

Medical Transportation

Ontario Region Non-Insured Health Benefits Program

To: Ontario Region Nursing Stations/Health Centres
Chiefs and Councils/Health Directors
Indigenous Services Canada Partners

From: Terry Jeans, Director Client and Community Response

Date: October 8, 2025

Medical Transportation Requests: 10 Day Guideline

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Program is committed to supporting eligible clients in accessing medically necessary health services. In response to feedback from clients and First Nations leadership, NIHB has reviewed and updated our approach to travel planning under the Medical Transportation benefit.

NIHB is now following a 10 day travel guideline for medical transportation requests. This standard will provide clients with more notice before their travel out of community.

Effective November 1, 2025, we request all client transportation requests be submitted to NIHB a minimum of 10 business days prior to the appointment date. *Some exceptions apply.*

Background

Many clients and First Nation representatives have expressed concerns about receiving short notice travel arrangements. Additionally, booking travel on short notice also presents challenges with flight availability and lack of accommodation options near medical service locations.

NIHB carefully considered the feedback from clients and partners, and the realities of the travel and accommodation industry which face increasing demand and various limitations. We explored how we issue travel vouchers and when they are provided to clients. The 10 day guideline will help to address existing challenges and improve client services.

Service Improvements

This guideline will improve the overall travel experience for clients. It enables NIHB to:

- Secure travel and accommodations in a timely manner for clients
- Issue travel vouchers well in advance – providing clients more notice before their departure
- Minimize last-minute complications – reducing the risk of delays or missed appointments
- Improve client services and transportation planning
- Ensure NIHB resources remain available for urgent travel

Urgent/Unforeseen Needs

While we request every effort be made to follow the 10 day guideline, NIHB understands that urgent or unforeseen medical needs can arise. In these cases, we will continue to accept transportation requests and every effort will be made to arrange travel within the limitations of transportation and accommodation availability. If travel cannot be secured in time, both the client and health facility will be informed so alternative appointment arrangements can be made. Requests for urgent travel may be escalated to management who may request documentation to support the urgency.

Contact for More Information

We appreciate your cooperation in following this guideline to provide more reliable and efficient service for all clients. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact Patricia Emond, Acting Program Delivery Manager, at patricia.emond@sac-isc.gc.ca.

About NIHB

The NIHB program provides coverage for a range of health services for registered First Nations and recognized Inuit, which includes prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, dental, vision care, medical supplies and equipment, mental health counselling, and transportation to access health services that are not available locally. Learn more about NIHB at www.canada.ca/NIHB.

Sincerely,

Terry Jeans,

Director, Client & Community Response, FNIHB

Key Contacts for Communities Served by Ontario Region NIHB Medical Transportation

Terry Jeans, Director – Client & Community Response, terry.jeans@sac-isc.gc.ca

Patricia Emond, Acting Senior Program Delivery Manager, patricia.emond@sac-isc.gc.ca

Kelli George-Egerter, Manager – Medical Transportation, kelli.george-egerter@sac-isc.gc.ca

Ontario Region NIHB Client Information Line, Monday - Friday: 8 am - 4 pm (EST)

Call: 1-800-640-0642

All Ontario Emergency After Hours Line (4 pm to 8 am CST)

Call: 1-833-675-3081

Sioux Lookout NIHB Office 1-888-283-8885

General Travel Request Fax: 807-737-3879

General Travel Email: sl-ssna-sl-nihb@sac-isc.gc.ca

Medivacs & Urgent Fax: 807-737-8057

Medivacs & Urgent Email: nihbslurgent-urgentssnasl@sac-isc.gc.ca

Discharges Fax: 807-737-4917

Discharge Email: nihbsl-discharge-congehospitalssnasl@sac-isc.gc.ca

Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA) – Discharges

Call: 1-807-737-5080

Fax: 1-807-737-3618

Thunder Bay NIHB Office 1-877-779-7749

Travel Request Email: nihbmt.tbay@sac-isc.gc.ca

Travel Request Fax: 1-866-551-5650

Southern NIHB Office 1-800-881-3921 Option 3

Travel Request Email: onnihbtrans-ssna@sac-isc.gc.ca

Travel Request Fax: 1-800-806-6662