protect Skowkale Reserve Lands or Members within the meaning of section 3.8 of the *Land Code*;
- K. Council wishes to implement measures to protect the health and safety of Skowkale Members and residents and particularly vulnerable elders and others;
- L. Council will monitor the COVID 19 virus risks on Skowkale Lands and may in accordance with sections 14.4 and 14.5 of the *Xa’xa Temexw Te Skowkale Land Code* decide at a future date whether to re-enact, amend, or repeal all or part of this Law;

**NOW THEREFORE this *Skowkale Covid Emergency Protection Law* is hereby enacted at a duly convened meeting as a Law of the Skowkale First Nation.**

## **PART 2. TITLE**

2.1 This Law may be cited as the *Skowkale Covid Community Protection Law*.

## **PART 3. DEFINITIONS**

3.1 The following definitions apply to this Law:

”**Order**” means an order made under section 5.1 of this Law;

”**Peace Officer**” has the meaning ascribed in section 2 of the Criminal Code of Canada, R.S.C. 1985 c. C-46, as amended.

”**Person**”, for the purposes of this Law, and unless otherwise explicitly stated, means an individual;

”**Skowkale Official**” means a Person appointed as a Skowkale Official pursuant to section 5.1 of this Law.

## **PART 4. PURPOSE & APPLICATION**

### ***Purpose***

4.1 The purpose of this Law is to provide for the protection of Skowkale Lands, the environment, the health and safety of Members, and their families by imposing measures to reduce the risk of the spread of the COVID 19 virus on Skowkale Lands.

4.2 This Law has been adopted by Council as an interim law on an urgent basis, in accordance with the authority to adopt urgent laws as set out in sections 14.4 and 14.5 of the Land Code, for the purpose of imposing temporary measures required to reduce the risk of harm on Skowkale Lands.

### ***Application***

4.3 The provisions of this Law apply to all Skowkale Lands.

## **PART 5. INTERIM RESTRICTIONS WITHIN BUSINESSES & OTHER PREMISES**

### ***Appointment of Skowkale Officials***

5.1 Council may appoint, by Council Resolution, an employee, Councillor, contractor or agent of Skowkale, or any other person, to be a Skowkale Official for the purposes of this Law.

(a) First Nations Community Watch/ Allegiance Enforcement has already been appointed to enforce Skowkale laws and are also appointed to enforce this law.

5.2 A Skowkale Official, once appointed by Council, has the following powers:

(a) to enforce any of the provisions under this Law;

(b) to issue orders under this Law which Skowkale Officials are specifically empowered to make;  
and

(c) To issue fines and other penalties under this Law.

5.3 Council may, at its sole discretion and without imparting any obligation to do so whatsoever, may provide for remuneration of a Skowkale Official by Council Resolution.

***Restrictions on hours of operation and number of occupants***

5.4 For the purposes of protecting public health, Council may issue orders restricting the hours of operation, and number of persons entering businesses or other premises on Skowkale Lands.

***Temporary assistance for businesses and Members***

5.5 To assist businesses operating on Skowkale Lands, Council may, at its sole discretion, waive or delay payment of any fees or amounts owed under contracts with Skowkale, notwithstanding the requirements of other Skowkale laws or contracts previously entered into by Skowkale.

5.6 To assist Members, Council may, at its sole discretion, waive or delay payment of any rent or other amounts any Member owes to Skowkale.

***Interference with restrictions on entering businesses and premises***

5.7 Any person who violates an order commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), imprisonment for up to six (6) months, or both imprisonment and a fine.

**PART 6. INTERIM RESTRICTIONS ON PUBLIC GATHERINGS**

***Restrictions on access to Skowkale Lands***

6.1 No person, other than:  
(b) a Member and their immediate family;  
(c) a person who is not a Member but who is authorized to reside on Skowkale Lands;  
(d) a Peace Officer or coroner;  
(e) a Skowkale Official; or  
(f) other persons specifically permitted to do so in advance and in writing by Council

is authorized to enter onto or remain on Skowkale Lands while this Law is in force.

***Restrictions and Closure of public facilities***

6.2 Council may, at its sole discretion, order closure, or restrictions on access to, community facilities on Skowkale Lands including, but not limited to, buildings, playgrounds, and other open recreational spaces.

***Social distancing requirements***

6.3 In order to protect health and safety, all persons present on Skowkale Lands must practice social distancing at all times by maintaining a minimum distance of six (6) feet or more from all persons.

6.4 In order to protect health and safety, Chief and Council, in consultation with appropriate public health officials, may issue additional orders for social distancing and similar conduct on Skowkale Lands.

***Restrictions on public gatherings without permission***

6.5 No person shall participate in public gatherings, assemblies, or parties involving two (2) or more persons on Skowkale Lands, without the specific written permission of Council.

***Restrictions apply to homes and residences***

- 6.6 The restrictions under this Law on public gatherings, assemblies, or parties apply to residences and spaces on Skowkale Lands whether occupied by Members or non-Members.
- 6.7 No person may have any more than ten (10) people present at any one time in his or her private dwelling.

***Orders***

- 6.8 A Skowkale Official may order that persons participating in public gatherings, assemblies, or parties contrary to this Law cease participating in those public gatherings, assemblies, or parties.

***Assistance of Police & Peace Officers***

- 6.9 Skowkale Officials are authorized to issue orders under this Law may request the assistance of Peace Officers or health or law enforcement professionals to carry out orders under this Law.

***Offence***

- 6.10 Any person who does not comply with an order under this Law is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand (\$1,000.00) dollars, imprisonment for up to six (6) months, or both imprisonment and a fine.

**PART 7. PARKING RESTRICTIONS**

***Parking***

- 7.1 No person may park a motor vehicle on any Skowkale Lands, other than lands on which signs have been erected permitting parking, and lands ordinarily used by Members for parking adjacent to, or near, their residences.

***No Parking signs***

- 7.2 Council may authorize Skowkale Officials to post signs restricting or banning parking motor vehicles on any Skowkale Lands, including any lands on which parking has been permitted in the past if deemed necessary by Council to prevent the risk of the spread of COVID 19, or to ensure that emergency and health officials have access to any Skowkale Lands.

***Removal of Vehicles***

- 7.3 Council may authorize Skowkale Officials to tow or remove vehicles that are parked in violation of this Law and Skowkale is not liable for damages to a motor vehicle, or damages incurred by any person affected by the need to tow or remove the motor vehicle.

***Offence***

- 7.4 Any person who fails to remove a motor vehicle when ordered to do so, who obstructs a Skowkale Official in the course of their duties related to parking violations, or who parks a motor vehicle in contravention of this Law is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, imprisonment for up to six (6) months, or both imprisonment and a fine.

**PART 8. REPORTING**

- 8.1 Any person who sees another person on Skowkale Lands not complying with this law is encouraged to report the matter to First Nations Community Watch/ Allegiance Enforcement and to the RCMP..

## **PART 9. REGULATIONS AND ORDERS**

- 9.1 In addition to the authorizations set out in this law to issue orders, Council may, by Council Resolution
- (a) issue any order or authorize any Skowkale Official to issue any order necessary to carry out the purposes of this Law; and
  - (b) pass any regulations, or approve and notices, forms or other documents necessary to implement this law.

## **PART 10. DELIVERY OF ORDERS AND NOTICES**

- 10.1 A copy of a Council Resolution, order, notice or other document under this Law may be delivered in any of the following ways:
- (a) in person;
  - (b) by leaving a copy of the order with a person who appears to be at least 16 years of age at the actual or last known address of the addressee;
  - (c) by posting a copy of the order prominently on a door of a building at the actual or last known address of the addressee; or
  - (d) by mailing a copy of the order to the actual or last known address of the addressee.

## **PART 11. GENERAL AND LEGAL**

### ***Interim nature of this Law***

- 11.1 This Law is an interim law to respond to an urgent situation on Skowkale Lands and, unless renewed, will no longer be in force 120 days after enactment, except to the extent required to complete any enforcement actions arising from events taking place while this Law was in force.

### ***Law applies to Skowkale employees and Skowkale Council***

- 11.2 Council Members, employees, representatives and agents of Skowkale may be suspended for a period of time specified by Council, or have their employment or contract with Skowkale terminated if they fail to comply with an order issued under this Law.

### ***No liability***

- 11.3 None of Skowkale, present or past Council, or members, employees, contractors, representatives or agents of Skowkale or Council are liable for any damages or other loss, including economic loss, sustained by any Person, or to the property of any Person, as a result of neglect or failure, for any reason, to discover or detect any contravention of this Law or any other Skowkale Law, or from the neglect or failure, for any reason or in any manner, to enforce this Law or any other Skowkale Law.

### ***Limitation Period***

- 11.4 Any actions against Skowkale (including Council and its employees) for the unlawful doing of anything that:
- (a) is purported to have been done under the powers conferred by this Law or any Skowkale Law; and
  - (b) might have been lawfully done if acting in the manner established by law,
- must be commenced within six (6) weeks after the cause of action first arose.

**Required Notice**

- 11.5 Skowkale is in no case liable for any claims, damages or losses unless notice in writing, setting out the time, place and manner in which it has been sustained, is delivered to Skowkale within four (4) weeks from the date on which the damage was sustained. In the case of the death of a person injured, the failure to give notice required by this section is not a bar to the maintenance of the action. Failure to give the notice or its insufficiency is not a bar to the maintenance of an action if the court before whom it is tried, or, in case of appeal, the court of appeal, believes:
  - (a) there was a reasonable excuse; and
  - (b) Skowkale has not been prejudiced in its defence by the failure or insufficiency.

**Compliance with other Laws**

- 11.6 Where any other law or legal requirement may apply to any matter covered by this Law, compliance with this Law will not relieve the person from also complying with the provisions of such other applicable law or legal requirement.

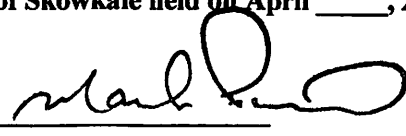
**Severability**

- 11.7 In the event that all or any part of any section of this Law is found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, that part or section shall be severable, and the remaining portions and sections of this Law shall remain in full force and effect.


**Coming into Force**

- 11.8 This Law will come into force on the date that it is duly passed by Council.

**BE IT KNOWN that this Law is entitled the Skowkale Covid Community Protection Law (2020) and is hereby enacted by a quorum of Council of Skowkale held on April \_\_\_\_, 2020**




Chief

  
Councillor

  
Councillor

  
Councillor

  
Councillor

Quorum consists of \_\_\_\_  
Council Members