



ELEVATING SAFETY: NORTH STAR AIR OPENS RAPID SCREENING CENTRES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Thursday April 1, 2021 – Thunder Bay, ON

North Star Air is the first regional airline in Northwestern Canada to provide, through a third party provider, COVID-19 Antigen Rapid Screening for passengers prior to boarding their flight. This is good news and a game-changer for passengers travelling to remote First Nations communities in Northern Ontario. Working closely with the First Nations communities served by North Star Air, the support from community leadership was overwhelming. Remote northern communities have been looking for such a program to increase safety amid the on-going fight against the spread of COVID-19. While pre-departure screening is not required for domestic travel within Canada, North Star Air understands the importance of providing an additional line of defense to northern remote communities. “We’ve stepped up the layers of protection for the good of the North. Our communities have always been concerned and employing various protocols to minimize the spread of COVID within their communities. This is very much needed” says Chief Harvey Yesno of Eabametoong First Nation. Chief Cornelius Benson of North Caribou First Nation applauds the initiative saying “We are very happy with this initiative that will bring more safety to our community.”

After months of discussions with northern communities and various health service providers, the challenge has always been the resources required to administer the screening. A solution was found. Effective this week passengers flying with North Star Air will be required to take the COVID-19 rapid test at the Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout Airports prior to boarding their flight. The rapid screening, with results in as little as fifteen minutes, will supplement and not replace the mandatory requirements for health questionnaires, temperature checks and facemasks. “This is a critically important program. It’s another layer of protection that we offer our customers, our communities and our staff,” states Jeff Stout, President of North Star Air.

As part of the program, the Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout Airports have provided support by allocating secure locations within their Airports for the screening to take place. While there are costs involved with the screening, North Star Air is offering this service free of charge to all passenger flight customers. North Star Air’s President Stout adds that, “In order to get this program online we understand there are costs that we as an airline will need to absorb, however we are calling on all levels of government to provide financial assistance. This should be a cost neutral service for the customer and the airline. We’re only halfway there today.”

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North Star Air continues to be the leader in providing the utmost in safety when it comes to their passengers, employees and the remote communities they serve. Since the onset of the pandemic, North Star Air has implemented a series of safety measures to help mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These safety measures along with FAQ's about rapid screening can be found on their website. <http://www.northstarair.ca/covid-19-update>

[North Star Air](#) is a rapidly growing airline with over 280+ dedicated employees providing passenger, charter, cargo and fuel air service in a safe and reliable environment. We service over 54 remote Northern Ontario, Northern Manitoba and Nunavut locations with a fleet of 17 aircraft, including Pilatus PC-12, Dash 8-100, Basler DC3T and ATR-72-500F. With 50+ departures daily, we fly over 24,000 hours per year, holding a Gold ARGUS status. We are the recipient of the 2019 Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce Large Business Excellence Award and the 2019 NOBA Company of the Year Award. We are a 703, 704, 705 Operator based in Thunder Bay, ON, with additional base locations in Kapuskasing, Pickle Lake, Red Lake, Sioux Lookout (all in Ontario) and Thompson, MB.

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