



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

COVID-19 Community Support Guide

Last updated on December 29, 2020



As a partner in health and wellness, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) continues to work with communities to identify COVID-19 needs and offer supports and services to address those needs. The [COVID-19 Community Support Guide](#) represents areas of support the FNHA has determined are within the scope of our response and within our capacity as an organization to effectively fulfill. **It is an evergreen document that captures our current state and will be amended regularly as the pandemic unfolds, please follow link above to ensure you are seeing the latest version.** Every effort will be made to ensure communities have access to the most recent and accurate version of this document, as such, it is important to establish communication pathways with Regional FNHA teams to verify and discuss access to financial supports and community services for COVID-19 response.

The FNHA will continue to support First Nations Communities in British Columbia (BC) by:

- Coordinating service delivery and supports on behalf of communities
- Procuring items needed for COVID-19 response
- Reimbursing eligible expenses with appropriate documentation

1. ELIGIBLE COVID-19 ITEMS FOR BC FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

To ensure alignment with the funding parameters given to the FNHA from federal and provincial partners, a conversation with the FNHA regional team is recommended.

■ Wage Top-Up Funding

- Support is available for the period from April 1, 2020, to July 22, 2020 for wage top-up funding for front-line health care workers funded by the FNHA. This funding is to recognize the essential role that many health care workers played in keeping individuals, families and communities well at the outset of the pandemic.
- Eligible costs include \$4 per hour in wage top-up funding for straight time hours worked by front-line health workers at any point during the 16-week period referenced above.
- Front line employees are eligible whether they were working remotely or on-site at their usual workplace.
- Front line employees who were on leave (e.g., sick leave, parental leave, vacation, short/long term disability) and management and executive positions are ineligible.
- Funding is included for the positions outlined below:
 - Allied health professionals such as occupational therapists, social workers;
 - Health Directors, health care assistants, community health workers and patient care support workers for programs such as the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program, Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program, Prenatal Nutrition, Mental Health and Wellness, Brighter Futures, Aboriginal Headstart on Reserve, Diabetes and Home and Community Care; and,
 - Administrative/clerical, and maintenance roles that support the direct delivery of FNHA funded health programs and services including medical transportation.

- **Submissions will be accepted until February 28, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: Wage Top-Up Funding is available for front-line health care workers funded by the FNHA as noted above. Please see the [Calculator](#) and [FAQ](#) on our website for more details. Please submit your request for reimbursement to COVID19needs@fnha.ca.

■ **Public Health Check-Points**

- At this time, reimbursement is available for the period from April 1, 2020, to September 30, 2020 for Public Health Check-points that minimize non-essential travel into community through access control and the dissemination of up-to-date public health messaging.
- Eligible costs include up to 48 billable hours per day at a maximum salary cost of \$24.66/hour inclusive of all deductions and benefit costs, for a total of \$1183.68 billable per day.
- Equipment costs up to a maximum of \$2,000/month for expenses to operate the Check-points (e.g. food, mileage, equipment) as well as a one-time equipment start-up cost of up to \$3,000 per community.
- **Submissions will be accepted until February 28, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: The FNHA is providing reimbursement for Public Health Check-points from April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020. Submissions using [Public Health Check-Point Funding Calculator](#) are recommended. Please submit your requests for reimbursement to COVID19needs@fnha.ca.

■ **Communicable Diseases Emergencies (CDE) Preparedness Planning**

- FNHA is supporting communities and Nations in developing and updating their CDE preparedness plans. The FNHA Communicable Disease Management team is available to provide guidance in the development of COVID-19 mitigation, preparation and response planning.
- In addition to existing funding and resources provided by the Community Health and Wellness planning process, there is a one-time-only funding stream to develop planning capacity in communities as they continue to prepare for and respond to COVID-19. Plans may include elements pertaining to safe re-opening, isolation supports, public health check-points, and recovery.
- **Submissions will be accepted until March 31, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: For assistance with CDE preparedness planning and further information regarding accessing the one-time-only funding for CDE planning contact cdmgmt@fnha.ca

■ **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Testing Supplies**

- PPE for health service providers and first responders. Eligible PPE and testing supplies include:
 - Gloves
 - Face shields
 - Gowns
 - Procedure masks (including masks for clients and non-clinical staff, per [BC Ministry of Health policy](#))
 - N95 masks
 - Alcohol-based hand rub
 - Nasopharyngeal swab
 - Gargle kits

REQUEST PATHWAY: PPE for health service providers and first responders can be requested from FNHA if they are not accessible through regular procurement or provincial channels. The

PPE is allocated to communities based on availability from the provincial and federal supplies, in line with what is needed to maintain essential frontline health care and first responder services, and are allocated by FNHA Regional teams. Please email COVID19needs@fnha.ca with the completed [PPE and COVID Testing Supplies](#) (request process & form) to request PPE for health service providers and first responders.

■ **Community or Service Provider Infection Prevention and Control Supplies**

- Soap, sanitizers, disinfectants for individuals observing physical distancing and isolation recommendations in community; community health centres, treatment centres, and other health-related facilities; for the implementation of health and wellness programs and services funded through FNHA Funding Arrangements; and vehicles whose primary function is medical transport.
- Cleaning services in community health centres, treatment centres and other health-related facilities required for implementation of FNHA Funding or Contribution Agreements may be eligible.
- Community Service COVID-19 Supplies (CSCS) for other health-related services that are funded through a contribution agreement with FNHA (e.g. Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve, Treatment Centres, etc.). Eligible CSCS items include:
 - Masks (ideally reusable/washable)
 - Homemade cloth masks
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Hand soap
 - Gloves
 - Cleaning supplies for facilities
- COVID-19 specific signage including directional arrows, physical distancing decals, and public health posters for community health centres, treatment centres, and other health-related facilities required for implementation of health and wellness programs and services funded through FNHA Funding or Contribution Agreements.
- Additional PPE/CSCS storage costs may be eligible.
- **Submissions will be accepted until March 31, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: First Nation governments and Indigenous organizations can purchase CSCS through the [provincial COVID-19 Supply Hub](#). FNHA will reimburse communities who purchase Infection Prevention and Control Supplies for their non-clinical health positions funded through their Funding or Contribution Agreement, such as Mental Health and Addictions counseling, patient travel, community health representatives and other FNHA funded positions. Please send requests or questions to COVID19needs@fnha.ca. For reimbursement or funding requests you may use the optional form: [Request for Community COVID-19 Financial Support](#). Submissions will be shared with FNHA regional teams who will work with you to ensure requests for reimbursement are aligned with existing funding parameters.

- Plexiglass Barriers for community health centres, treatment centres, and other health-related facilities required for the implementation of health and wellness programs and services funded through FNHA Funding Arrangements, and vehicles whose primary function is medical transport.
- **Submissions will be accepted until March 31, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: FNHA has a limited supply of plexiglass for community health centres, treatment centres, and other facilities required for implementation of health and wellness programs and services funded through FNHA Funding Arrangements. There are two available sizes - 36 inches wide by 32 inches tall and 30 inches wide by 32 inches tall. Additionally, funding for different sizes of plexiglass or plexiglass for vehicles whose primary function is medical

support are also available. To request plexiglass, please send your request to COVID19needs@fnha.ca.

■ **Mental Health Services and Cultural Supports**

- A comprehensive list of FNHA services and supports can be found through this link: <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-Mental-Health-and-Cultural-Supports.pdf>

■ **Isolation Support for Community**

- For communities: Adaptation and addition of community space for self-isolation, quarantine and/or other COVID-19 related purposes as indicated by the community CDE plan. Items for consideration may include the following:
 - Retrofits of appropriate existing community infrastructure. Quotes may be required depending on the scope of proposed retrofits.
 - Rental or purchase (if cost-effective), of travel trailer, ATCO trailer, and/or modular trailers (including costs for transport and set-up).
 - Purchase/rental of supplies required to activate community spaces for self-isolation and surge capacity (e.g. beds, linens, cleaning).
 - Infection prevention and control items (e.g. soap, sanitizers, disinfectant, masks).
- Cost effective acquisition (rental or purchase) of basic communication devices (tablets, phones, satellite phones, etc.) by community for the purpose of lending to individuals isolating due to COVID-19 to ensure their access to online health resources (e.g., Virtual Doctor of the Day).
- Support for activities on the land that strengthen community isolation capacity and traditional food security such as berry picking, fishing and hunting.
- Harm reduction strategies including managed alcohol programs where it has been recommended by an appropriate health care provider (purchase of alcohol is ineligible).
- Other supports where identified in a community's CDE preparedness plan and are consistent with public health best practices.
- Navigation support from FNHA regional Emergency Operation Centres (EOC) to ensure all available resources are leveraged toward the health and wellness of individuals and communities directly impacted by COVID-19.
- **Submissions will be accepted until March 31, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: To request support for COVID-19 Isolation Capacity Development Support, please contact COVID19needs@fnha.ca. For reimbursement or funding requests you may use the optional form: [Request for Community COVID-19 Financial Support](#). Submissions will be shared with FNHA regional teams who will work with you to ensure requests for reimbursement are aligned with existing funding parameters.

■ **Isolation Support for Individuals**

- Individuals mandated to isolate due to COVID-19 under advice from an appropriate health care provider may be eligible for:
 - Alternative accommodations (including hotels or community spaces), and transportation when safely isolating at home is not possible.
 - Support for escorts may be eligible (accommodations, travel and meals).
 - Support for childcare may be eligible where caregivers are required to isolate.
 - Delivery of groceries and medicines (purchase of food and medication are ineligible).
 - Communication support including phone cards or communication devices for individuals in isolation in order to ensure they have access to online health resources (e.g., Virtual Doctor of the Day).
 - Mental health services and cultural supports for individuals.
- **Submissions will be accepted until March 31, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: When isolating at home is not possible, alternative accommodations (including hotels or community spaces), transportation, and meals may be eligible for individuals mandated to isolate due to COVID-19 under advice from an appropriate health care provider. Please contact Health Benefits at 1-888-305-1505. This number is supported Monday-Sunday from 08:30am to 4:30pm.

■ **Health Human Resources Surge Capacity**

- Primary care nurses, public health nurses, or other health providers such as paramedics and community workers needed to address COVID-19 cases in communities.
- Health care provider (HCP) overtime due to case management, HCP illness, or other COVID-19 related reasons may be eligible for reimbursement.
- **Submissions will be accepted until March 31, 2021**

REQUEST PATHWAY: To request support for COVID-19 health related needs, please contact COVID19needs@fnha.ca. Submissions will be shared with FNHA regional teams who will work with you to ensure requests for reimbursement are aligned with existing funding parameters.

2. SUPPORTS FOR URBAN AND AWAY FROM HOME POPULATIONS

- Status First Nations Individuals that are living urban or away from home are eligible for support through FNHA Health Benefits.
- Counselling and cultural support is available for Indian Residential School survivors and their families through FNHA Health Benefits.
- Counselling and cultural support is available for family members and loved ones of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls through FNHA Health Benefits.

REQUEST PATHWAY: <https://www.fnha.ca/benefits>

As the spread of COVID-19 remains a public health emergency its impact on communities is unpredictable and will vary from place to place. The FNHA has developed regional strategies to ensure timely and effective supports are in place, including a process of assessing requests currently not included in the above list of eligible supports and services. Communities are encouraged to continue to identify gaps through regional communication pathways, and the FNHA will continue to address them as and when they fall within scope, or advocate on behalf of communities with our government and non-government partners.

Key Information

We encourage everyone to check our website frequently for up-to-date information: www.FNHA.ca

The FNHA created the COVID-19 web portal to help community members, First Nations leadership and health care providers in accessing the information needed to keep themselves and others safe. FNHA's COVID-19 web portal can be found here: www.FNHA.ca/coronavirus

This Community Support Guide can be found at: <https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-Community-Support-Guide.pdf>

Stay updated on COVID-19, Health Benefits updates and more with the new FNHA App. Learn more here: <https://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/news/fnha-launches-mobile-app>

For the most relevant information, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for community members and FAQs for health care providers, visit one of our three COVID information pages: [COVID-19 Information for BC First Nations Individuals](#)

[COVID-19 Information for health professionals](#)

[COVID-19 Information for community leaders](#)