

Primary care services

Pre-travel assessment tool

The pre-travel assessment tool provides nursing staff and paramedics with guidance to inform their activities during their time between First Nation (FN) community rotations or assignments into remote and isolated communities. The tool minimizes the risk of COVID-19 transmission given geographic location and everyday activities while providing nursing staff and paramedics with maximum flexibility and reducing Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) mandated pre-travel self-isolation requirements.

Risk criteria are identified in collaboration with ISC's Chief Medical Officer of Public Health based on the analysis of surveillance data and current best practices. In developing the criteria, consideration was given to the health status and needs of FN community populations and factors affecting COVID-19 transmission such as space enclosures, duration of exposure, density and forceful exhalation. This assessment tool will be revised as new information becomes available and, at a minimum, be reviewed every four weeks.

Each risk level has COVID-19 ISC mandated pre-travel requirements that nursing staff and paramedics must comply with before travelling into remote and isolated communities. ISC leadership uses the information collected through completed assessments to monitor and understand its overall level of risk and inform safe travel.

Nursing staff and paramedics must submit completed declarations (Part A) and risk assessments (Part B) to their regional offices or contractors at least 15 calendar days prior to their planned travel date into community before each assignment or rotation.

In addition to abiding by any applicable pre-travel requirements identified through the risk matrix, nursing staff and paramedics are also responsible to self-monitor and screen for COVID-19 symptoms per *First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Directive – Healthcare Professional Self-Screening for COVID-19*.

If you have any questions, please contact the Nursing Services Response Centre at 1-833-615-0362 during business hours, your contractor or your nurse manager.

Part A: Declaration

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| Name | | Region/Contractor | |
| Assessed risk level | | Assignment start date | |

In signing below, I acknowledge that:

- As a regulated health care professional, I am responsible for completing the assessment honestly and in good faith as well as complying with the corresponding pre-travel requirement(s) to support the safety of my clients and peers;
- False documentation or failure to comply with pre-travel requirements may lead to progressive discipline, up to and including termination;
- I understand that ISC may need to verify the information provided in my declaration and risk assessment, as well as my compliance with all pre-travel requirements. This may require that I submit additional information to ISC in support of the same or that ISC verify the accuracy of this information directly with me or with my consent;
- An assessment of risk represents a moment in time. I am responsible for continually assessing my level of risk using the matrix. If something occurs that changes my level of risk, I will immediately contact my nurse manager or contractor for guidance;
- This risk-based approach assumes my full compliance with all applicable provincial COVID-19 public health requirements, orders and precautions; and,
- Due to the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, ISC will continue to update the risk matrix. If I am provided with an updated version of the risk matrix, I am responsible to re-assess my level of risk. If my level of risk changes, I will immediately contact my nurse manager or contractor for guidance.

Signature _____

Date _____

Part B: Risk Assessment

| | | | |
|---|--|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Name | | Region or Contractor | |
| Assigned FN Community | | Date of Assessment | Assignment start date |
| Location used to make geographic COVID-19 active case rate assessment below | | | |

Assessment directions:

1. Mark all criteria that apply to you in the matrix below.
2. Determine your level of risk by identifying the highest risk category with any marked criteria. For example, if you have checked only one (1) red criterion and multiple yellow criteria, your level of risk is red.

| Risk | Assessment Criteria | ISC Pre-Travel Requirement |
|---------------|---|---|
| --- | <input type="checkbox"/> Presumptive or confirmed positive for COVID-19; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Signs/symptoms of COVID-19, as described in Annex B | Contact your nurse manager or contractor |
| Red | <input type="checkbox"/> Living in a provincially defined health region or geographic area with ≥ 25 active cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 ¹ ; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Travel outside of Canada, or to a COVID hot spot within Canada as deemed by a provincial health authority; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Work in an acute, emergency, non-acute or long-term care facility between FN/IB rotations or assignment; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Close contact ² with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Laboratory exposure to biological material (e.g. primary clinical specimens, virus culture isolates) known to contain COVID-19; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure at a location when a known COVID outbreak occurred with or without personal protective equipment; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at an event or gathering where consistent physical distancing is impracticable, such as a demonstration or indoor party; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in a sporting league in which physical contact is likely, such as soccer; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Has a household member who meets any red criteria and consistent physical distancing is not practicable; OR <input type="checkbox"/> When required by a community's Chief and Council or other applicable authority ³ | 14-day self-isolation required ⁴ Annex C contains self-isolation guidance |
| Yellow | <input type="checkbox"/> Living in a provincially defined health region or geographic area with > 10 and < 25 active cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 ¹ ; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Travel outside the province of residence to a low-risk location as deemed by a provincial health authority but remained within Canada; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Use of public transportation (bus, light rail transit, etc.); OR <input type="checkbox"/> Use of a fitness facility; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at an activity where seating assignments do not allow for 2-metre physical distancing, such as a movie theatre, sporting event, concert, or religious service; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Close contact ¹ with an individual under a provincial self-isolation order associated with travel outside of the province; OR <input type="checkbox"/> Has a household member who meets any yellow criteria and consistent physical distancing is not practicable AND <input type="checkbox"/> No red criteria | COVID-19 testing required at five (5) calendar days prior to departure with self-isolation until departure irrespective of test results OR If COVID-19 testing is unavailable, 14-day self-isolation required ⁴ Annex C contains self-isolation guidance |
| Green | <input type="checkbox"/> Living in a provincially defined health region or geographic area with ≤ 10 active cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 ¹ AND <input type="checkbox"/> No red or yellow criteria | No self-isolation or COVID-19 testing required by ISC |

¹ **Annex A** contains web links for identifying the active COVID-19 case rate for your area.

² A close contact of a confirmed or presumptive positive case of COVID-19:

- provided direct care for the case (including health care workers, family members or other caregivers), or who had other similar close physical contact (for example, intimate partner) without consistent and appropriate use of recommended personal protective equipment (PPE), or
- lived with or otherwise had close, prolonged (within 2 metres and > 15 minutes) with a case up to 48 hours prior to symptom onset or while the case was symptomatic and not isolating, or
- had direct contact with infectious body fluids of a case (for example, was coughed or sneezed on) without the appropriate use of recommended PPE.

³ As applicable, your region will advise you if your assigned community has pre-travel self-isolation requirements.

⁴ When a Region's standard scheduling practice does not permit 14 calendar days between FN community assignments and with the permission of the Region, a nurse or paramedic who is unable to meet red or yellow risk level pre-travel self-isolation requirements must:

1. Self-isolate for the entire duration of the time between assignments; and,
 2. Upon arrival in an FN community, wear gloves a mask and gown (prescribed PPE) while working and self-isolate when not working for the balance of the 14-day self-isolation period.
- Ex. A nurse with ten (10) calendar days between assignments must: 1) self-isolate for the ten (10) days between assignments; and, 2) Wear the prescribed PPE while working and self-isolate when not working for four (4) days.

Annex A: COVID-19 surveillance data



Created with mapchart.net

| Province or Territory* | Active Cases per 100,000 | Classification |
|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Alberta | 273.00 | Red |
| British Columbia | 76.00 | Red |
| Manitoba | 359.00 | Red |
| New Brunswick | 17.00 | Yellow |
| Newfoundland | 19.00 | Yellow |
| Northwest Territories | 7.00 | Green |
| Nova Scotia | 86.00 | Red |
| Nunavut | 33.00 | Red |
| Ontario | 129.00 | Red |
| Prince Edward Island | 8.00 | Green |
| Quebec | 63.00 | Red |
| Saskatchewan | 123.00 | Red |
| Yukon | 0.00 | Green |

Notes

- * At the discretion of the FNIHB Region, provincial public health data may be applied to identify active case rates for a health region or geographic area within a province to identify a more localized risk level.
- Data presented is current as at 09:00 EST on 26 May 2021
- Data source: [Public Health Agency of Canada Situational Awareness Dashboard](#)
- Active case rates are calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Total Cases} - \text{Recovered Cases} - \text{Death}}{\text{Provincial Population}} \times 100,000 = \text{Active Case Rate}$$

Annex B: Signs/symptoms of COVID-19

- Fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ or feeling feverish or shakes or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Other symptoms such as fatigue, sore throat, headache, runny nose, muscle aches, decreased appetite, abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea and loss of smell or taste

Source: *First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Directive – Healthcare Professional Self-Screening for COVID-19*

Annex C: Self-isolation guidance

NOTE: This guidance applies only to satisfying the *Primary Care Services Pre-Travel Assessment Tool's* self-isolation requirements. If differing levels of self-isolation are required of an individual by a departmental directive, policy or standard or provincial health authority, the most conservative requirement(s) shall apply.

When self-isolating, individuals:

- Must:
 - Avoid contact with others not in their household cohort;
 - Not participate in any activity identified as **red or yellow** within **Part B: Risk Assessment**;
 - Physically distance by two (2) metres from household members meeting any red criteria, as defined in **Part B: Risk Assessment**, which includes:
 - Identifying, when possible, separate washroom facilities. When separate washrooms are not feasible, a cleaning plan should be established;
 - Coordinating separate sleeping arrangements in the home, if applicable; and,
 - Keeping close contact as brief as possible
 - Avoid all outings to stores, restaurants and other commercial facilities. If not feasible, nurses and paramedics may visit essential services, such as grocery stores, pharmacies and gas stations, but must practice physical distancing, regular hand hygiene and wear a non-medical mask or face covering. Errands should occur at non-peak times to support physical distancing.
- Seek to maintain all appropriate measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by members of their household cohort, such as regular hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and wearing non-medical masks or face coverings in public;
- May participate in outdoor activities that support their well-being, but must maintain physical distancing from individuals outside of their household cohort. Examples of activities include walking, biking, jogging or taking their children to a park or walking them to school; and,
- Must practice good, conservative judgement in assessing activities and situations not explicitly identified in this guidance.