

COVID-19 Support Pathways

AS INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES PREVENT, PREPARE AND RESPOND TO THE COVID-19 VIRUS, the First Nations Health Authority, Emergency Management BC, and Indigenous Services Canada are coordinating to ensure services and resources are available and ready. This document outlines the supports that currently exist and the pathways to each.

WORKING TOGETHER—each organization is ready to help. If you're in doubt, please call your Provincial Regional Emergency Operation Center (PREOC) for assistance. For help outside of regular business hours, contact the Emergency Coordination Centre 24/7 emergency line at **1-800-663-3456**.



Working Together

IF IN DOUBT, please call your Provincial Regional Emergency Operation Center (PREOC), and they will assist. For assistance outside of business hours, please contact the Emergency Coordination Centre 24/7 emergency line: 1-800-663-3456.

Emergency Management BC

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BC (EMBC) is the provincial government's lead coordinating agency for emergency response to non-health related needs of COVID-19 impacts. This work is done in collaboration with local governments, First Nations, federal departments, industry, non-government organizations and volunteers.

For task numbers please contact the appropriate Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Center. EMBC has a 24/7 emergency line **1-800-663-3456**.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| South West PREOC Telephone: 778 572-3962 Email: preoc2.ops1@gov.bc.ca | Central PREOC Phone: 250 371-5221 PREOC E-mail: preoc3.ops1@gov.bc.ca | South East PREOC Phone: 250 354-5914 PREOC E-mail: preoc4.ops1@gov.bc.ca |
| North East PREOC Phone: 250 614-6322 PREOC E-mail: preoc5.ops1@gov.bc.ca | North West PREOC Phone: 250 615-4800 PREOC E-mail: preoc6.ops1@gov.bc.ca | Vancouver Island PREOC PREOC phone: 1 250 952-4909 PREOC E-mail: preoc1.ops1@gov.bc.ca |

For Incremental EOC or health capacity costs as outlined in Policy 5.13 or EMBC Financial Guidelines visit <https://tinyurl.com/y77fxq24>.

1. ACTIVATING EOC

Incremental costs associated with activating an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) including activities related to planning, implementation or monitoring of any specific response actions or measures directed by the Province of British Columbia through the Public Health Officer or Emergency Management BC, or by federal counterparts in collaboration with First Nations governments within the Province.

- Feeding emergency response staff during an event.
- Renting EOC equipment, such as laptops.
- Facility rental, if the facility is not-owned by the First Nation or community. If no community owned facility is available, when approved by expenditure authorization form (EAF).
- Incremental overtime and reasonable benefits for essential services as defined by per contract or collective agreement terms and conditions.
- Incremental telephone and data services, including installation and operation while EOC is active.
- Incremental janitorial services or security.
- Purchase of EOC office supplies (under \$100).

2. SUPPORTING ADDITIONAL HEALTH CAPACITY

- Changes to a facility required by the Health Authority (Temporary changes to plumbing, electrical, or other facility systems and their restoration to original condition when approved by EAF.
- Reasonable incremental cleaning (to meet Public Health Officer direction), security and support staffing costs for additional health capacity directed by a health authority.
- Rental of equipment/furniture as required by Health Authority and approved by EAF.
- Rental of a facility not owned by the local authority or First Nation, if no community owned facility is available, when approved by EAF.

3. MEASURES TO RESTRICT MOVEMENT OR OTHER DIRECTED ACTIONS

- When the appropriate medical health officer has ordered the closure, costs associated with contracting security personnel to monitor closures/restrictions, timeframe to be approved by EAF.
- **Bylaw Officers enforcement of Health Orders.** Incremental bylaw enforcement capacity – i.e. extra officers and/or overtime to patrol specific activities to be approved by EAF.

Emergency Management BC (continued)

- **Shelter.** Costs associated with short-term housing of vulnerable populations in shelter alternatives, including commercial accommodation, if directed by or with the written approval of public health officials (e.g. to comply with physical distancing). [governmental options, including direct support provided by BC Housing, non-government organizations, and Health Authorities must have been explored, and exhausted]. Temporary changes to plumbing, electrical, or other facility systems and their restoration to original condition when approved by EAF.

4. CONTINUATION OF LOCALLY ADMINISTERED ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- Backfilling essential positions where individuals are vital to fulfilling an EOC role.
- Incremental overtime for essential services, if no community owned facility is available, when approved by expenditure authorization form (EAF).
- Support for remote workers for essential services, including equipment rental (such as computers to support working from home). Case by case rental of 'incremental' and 'short-term' temporary upgrades may be approved based on demonstrated incremental need.
- **Specialist workers.** Contracting of workers with specialist skillsets where those specialists are unavailable or do not have capacity within the local government or First Nation, approved by EAF.

- **Personal protective equipment (PPE).** Incremental PPE for local government and First Nation critical infrastructure operators and essential service workers, under guidance of Public Health Officer (sewer, water, etc.).
- When serving a vulnerable population, where no other public facility exists, short-term rental of portable washrooms and hand washing stations to be approved by EAF.
- COVID warning signage: If the rationale and extent of the proposed signage is reasonable to the circumstances.

5. TRAINING, SUPPORTING AND EQUIPPING PERSONNEL

- **Just-in-time training.** Reasonable costs to provide role training required for new staff/volunteers to respond to COVID-19.
- **Food delivery.** Mileage reimbursement consistent with current provincial rates, and reasonable costs to contract an outside delivery service.
- **Community-owned facilities to support vulnerable persons.** Incremental cleaning and operating costs related to ensuring public facilities (public washrooms, shower facilities, additional security, etc.) remain open to vulnerable persons and the restoration to original condition afterwards.

First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)

During the COVID-19, FNHA assists First Nations communities by continuing to provide health and wellness supports through these difficult times. To do this, FNHA provides education, resources and support to FNHA regions through various program areas, as well as Health Emergency Management expertise to regional, provincial and federal response structures.

Please visit <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus> for important public health information.

Contact: First Nations communities are encouraged to work through their existing FNHA regional engagement pathways.

Available services include:

1. COMMUNITY OR SERVICE PROVIDER LEVEL INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL SUPPORT:

- soap
- sanitizers
- disinfectants
- personal clinical supplies

2. MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS¹:

- Gowns
- Gloves
- Face Shields
- Procedure Masks
- N95 Respirators (Various models)
- Alcohol Based Hand Rub

3. HEALTH BENEFITS, INCLUDING MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION²:

- travel (air, ground and water)
- meals
- accommodations

4. HEALTH HUMAN RESOURCES SURGE CAPACITY:

- As need, primary health care nurses and public health nurses deployed to support outbreaks communities staff

5. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND CULTURAL SUPPORTS AS A COMPLEMENT TO COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES:

- FNHA Mental Wellness & Counselling Support through Health Benefits
- Indian Residential School (IRS) Resolution Health Support Program, offering emotional and cultural support

6. ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS, ACCOMMODATION FOR SELF ISOLATION, TEMPORARY ADAPTATION OF COMMUNITY SPACE FOR SURGE CAPACITY:

- Temporary retrofit of existing community spaces
- Trailers and other portable equipment

7. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE EMERGENCY PLANNING AND PANDEMIC PLANNING:

- Support to Communities and Nations to assist in planning

.....
¹ PPE for non-health care providers in community is not available

² High-risk individuals eligible for private ground transportation, such as taxi, and private accommodations, such as hotels.

Indigenous Services Canada – Emergency Management

INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA supports First Nations to prepare for and respond to emergencies such as Coronavirus (COVID-19). BC Region has implemented a whole-of-region team approach to triaging and responding to First Nation inquiries received through our COVID-19, Emergency Management and Band Social Development Worker Support phone lines and e-mail boxes.

All COVID-19 questions and requests for ISC should be directed to our COVID-19 e-mail address aadnc.isbccovid19.aandc.gc.ca. For more information on COVID-19 and Indigenous communities, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/yb74ohuw>.

1. MAINTAINING ESSENTIAL SERVICES

BC Region staff are responsible for implementing the Region's Business Continuity Plan and working with First Nations to ensure they and their members have uninterrupted access to essential ISC programs and services in areas such as emergency management, social programs, environmental remediation, operation and maintenance of critical infrastructure and other initiatives such as Jordan's Principle.

2. DELIVERY OF CORONAVIRUS PROGRAMS AND RELATED FUNDING

2.1) In March 2020 ISC advanced Income Assistance – Emergency/Disaster Supplement and Emergency Management Assistance Program funds to all First Nations in BC to ensure funds were on hand to address immediate needs.

a) Income Assistance – Emergency/Disaster Supplement

The Emergency/Disaster Supplement can provide additional support for:

- family units that are eligible for income assistance, disability assistance, medical services or hardship assistance;
- children in the home of a relative if the individual/family requires the supplement to meet an unexpected expense or obtain an item unexpectedly needed due to the emergency; or,
- a family unit or person in the family that is unable to meet the expense or obtain the item because resources are not available to the family unit due to the emergency.

This support can help meet an expense or obtain an item to prevent imminent financial loss or danger to the physical health of any person in the family unit due to the emergency. Band Social Development Workers are asked to contact the ISC BSDW Policy Support Line at (toll-free) **1-888-440-4080** or aadnc.tsdbstoutien-bsdwsupport-bc.aandc@canada.ca if they have any questions.

b) Emergency Management Assistance Program

The Emergency Management Assistance Program assists First Nations to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency events. Eligible costs include the following:

- incremental costs for Emergency Operation Centres (e.g., overtime, equipment rental);
- shipping of food or other necessities;
- continuation of essential services (i.e., that preserve life, health and basic societal functioning);
- social and cultural supports; or,
- costs to meet the needs of vulnerable persons in isolation who are unable to access usual support networks.

Questions related to the Emergency Management Assistance Program should be directed to **604-209-9709** or bcaandc.do@canada.ca.

2.2) Delivery of the Indigenous Community Support Fund

In April 2020 ISC provided Indigenous Community Support funding to all First Nations in BC to assist them prevent, prepare for and respond to COVID-19, providing the flexibility to address specific needs identified by communities and their members.

Indigenous Services Canada – Emergency Management (*continued*)

These funds are intended to support Indigenous communities to implement community-based solutions, such as the following:

- support for Elders and vulnerable community members;
- measures to address food insecurity;
- educational and other support for children;
- mental health assistance and emergency response services; and or,
- preparedness measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

2.3) In April 2020 BC Region also mirrored the Province of BC's \$300 income assistance supplement for the months of April, May and June for Income Assistance program all clients. Additional funding was transferred to First Nations as required.

3. COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION SUPPORT

- a) ISC BC Region has implemented ongoing written communication with First Nations, participates in regular calls with the First Nation Leadership Council, FNHA and the Province of BC and has participated on or led a number of Webinars hosted by the First Nations Public Service Secretariat (FNPSS) and other partners. Copies of daily communications and past Webinars hosted by the FNPSS can be found on their website <https://fnps.ca/covid-19#webinars>.
- b) ISC BC Region is maintaining ongoing contact with FNHA and EMBC to ensure we have coordinated approaches to supporting First Nations and to ensure that there is no wrong door when an inquiry is received. ISC BC Region strives to respond to all inquiries within a 48 hour window. Inquiries for ISC should be directed to the addresses noted above.
- c) ISC BC Region is actively working with other federal departments through the British Columbia Federal Council to ensure approaches are coordinated and responsive to the needs of First Nations (i.e. Service Canada Outreach Support Centre for First Nations).