

# Events in Ottawa and across Canada to mark the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

Canada is set to mark the second National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on Friday, Sept. 30. Events have been planned across the country to reflect on the tragic history of Canada's residential school system, and to honour the children who did not make it home, as well as survivors and their families.

Leading up to the day, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation is hosting a week-long virtual event that will bring together Indigenous storytellers, artists, elders, knowledge keepers, survivors and the children of survivors of residential schools for an immersive learning experience.

Here's a look at events happening in Ottawa and across the country.

### Is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation a national holiday in Canada?

The statutory holiday applies to all federal employees and workers in federally regulated workplaces. All federally regulated industries and workplaces will be closed, including banks, post offices and public services.

The majority of provinces have not followed the federal government's move to make the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation a statutory holiday for their workers. New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut have declared Sept. 30 a statutory holiday.

The other provinces and territories are choosing to observe the day in various ways, while some continue consultations with Indigenous groups and businesses about whether to make it a stat.

### What events are planned in Ottawa?

- The Indigenous Arts Collective of Canada is hosting "Remember Me: A National Day of Remembrance" on Parliament Hill on Friday. The event begins at 8:30 a.m. ET with a welcoming ceremony and round dance with Akwesasne's Native North American Traveling College. The opening ceremony begins at 10 a.m. At 11:30 a.m., children and residential-school survivors will lead a walk from Parliament Hill to LeBreton Flats Park. Upon arriving at the park, attendees will place Indigenous children's footwear on the stage as a symbol of remembrance of the children who never made it home. Watch the event live, [here](#).
- Governor-General Mary Simon will host about 100 schoolchildren at Rideau Hall and speak on the importance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, at 10 a.m. ET.
- The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network will host a commemorative gathering at LeBreton Flats presented in English, French, Inuktitut and Cree. Ms. Mary Simon will deliver remarks at 1 p.m. ET.
- Albert Dumont, Algonquin spiritual adviser and artist, will lead a walk on the John A. Macdonald Parkway from the Canadian War Museum to Parkdale Avenue. The walk begins at 9 a.m. ET.
- The Peace Tower on Parliament Hill will be illuminated in orange from 7 p.m. ET on Friday to sunrise on Oct. 1.
- And, there will be a plaque unveiling for Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, a whistle-blower on residential schools, in the morning at the James Hope & Sons building at 61 Sparks St.
- Also check out the Downtown Ottawa Reconciling History walking tours, where each stop marks a point of interest, explaining the role of non-Indigenous peoples and the federal government in residential schools.

### What events are planned in each province or territory?

#### BRITISH COLUMBIA

Similar to last year, B.C. has advised public sector employers, including those in public schools, that the day should be observed as a statutory holiday by those who are normally entitled to federal and provincial stats. Essential services will operate as normal. The province has consulted with residential-school survivors, Indigenous partners and communities about creating a new holiday, and is seeking input

from employers and employees. The province has said that the earliest that changes can be made under the Employment Standards Act would be for 2023.

In North Vancouver, a pilgrimage to commemorate the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation will start from former St. Paul's Residential School to Tsleil-Waututh First Nation reserve. The pilgrimage, now in its second year, will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. PT. In the city of White Rock, Semiahmoo Chief Harley Chappell will host a ceremony at city hall on Friday at 10 a.m. PT.

A Xe Xe Smun' Eem (Cowichan for sacred children) event will be hosted by residential school survivor Eddy Charlie and include drumming and spoken word performances at 10 a.m. PT at Centennial Square Stage, Victoria.

Capital Bike is hosting a Truth and Reconciliation Day bike ride in Victoria. Diane Sam, of Songhees Nation, will talk about the significance and history of land around Songhees Park before the ride begins. The ride ends at the Royal Athletic Park where Songhees Nation will be hosting a powwow, starting at 10 a.m. PT.

## **ALBERTA**

Alberta has left it up to employers to implement the day as a statutory holiday. A spokesperson with Indigenous Relations, Ted Bauer, says the province has chosen to commemorate the day through education and action, as work is being done to create a residential school monument and garden. The United Nurses of Alberta has said Alberta Health Services told it to recognize the day as a named holiday after the union filed a grievance.

In Alberta, several events for Truth and Reconciliation Day are planned in Banff, Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Grande Prairie, Red Deer and Spruce Grove. An Orange Day Shirt commemoration will be held in Calgary to honour residential-school victims, survivors and their families. The event will also be livestreamed.

Premier Jason Kenney will join Indigenous community representatives to announce a new path forward regarding the stewardship of Manitou Asiniy, a sacred Indigenous artifact in the care of the Royal Alberta Museum at 9:30 a.m. MT, at the Royal Alberta Museum.

## **SASKATCHEWAN**

Saskatchewan says it is not considering additional statutory holidays at this time. Matthew Glover, director of media relations with the government, says Sept. 30 will continue to be an important day for reflection, recognition and an opportunity for all citizens to learn more about the legacy of residential schools.

Events will be held in Saskatoon, Regina, Nipawin and Prince Albert. A Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation will be held in Saskatoon, starting at 10 a.m. CT. The Saskatoon Tribal Council will host a powwow, which runs from noon to 5 p.m. CT. In Regina, Lt. Gov. Russ Mirasty will host an event from 10 to 11 a.m. CT at Government House, with elder John Stonechild, delivering the blessing and a performance of hip hop music and storytelling by Brad Bellegarde.

## **MANITOBA**

The Manitoba government is observing the day for a second year, while discussions continue about making it a statutory holiday. Schools and non-essential government services and offices will be closed. The province says it is consulting with Indigenous and labour groups.

In Winnipeg, the Wa-Say Healing Centre will hold a pipe ceremony and survivors walk, starting at 10 a.m. CT. The centre will also host the second annual Orange Shirt Day powwow at 1 p.m. CT. A reconciliation half-marathon run is also scheduled for Sept. 30, hosted by the Manitoba Runners' Association.

## **ONTARIO**

Sept. 30 is not a statutory holiday in Ontario. Schools will be open and operating as usual. Erika Robson, a spokesperson for Minister of Indigenous Affairs Greg Rickford, says the day is a time for schools, workplaces and communities to honour those affected by the legacy of residential school policies, and is similar to how Remembrance Day is observed across the province.

Several events have been planned in Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay to commemorate the day. The Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre will host a two-day event at Nathan Phillips Square called the Indigenous Legacy Gathering. On Sept. 30, the event begins at 7 a.m. ET with a sunrise ceremony. In Thunder Bay, a member of the city's Anishinaabe Elders Council will lead a flag-raising ceremony at Hillcrest Park from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. ET. Also, Nishnawbe Aski Nation will lead an Orange Shirt Day walk, starting at 11 a.m. ET.

Indigenous Tourism Ontario is presenting a drone show about Truth and Reconciliation. The show will be illustrated with about 200 drones over the night sky and will be told in Anishinaabemowin at 9 p.m. ET and in English at 10 p.m. ET.

## **QUEBEC**

They day is not a statutory holiday in Quebec. Last year, the government said it had no plans to make it one.

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal has a march planned marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. ET. It is also the fourth year the "We Will Walk Together/Skàtne Entewathahita" event will be held, an outdoor ceremony honouring the victims of residential and day schools.

## **NOVA SCOTIA**

Nova Scotia will be observing the day for a second year in a row. Provincial government offices, public schools, regulated child care and other non-essential public services will be closed. Businesses have the choice to remain open. The day is not a general paid holiday. The

government is in discussions with Mi'kmaw leaders and communities, as well as businesses and organizations, on how best to honour the day in the future.

The City of Halifax is illuminating its City Hall building in orange on Sept. 30 to mark the day. Mayor Mike Savage will host a flag raising and proclamation reading at 10 a.m. local time at Halifax City Hall. Other planned events such as the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre's Traditional Salmon meal have been postponed due to post tropical storm Fiona.

## **NEW BRUNSWICK**

The province recently declared Sept. 30 a provincial holiday. All essential services, including health care, will continue to be delivered. The holiday is optional for private sector businesses.

The City of Saint John will host a special event on Friday to reveal a mural created by local Inuvialuit artist Cassandra McLaughlin, which has been permanently installed outside the City Market. The unveiling ceremony will take place at 12 p.m. local time.

## **PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

P.E.I. said last year it would recognize the day. It is one of eight paid holidays in the province under the Employment Standards Act. Provincial government offices and schools will close.

As the province recovers from post-tropical storm Fiona, public events recognizing the importance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation have been cancelled.

## **NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

The government says consultations continue with Indigenous governments and organizations and the business and labour sector about making the day a public holiday under the Labour Standards Act. For now, provincial government offices, schools and other entities will be closed. The province is encouraging businesses and other organizations to commemorate the day.

First Light is holding space for community healing for residential school survivors at the Fluvarium in St. John's on Friday, starting at 6 p.m. local time. A public event will follow at Pippy Park Courtyard, which is open to everyone wanting to come together in the spirit of reconciliation.

## **NUNAVUT**

The territory announced last month that changes had been made to the Labour Standards Act, Legislation Act and Public Service Act to make the day a statutory holiday, which applies to public service employees and those with territorially regulated businesses.

The Qikiqtani Inuit Association and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. are hosting a walk for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. The walk starts at the Igluvut building at 1 p.m., local time, and ends at Iqaluit square.

## **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

Northwest Territories amended the Employment Standards Act in the summer to add the day to its list of statutory holidays to be observed annually beginning this year.

The Dene Nation is hosting an event at Yellowknife city hall marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation that features a community barbecue, drumming and speakers, at 11 a.m., local time.

## **YUKON**

The territory surveyed members of public, First Nations, businesses and other groups to get feedback on what the day should look like. It says support was mixed for making it a statutory holiday. The government says it is continuing consultations, but the earliest Sept. 30 could become a stat would be next year. This year, the territory is observing the day and Yukon government employees will not be required to work. Schools will be closed.

The Council of Yukon First Nations will mark the day at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre (KDCC) fire pit, starting at 11 a.m. local time. Participants attending are encouraged to wear an orange shirt and bring a drum. The Northern Nations Alliance will host a walk from the former Choutla residential school site in Carcross to the KDCC event in Whitehorse.

**Region:** Canada <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** Aboriginal (indigenous) <sup>[4]</sup>

Truth and Reconciliation <sup>[5]</sup>

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**Links**

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