



Emergency
ManagementBC



EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES

PROGRAM GUIDE

THE HEART OF EMERGENCY AND
DISASTER RESPONSE

2022

FIRST EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

This ESS Program Guide supports Emergency Management British Columbia's (EMBC) Evacuee Living Assistance Policy ([Policy 5.03](#)) by providing information on the Emergency Support Services (ESS) program. This ESS Program Guide replaces the ESS Field Guide (2010).

ESS is a locally managed program under the Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer (PSLV) system which is administered through EMBC.

The terms First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are used throughout this ESS Program Guide. These terms are intended to reflect inclusion of First Nations, along with 'local authorities' as defined in the [Emergency Program Act](#) (EPA).

Information [highlighted in this colour](#) throughout the guide is expanded upon in Appendix B – Resources Toolkit. There are seven appendices in all:

- Appendix A – Response to Apartment Fires
- Appendix B – Resources Toolkit
- Appendix C – Acronyms
- Appendix D – Glossary
- Appendix E – Forms
- Appendix F – Virtual Work Environments
- Appendix G – Evacuee Medication

EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW

ESS is a First Nations Government and Local Authority based provincial emergency response program designed to meet the basic needs of British Columbians impacted by disasters by providing short-term support in a compassionate manner. ESS is designed to provide support for disasters ranging from a single house fire to provincial level events involving large evacuations. These supports enable people to re-establish themselves as quickly as possible after an emergency or disaster.

VISION STATEMENT

Emergency Support Services is a Provincial Program delivered by First Nations Governments and Local Authorities that meets the basic needs of British Columbians impacted by disasters by providing short-term support in a compassionate manner.

On May 29, 2019 the First Nations Health Authority and EMBC signed a letter of understanding and [Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility in Emergency Management Services for First Nations People in B.C.](#) This program guide affirms the Province of British Columbia's commitment to continually strive to build capacity to offer culturally safe and inclusive ESS.

LEGISLATION, POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Under the [EPA](#) Local Authorities are responsible for planning for and responding to emergency events within their jurisdiction. This includes coordinating the provision of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and medical services for their residents. First Nations are supported in fulfilling this role through a service agreement between EMBC and [Indigenous Services Canada \(ISC\)](#).

EMBC's [Evacuee Living Assistance Policy \(Policy 5.03\)](#) supports First Nations Governments and Local Authorities in fulfilling their legislated mandate. Policy 5.03 provides definitions for key terms while setting program eligibility criteria and defining evacuee responsibilities. This Program Guide is an annex of Policy 5.03. Further operational procedures are found on the [EMBC ESS Responder Resources page](#). These policies and procedures together form the framework under which ESS operates and are the basis for decision making at the Local and Provincial Government levels.

EMBC supports First Nations communities in their efforts to stand-up emergency management and evacuee care programs, including Emergency Support Services. Evacuated residents in BC, regardless of jurisdiction, have access to Emergency Support Services through their First Nation or Local Authority. First Nation and Local Authority emergency managers can reach out to EMBC for strategic guidance and support across all phases of emergency management.

TYPES OF SUPPORT

Residents of BC are encouraged to increase their resilience and reduce their vulnerability by preparing themselves for potential emergencies. Emergency preparedness information can be found through the [Prepared BC Program](#). When evacuated, supports provided by friends, family and insurance should be used before ESS is considered. ESS should only be used when other resources are unavailable or inaccessible.

ESS provides short-term temporary supports for individuals and families affected by emergencies or disasters so they can begin to plan their next steps and facilitate their recovery. The core categories of support include:

- Food (groceries or restaurant meals)
- Clothing
- Lodging (commercial accommodation, group lodging or billeting)
- Incidentals
- Transportation

Local ESS teams and the Provincial ESS program hold relationships with a broad range of emergency response organizations specializing in disaster support. Based on these relationships, ESS teams may facilitate access to a range of supports to ensure evacuee needs are met. These supports may be delivered on site, at a Reception Centre (RC) or Group Lodging (GL) facility or provided by a provincial or local support organization. These may include:

- Family reunification
- Social-emotional support
- Cultural support
- Spiritual support
- Volunteer services
- Child Activity Areas
- Information services. Additional information is provided by [Emergency Info BC](#) during large scale emergencies.

ESS is typically provided for a period of up to 72 hours. During this initial period, evacuees need to plan their next steps and begin their transition to recovery by:

- Contacting their insurance providers for coverage
- Contacting family, friends and community for support
- Contacting their First Nation Government or Local Authority for next steps and support options
- Accessing community service organizations such as the [BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres](#), [First Nation's Health Authority](#), [Canadian Red Cross](#) or [The Salvation Army](#) for longer term support.

ESS is typically provided for up to 72 hours. During this period, evacuees need to plan their next steps and begin their transition to recovery.

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In some cases, the 72 hour period is not enough for an evacuee to begin their recovery process. Approval to extend support beyond 72 hours may be granted by EMBC on a case by case basis. As the ESS program is designed to support the immediate needs of evacuees, extensions beyond 72 hours are considered exceptions and will be granted only in cases where an unmet need can be clearly identified.

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may provide supports beyond the scope or time span of the ESS program as they deem appropriate. The costs of these additional supports are borne by the First Nations Governments and Local Authorities.

ESS IN THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ESS is organized under the [British Columbia Emergency Management System \(BCEMS\)](#) and follows an Incident Command System (ICS) approach to response. The core function of ESS is usually delivered by trained volunteer responders or contractors. To deliver inclusive, culturally safe and coordinated supports to evacuees, ESS teams are supported by several different emergency management levels, outlined below.

FIRST NATIONS GOVERNMENTS AND LOCAL AUTHORITY LEVEL

Under the EPA, Local Authorities in BC are legislated to plan for and manage emergency response operations within their own jurisdiction. ESS teams are a part of First Nations Governments and Local Authorities Emergency Management Programs, under the direction of the local Emergency Program Coordinator (EPC) or equivalent. The EPC is the contact point between EMBC and the ESS team.

EMBC has a service agreement with ISC to provide emergency management support to First Nations communities. The agreement ensures:

- EMBC equitably supports all community emergency programs
- Access to training opportunities and provincial support are available to all First Nations

The Emergency Program Coordinator (EPC) is the contact point between the ESS team and EMBC.

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are encouraged to work together to integrate planning, preparedness and response activities with neighbouring communities.

Though ESS is designed as a locally managed volunteer model, First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may contract the delivery of the ESS program to third party organizations. It is recommended practice to contact the relevant [EMBC Regional Office](#) if a contracted ESS model is being considered.

Considerations related to contracting an ESS program to a third party include:

- The cost of contracting an ESS program is borne by the First Nation Government or Local Authority and is not reimbursable.

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- The third-party ESS provider has received cultural sensitivity/cultural safety and humility training or possesses a strong understanding of the historical contexts of First Nations in BC
- PSLV ESS volunteers are reimbursed at the rates prescribed under the [PSLV](#) program.
- Liability and reimbursement impacts may result if contractors exceed the scope and parameters of the provincial ESS program
- To ensure equitable and timely service, the contractor must use only approved ESS forms, procedures and local suppliers.
- The Local Authority retains its legislated responsibility – this cannot be delegated to the contractor.

Preparedness phase: The EPC holds overall responsibility for the ESS program within their jurisdiction. The EPC is responsible to:

- Appoint an ESS Director (ESSD). This is usually a volunteer position and plays an integral role in the Emergency Planning Committee.
- Recruit, train and exercise ESS responders.
- Develop callout procedures and prepare potential RCs and GL facilities for use.
- Create an ESS Plan, which forms part of the First Nation Government or Local Authority's overall Emergency Plan.
- Develop and maintain relationships with support organizations, including suppliers, non-government organizations (NGO) and community organizations.
- Prepare adequately for supports to vulnerable populations.
- Encourage public preparedness by recommending personal or family preparedness and recovery plans. Including resources from the [Emergency Management in B.C.](#) site.
- Work with EMBC to develop program capacity.

Preparedness considerations for EPCs and ESSDs:

- ESS Volunteers must be registered as PSLVs with their First Nation Government or Local Authority and EMBC
- Once registered, volunteers may apply to receive a PSLV ID card
- Eligibility for Workers Compensation Board (WCB) coverage, liability protection and expense reimbursement benefits require all responders be registered for the specific operational or training number in which they are involved.
- The following are recommended training courses for all ESS responders. A full list of courses available can be found on the [ESS Training page](#)
 - o Introduction to ESS
 - o Registration & Referrals
 - o Introduction to Reception Centres
 - o Introduction to Group Lodging
 - o Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) Tool training

ESS responders interested in staying current on Culturally Safe Training can learn more by exploring the [BC Government Indigenous Relations Behavioural Competencies](#).

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Response phase: The EPC is responsible for operations during response. During larger activations, the EPC may fill the EOC director position while the appointed ESSD generally fills the ESS Branch Coordinator function at the EOC. The EPC is responsible to:

- Activate the ESS plan and provide supports as appropriate.
- Coordinate response activities, including requesting additional support as required.
- Plan for a transition to recovery.
- Ensure a responsible demobilization.
- Provide role modeling in leading a culturally safe operation.

Key response considerations include:

- Only engage ESS responders to perform tasks within the scope of their qualifications, training and/or experience.
- Always deploy ESS responders in pairs for health and safety reasons.
- Ensure appropriate breaks and health measures are in place to protect the responders and evacuees.

More detailed information regarding typical ESS operations and functions is available through the [Reception Centre Operational Guidelines](#) and the [Group Lodging Operational Guidelines](#).

EMBC REGIONAL LEVEL

EMBC maintains an office in each of the six [EMBC regions](#). Each region has several regional staff, including Regional Managers (RM), Emergency Management Technicians (EMT) and Regional Office Administrators (ROA).

Regional staff are responsible for providing support to a full spectrum of emergency management activities.

Regional offices maintain a 24/7 duty position called a Regional Duty Manager (RDM). The RDM is the EPC's contact point for any approvals related to overages and expenditures. It is important for EMBC Regional Staff and EPCs to develop a good working relationship.

The Regional Duty Manager is the EPC's contact point for any approvals related to ESS overages and expenditures.

Preparedness phase: Regional staff may support ESS by:

- Acting as a contact point for EPCs, providing expert advice on local and regional issues.
- Offering support and advice to communities about their emergency program planning, preparedness and recovery activities.
- Coordinating the integration of key regional partners or stakeholders.
- Advising and supporting the development of ESS teams and plans.
- Attending or supporting conferences, working groups and ESS events.
- Hosting seasonal readiness information sessions.
- Resourcing, capacity and capability building within First Nations Governments and Local Authorities.
- Supporting the development of Mutual Aid or Host Community agreements

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Response phase: Regional staff may support ESS response by:

- Providing approvals, advice and support to EPCs and ESSDs.
- Activating a Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre (PREOC) to support larger emergencies.
- Staffing an ESS branch in the Operations Section of the PREOC.

EMBC PROVINCIAL LEVEL

EMBC headquarters (HQ) provides policy, training, operations, administration and financial support to a full spectrum of emergency management activities. The office is responsible for the overall strategy to build ESS capacity across the Province.

ESS staff in HQ provide policy advice, direction and coordinate response in large events

- EMBC Finance processes all invoices generated by Referrals from suppliers and response claims, including volunteer reimbursements
- The Provincial Duty Manager (PDM) maintains awareness on larger provincial events.
- The Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) is EMBC's 24/7 duty office and the source of all task/incident number (1-800-663-3456)
- The ESS Call Centre (1-800-585-9559) can provide information to suppliers and evacuees.

Preparedness Phase: EMBC HQ may support ESS by:

- Developing policy and procedural direction
- Maintaining the ESS website
- Hosting workshops
- Providing resources to the Regional Offices to support the ESS program
- Administering the ESS training program
- Facilitating access to funded training in coordination with contracted training and exercise partners
- Maintaining relationships with a large array of support organizations
- Developing integrated Provincial response plans for large scale emergencies

The Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) is EMBC's 24/7 duty office and the source of all task numbers. Call the ECC at 1-800-663-3456

Response Phase: EMBC HQ may support ESS by:

- Collecting and logging information and distributing task numbers/incident numbers through the Emergency Coordination Centre
- Providing decision making advice, support, resources and approvals to the RDMs, PDMs and activated PREOCs
- Activating the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre (PECC) to support larger activations
- Staffing an ESS branch in the Operations Section of the PECC
- Deploying available ESS responders upon request

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- Supporting the administration of ESS finance, including identification and follow up of discrepancies

Figure One – Provincial and Regional EMBC/ First Nations Governments and Local Authorities Emergency Management Structure

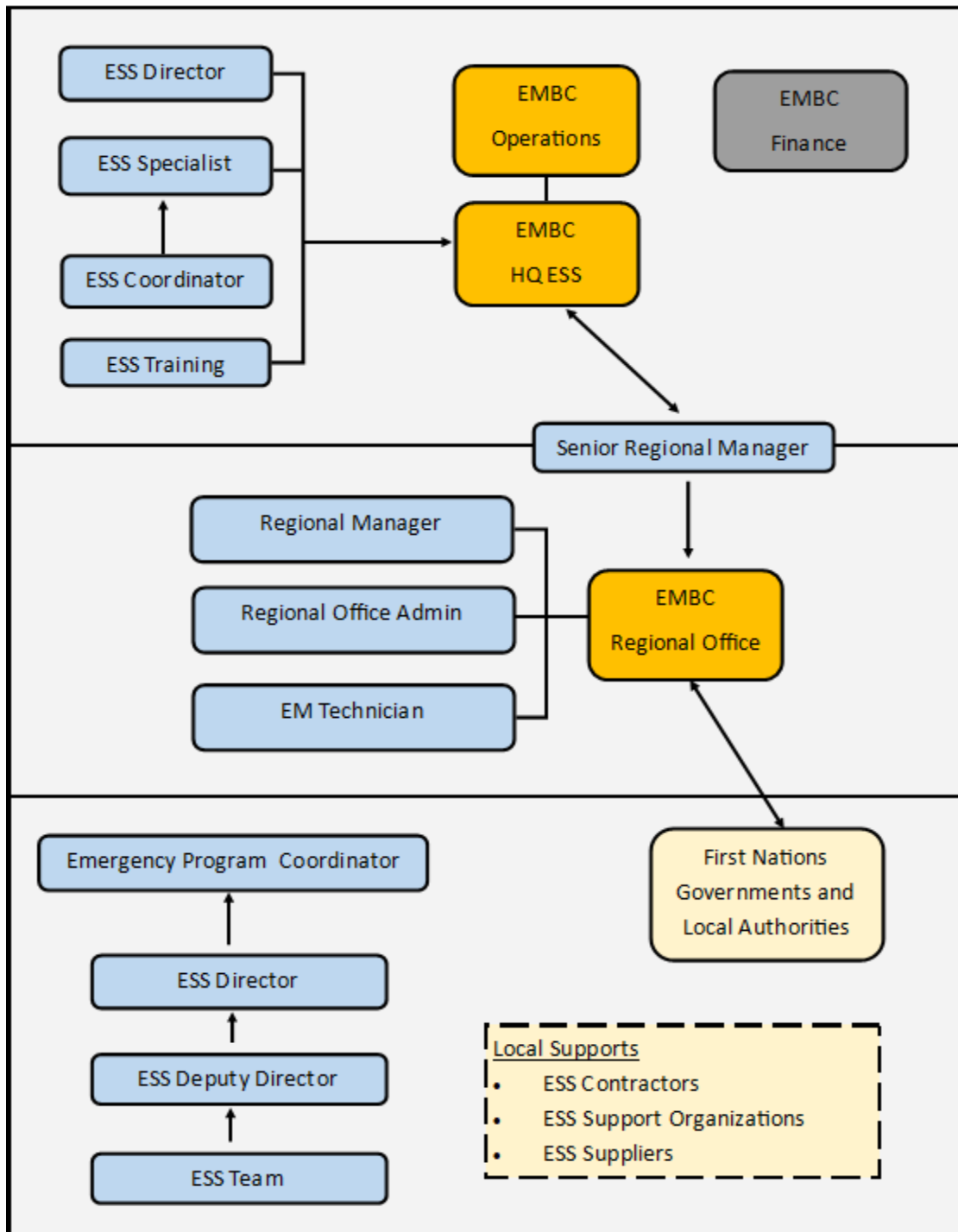
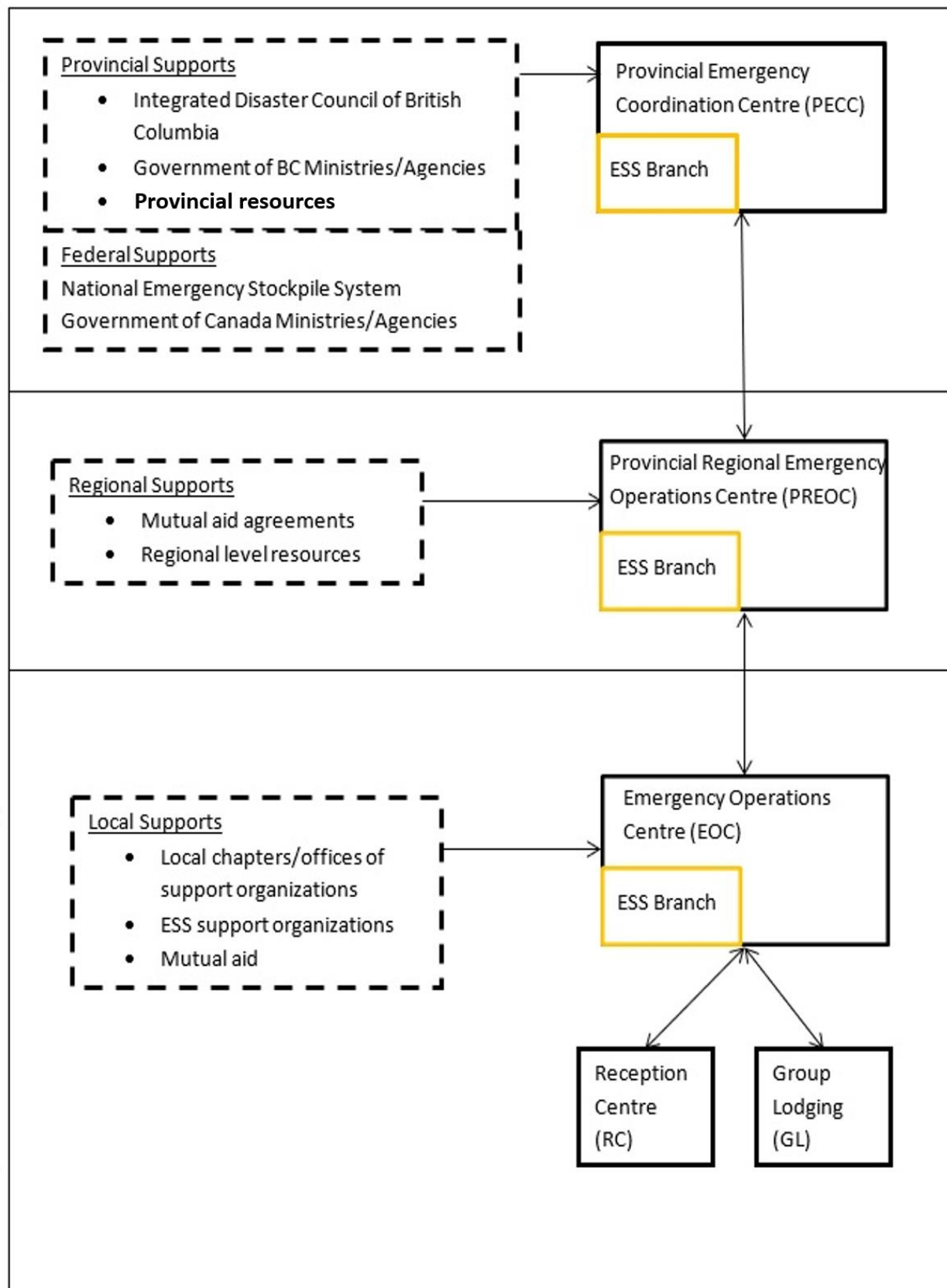


Figure Two - EMBC/First Nations Governments and Local Authorities response structure



ESS RESPONSE PROCESS

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

1. Treaty First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are responsible for planning and managing emergency response and recovery operations within their own jurisdiction. This responsibility involves the appointment of an EPC and the creation of an emergency program, including an Emergency Plan and ESS team. The Emergency Plan should contain a detailed ESS Plan outlining callout procedures, key personnel and the potential locations of RC/GLs and alternatives to meet unique circumstances.
2. When an emergency event occurs, First Nations Governments and Local Authorities activate their ESS Plan and form an appropriate response structure to manage the impacts and deliver ESS. To manage smaller events this may be limited to roadside response. During larger events it may necessitate the opening of an RC and GL Facility as well as an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). Where jurisdiction overlaps, a wise practice is to provide linkage to their respective EOCs through liaison roles.
3. When a First Nation Government or Local Authority is no longer able to effectively respond to an event due to the event size or complexity, support may be sought through mutual aid from neighbouring jurisdictions. First Nations Governments and Local Authorities should consider integrated planning for ESS preparedness and response on a regional basis.
4. When mutual aid resources are unavailable, provincial ESS assistance may be requested by the EPC or the activated EOC. Requests should be directed to the Regional Duty Manager (RDM) or the appropriate PREOC, if activated.
5. Planning for the transition to recovery needs to be initiated as soon as the ESS response begins. The ESS program is intended to support evacuees in their immediate needs during the initial response phase of an emergency event. The recovery process is distinct from ESS and requires appropriate resources to ensure a successful transition.

For more information on the transition to recovery see the ESS Response Guidelines Step 4 – Plan for Recovery

ESS ACTIVATION LEVELS

ESS activation levels are distinguished by size and the type of ESS resources required.

Level One: A localized event that can be managed using a minimal number of ESS resources. (Example – single house fire).

Level Two: A significant event that requires the full use of a First Nation Government or Local Authority's ESS resources. A Level 2 event might include the activation of an RC and an EOC. (Example – fire in an urban apartment complex).

Level Three: A major emergency that exceeds a First Nation Government or Local Authority's capacity to respond and requires assistance from neighbouring jurisdictions or the Province. (Example – interface wildfire that causes an entire city to evacuate).

TASK NUMBER/INCIDENT NUMBER

Task/incident numbers confirm the application of the **EPA** to an emergency and provide a method for tracking approved expenditures. Task numbers are an important financial control measure for every type of ESS support. In addition, the task number provides PSLV volunteers with access to:

- PSLV liability coverage
- Replacement costs for materials both lost or damaged
- Reimbursement of expenses for volunteers
- Coverage for other costs (with EMBC approval)
- Proceed with any registration and referral work in ERA

Task numbers are a crucial component of any ESS response. To receive a task number, contact the ECC 24/7 at 1-800-663-3456.

ESS responders attending an event need to know the event task number and must physically sign in on a task registration form before commencing work. Though physical signatures are not possible while working remote, it is still required to sign in/out under task. An email to the ESSD/Team Lead stating the task number is recommended to document the start and end time of each shift.

EOC's may be provided an incident number instead of a task number as a part of an Incident Management System project update. Incident numbers are functionally the same as task numbers and will start with the last two digits of the current year ex. 22-xxxxxx. In the event that your local EOC does not need to activate, requests may be submitted using the incident/task number for the individual incident. Throughout this document task number and incident number are either written together or used interchangeably.

ACTIVATION PROCEDURES

The following procedures are recommended when an emergency forces people from their homes and the First Nation Government or Local Authority activates its ESS plan. While these procedures are considered wise practice, they can be adapted as needed. It is recognized that not all teams have the same capacity or will use the terminology outlined below. Remote response may be appropriate for some events (see Appendix F – Virtual Work Environments).

Note: These procedures refer to the EPC as responsible for activating and carrying out the ESS Plan. While the EPC is responsible for these activities, it is recommended they delegate to an ESSD. The ESSD may assign further positions to members in the team. Team members calling in to the ECC to receive a task/incident number are representatives of the EPC and their First Nation Government or Local Authority.

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For Level One ESS Response

- A first responder (e.g. fire, police) notifies the EPC, ESSD or designate that an event has occurred.
- The EPC, ESSD or designate activates the ESS Plan and contacts the ECC at 1-800-663-3456 to pass on event information and receive a task/incident number.
- Upon receipt of the task/incident number, ESS attends the site of the emergency or an alternative location and carries out the registration and referral process.

For Level Two or Three Response

- First responder notifies the EPC or ESSD that an event has occurred.
- The EPC or ESSD activates the ESS Plan and contacts the ECC at 1-800-663-3456 to pass on event information and receive a task/incident number.
- If the EOC is activated, the EPC identifies an ESS Branch Coordinator. This is normally the ESSD.
- The ESS team may be required to open an RC and/or GL facility. The RC/GL Managers report to the ESS Branch in the EOC. ESS carries out the registration and referral process.
- The ESS Branch Coordinator in the EOC supports the ESS site operations.
- The EOC may request support from the Province via the Regional Duty Manager (RDM) or the PREOC if activated.

If unable to contact the community EPC:

- First responder may contact the ECC directly and request activation of ESS if not already initiated by local dispatchers
- EMBC ECC will initiate a callout until a representative is contacted who can activate the ESS response plan. If no contact can be identified the ECC will advise the Regional Duty Manager (RDM).

COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS/FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS

A Community Navigator is an individual identified as a liaison to help facilitate ESS delivery by liaising between a community and an RC/EOC. Community Navigators have been used in past events and in 2021 the position was formalized with policy written to elaborate on the role of a First Nations Community Navigator. This position can be requested in a Resource Request or Expenditure Authorization Form (EAF). It is a recommended practice that both First Nation Governments and Local Authorities use Community Navigators and First Nations Community Navigators to support ESS practices. The Community Navigator-First Nations Community Navigator policy lists the following potential assistance that these roles might provide

- Accompany individuals to cultural activity locations
- Duties normally undertaken by the Meeter and Greeter
- Accompany and support individuals during the Registration and Referrals process
- Provide services in multiple locations, such as Reception Centres, lodging facilities, and food service locations.

CULTURAL ACTIVITY LOCATION SUPPORT

Cultural Activity Location Support (CALS) are a designated location for the purpose of cultural care services. CALS have been conducted in past events at Reception Centres or community halls and have been formalized in 2021. CALS can be sourced as a response cost through a Resource Request or an Expenditure Authorization Form.

CALS policy uses the following language to describe the role CALS can fill in an emergency:

“Large scale evacuations that impact an entire community may be stressful and traumatizing for First Nations people, so it is important to provide trauma-informed, culturally appropriate services to lessen further impacts and to transition more effectively into recovery. These services may be offered within or close to Emergency Support Services (ESS) Reception Centres, however, some communities may prefer to have a separate designated gathering space where services can be provided.

To support the delivery of First Nations health, wellness, and cultural services, the host and/or evacuating community may utilize a Cultural Activity Location Support (CALS). The CALS provides a safe space where evacuees can gather and access cultural care services. Services offered within CALS may be delivered in collaboration with the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), community health society, or other support agency.”

WISE PRACTICES

The following wise practices are intended to support cultural humility and cultural safety. These practices are supported by research and after-action reports specific to the Province of British Columbia.

- Recruit Indigenous people and youth as ESS responders.
- Engage Indigenous leaders in all decisions that might impact their communities. This can also be achieved through the First Nations Community Navigator role.
- Facilitate First Nations creating ‘host community agreements’ with neighbouring communities to access facilities for CALS such as longhouses, Big Houses, Nation-owned buildings and Friendship Centres.
- Integrate cultural safety and humility training into monthly ESS team meetings. Include a write-up on the Indigenous history of the local area that will be shared with all volunteers.

PROVINCIAL/REGIONAL ESS SUPPORT

If a First Nations Government or Local Authority finds it is unable to manage the ESS response with their own resources, mutual aid from neighbouring jurisdictions needs to be accessed as a first step. The ECC must be notified if mutual aid is requested. First Nation Government or Local Authorities providing mutual aid must obtain a task/incident number from the ECC if they are a Host Community.

When mutual aid resources are insufficient, assistance may be requested from the Province via the Regional Duty Manager (RDM) or an activated PREOC. The EPC or designate (e.g. ESS Branch Coordinator at the EOC) is responsible to consult with RC and GL Managers to determine the need for resources. Requests should be submitted in the form of a Resource Request (RR).

- Resource Requests (RRs) should describe a need (rather than a suggested solution)
- RRs need to be detailed, realistic, prioritized and time based
- RRs must be approved by the EPC/EOC Director
- RRs are sent to RDMs or activated PREOCs
- When authorization is granted, the Province will provide the coordination for the deployment of ESS materials, EMBC ESS or First Nation/Local government staff, other community ESS responders or ESS Supporting Organizations.

These resources may be requested to provide:

- Operational mentorship
- 'Just in time' training
- Advice and support to ESSDs/EPCs

As a secondary function they may also provide:

- Relief shifts
- Surge support

Upon arrival all deployed ESS responders will contact the PREOC to check in and then contact the ESS representative named on the RR to confirm assignment of duties and receive a situation briefing.

Resource Requests describe a need rather than a suggested solution. For example, a RR request which describes a need for immediate training for new volunteers could be filled by many different people, while a specific request for an experienced ESS responder narrows the solution to one option.

When requesting people, it is important to recognize that responders who deploy sometimes do so at great personal expense, impacting their work and lives to help their fellow British Columbians. Every effort should be taken to ensure those deployed have a safe, enjoyable experience and are recognized for their time and energy.

HOST COMMUNITY

When it is not possible to keep evacuees in the impacted community, it is typical to ask neighbouring communities to help by providing support to the evacuees as needed. It is important for First Nations Governments and Local Authorities to reach out to potential host communities in advance of an evacuation to pre-establish relationships and communication channels. There is no obligation for another community to act as a host community. Fostering proactive, strong relationships with other communities will encourage mutual assistance in times of need.

When a non-impacted First Nation Government or Local Authority (i.e. host community) is providing support to evacuees from another jurisdiction, they can be reimbursed for response costs. The following guidelines must be adhered to when acting as a host community:

- ESS Referrals must be filled out under the task number assigned to the host community.

For more detail on host community considerations, see the [Evacuation Operational Guidelines](#). For detailed information regarding financial eligibility for host communities see the [Financial Assistance for Emergency Response and Recovery Costs: A Guide for Local Authorities and First Nations](#). Further questions can be directed towards the [EMBC regional office](#).

LANGUAGE SERVICES

Support for evacuee translation is available through the Victim Link program.

- Call 1-800-563-0808 (Available province wide and in the Yukon 24/7)
- Text 604-836-6381 (Available province wide 7 days a week from 8 am to 11 pm) Note this may incur a toll in some areas due to the 604 prefix.
- Call 211 (Service limited to Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley and Vancouver Island 24/7).

Services for the deaf and hearing-impaired are also available through the Victim Link program.

- Call 604-875-0858 (Available province wide 24/7)
- Email VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca

LOCAL POLICE FORCE

If the 'police of jurisdiction' (RCMP or local police force) wish to access an RC and/or GL facility, they may do so. Officers should be directed to connect with the RC/GL Manager to discuss their purpose and allow the RC/GL Manager to inform or confirm the police presence with the EOC (ESS Director) and if necessary, inform the facility volunteers. The presence of police may lead to discomfort and a hesitation to share important information for some evacuees. A wise practice is to have the police connect with a Community Navigator/First Nations Community Navigator and have them accompany the police into the facility.

THE INTEGRATED DISASTER COUNCIL OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (IDCBC)

The IDCBC is a Provincial level organization with a mandate to increase coordination amongst participating agencies by creating a forum for communication and information sharing to support First Nations Governments and Local Authorities' emergency management efforts within the province. The IDCBC assists organizations in working together to enhance community resilience across the four pillars of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery). The IDCBC is co-chaired by an EMBC Staff member and a rotating NGO partner.

The IDCBC does not have an EOC and cannot be requested by First Nations Governments and Local Authorities for support. Though IDCBC organizations may have Provincial mandates/goals, local chapters will have different capabilities based on size and resources. ESS teams can develop contacts with local chapters of response organizations to ensure coverage within their jurisdiction.

ESS RESPONSE GUIDELINES

Under [Policy 5.03](#) if an evacuation has been ordered or legislated authorities have determined that a home is uninhabitable ESS may be provided. This section provides a five-step guidance to both ESS volunteers and EMBC staff in determining the appropriate delivery of the ESS program to people affected by emergencies.

- Step One – Register and determine eligibility
- Step Two – Conduct Needs Assessment
- Step Three – Support needs appropriately
- Step Four – Plan for recovery
- Step Five – Demobilize ESS

STEP ONE – REGISTER AND DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

The determining of eligibility begins with the registering of the evacuee and their family. All evacuees who may potentially receive ESS must be registered to ensure complete collection of information and to facilitate informed decision making. Once a household is registered, the responder makes a determination if ESS is applicable.

For purposes of the ESS Program Guide, the term *designated authority* refers to an individual or organization given authority by statute which allow them to declare a residence uninhabitable.

There are two factors to consider when determining eligibility for the program, as outlined in the matrixes below.

1. Is ESS available for this type of emergency event?
2. Are the people affected by the emergency in need of ESS assistance?

ELIGIBILITY MATRIX

ESS Eligibility Matrix – Event Types		
Event Type	Available	Not Available
Flood. Interface Wildfire. Earthquake.	When an evacuation order is in effect.	Voluntary departure from their primary residence without authorization or support from their First Nation or Local Government. See Evacuation Operational Guidelines and unauthorized evacuees below.
Eviction due to landlord and tenant disputes.	Not eligible.	This is a civil court matter.
Police actions, decisions to condemn buildings or failure of municipal infrastructure.	On a case by case basis services such as family reunification, psychosocial services and food may be provided if significant numbers of people are evacuated and cannot return home for an extended period. (Examples - armed standoff or hazardous materials incidents). Only with authorization from EMBC.	Evictions due to execution of search warrants or premises being declared a crime scene.
Power Outages.	During prolonged outages with extreme winter weather conditions. On a case-by-case basis hotel or other supports may be authorized to ensure the safety of vulnerable populations.	Generally considered an inconvenience and not an emergency.
Motor vehicles crashing into residences.	If residence is declared uninhabitable by a designated authority and owner/tenant has no other personal resources, this may be approved on a case-by-case basis. EMBC approval is required.	If residence is damaged but still habitable or owner/tenant has insurance.

Accident involving public transportation such as a Ferry or Bus.	To cover immediate (overnight) needs on a case-by-case basis with approval from EMBC.	Usually covered by company providing transportation. Intent is to return people to their homes as soon as possible.
Burst water pipes rendering home uninhabitable.	On a case-by-case basis when health and safety are at risk. Only with authorization from EMBC. Insurance policies generally cover alternative living expenses.	Generally considered a homeowner/First Nation/Local Government responsibility. Costs may be covered by insurance. Strata or property management organization may assume costs.

ESS Eligibility Matrix – Affected People

Designation	Available	Not Available
Residents who have been ordered to evacuate from their primary residence or the residence has been deemed uninhabitable by a designated authority.	Primary purpose of the ESS program and Policy 5.03 . Primary residency is defined as a dwelling where an individual or family spends most of their personal time. A person can only have one primary residency at a time.	If the evacuee has their own personal supports available. This includes insurance, friends and family.
Temporary Residents and Tourists.	Approved on a case-by-case basis. Tourists, if they are considered stranded travelers with no other options – limited ESS services to maintain health and safety (usually Group Lodging). EMBC pre-approval is required.	Tourists or short-term visitors are expected to use their own resources to leave the affected area and return to their primary residence.
Persons in receipt of income assistance or disability assistance from Provincial Programs.	May be approved until they are able to contact an Employment Assistance Worker (EAW) or for the duration of an event if an evacuation order is in effect.	Once an EAW provides appropriate supports, ESS will no longer be required
Self-Evacuees (Extraordinary Evacuees)	Only with a signed Extraordinary Evacuee Authorization form from their First Nation or Local Government.	The individual relies on their own resources during self-evacuation.

STEP TWO – NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Once eligibility has been determined, the ESS responder conducts a Needs Assessment to determine what is needed to sustain an evacuee through the immediate response period. It is important to actively listen to the needs of evacuees and provide them with information regarding kinds of supports (Referrals vs. Interac e-Transfer).

ESS responders learn how to conduct a Needs Assessment during their training, notably in the Registration and Referrals Course. Interviewing and collecting information on evacuees is a skill developed over time and benefits from on-going training and reflection on a regular basis.

Needs: Goods and services to support the basic needs of evacuees. Includes food, clothing, lodging, transportation and incidentals.

Wants: Comfort or convenience goods and services not required to sustain an evacuee's basic needs. Items such as books or televisions are wants.

STEP THREE - SUPPORT NEEDS APPROPRIATELY

ESS responders provide supports to meet immediate needs in the most efficient, economical, effective and safe method possible (MEMPS). Responders must use the MEMPS Principle when choosing support options.

- Most Efficient (means possible) - simplest, quickest way to provide service to meet the needs of affected persons and ESS responders.
- Most Economical - exercise due diligence and consider the most cost-effective way of spending public money.
- Most Effective - best way to meet the objective of preserving the safety and wellbeing of people affected by an emergency.
- Safe – providing culturally safe and compassionate resources to all human beings.

ESS is a safety net program. In other words, ESS is only available to assist people during emergencies when no other assistance or support is available to them. ESS responders can encourage the evacuee to pursue the following types of support before ESS, if they have not done so already.

- Personal financial resources.
- Family and friends.
- Insurance (when people are traumatized by an event and unsure of their insurance coverage, overnight ESS may be authorized). If you are having difficulty contacting your insurance provider, please contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada at [1-844-227-5422](tel:1-844-227-5422).
- Other government agencies.
- NGOs and community groups.

Emergency Support Services Program Guide

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may provide ESS for up to 72 hours with a task number from the Province if the provisions of [Policy 5.03](#) and this Program Guide are followed.

- During this time First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are accountable for the decisions they make.
- Supports offered outside the eligibility matrix, or without consideration for the MEMPS principle will result in delays or denial of supplier payments.
- ESS may be extended if there is an evacuation order in effect and evacuees are unable to return home.
- All requests for extensions or exceptional approvals of ESS must be requested by the EPC and approved through EMBC by contacting the activated PREOC or the ECC at 1-800-663-3456.

STEP FOUR – PLAN FOR RECOVERY

While ESS is not directly responsible for recovery, consideration must be given to next steps during the response phase to ensure a successful transition. Successful recovery means empowering those impacted by a disaster in a way that preserves their dignity, embraces their right of choice, and demonstrates respect for their experience.

The following are recommended practices to assist in the transition.

- Refer evacuees to alternate sources of assistance such as a Resilience Centre or other community support organizations including Aboriginal/Indigenous Friendship Centres.
- Provide clear information to evacuees on ESS expiry dates. ESS supports are provided up to 72 hours and require EMBC approval for further extensions. Extensions for ESS should not exceed 3 months and require significant justification after 1 month.
- Identify exceptional circumstances that may affect the transition to recovery.

Vision for Recovery

Re-established social, cultural, physical, economic, personal, spiritual and community well-being through inclusive measures that reduce vulnerability to disaster, while enhancing sustainability and resilience.

STEP FIVE – DEMOBILIZE ESS

ESS provides short term supports and ends as soon as the evacuee can access their own resources (including insurance or connecting with friends/family), the evacuation order is rescinded, the area is deemed safe to return to or extensions have exceeded 3 months. ESS may also end if EMBC staff and First Nations Governments and Local Authorities find a more practical way to support evacuee needs (such as an NGO or *ISC* funding).

The following are recommended practices to ensure a successful demobilization:

- Debrief ESS responders individually.
- Consider a group After Action Review (AAR) immediately following the event.
- Provide resources found on the Self Care for Disaster Workers website to responders.
- Complete documentation such as task reports, volunteer expense reimbursement claims and the administration of Registration and Referral forms.
- Follow up with suppliers and support organizations.
- Document any operational or policy issues identified during the response on the Action Checklist and ensure that copies are provided to the EPC and forwarded to the EMBC Regional Manager.
- Inventory forms, signage and kit supplies. Reorder as necessary through either the ESS website or appropriate suppliers.

A successful demobilization ensures that responders and suppliers feel respected and are prepared for potential future operations.

ESS FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING VULNERABILITY

The term “population of people experiencing vulnerability” refers to a broad spectrum of evacuees, who each have unique needs as well as strengths. The **Evacuation Operational Guidelines** identify the following categories of vulnerable experiences:

- Communication: limited ability to speak, see, and hear; read or understand English, limitations in learning and understanding.
- Medical: assistance with bathing or feeding, managing medications, on dialysis or oxygen, operating power-dependent equipment to sustain life
- Independence challenges: maintaining functional independence with medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, or scooters
- Mental health and well-being, including people with inter-generational trauma
- Supervision needs: persons with dementia or Alzheimer’s, prisoners, and unaccompanied children
- Transportation needs: persons unable to drive due to disabilities, legal restrictions, socio-economic factors
- Houseless or transient people
- Substance use and self medication practices.

ESS responders must remain sensitive to the needs of all evacuees and try to support them to the best of their ability and resources through the application of the MEMPS Principle. ESS can also seek to leverage unique strengths of the evacuees that they are helping.

ESS Teams must further recognize that groups may face barriers to accessing services equitably which may have complex causes. ESS Teams must seek to provide services without judgement or bias. The following situations are only illustrative examples of unique impacts to people with vulnerable experiences.

WARMING AND COOLING CENTRES

Extreme weather often impacts vulnerable populations and can require warming or cooling centres to mitigate the risks to health created by extreme temperatures.

Warming/cooling centres are not within the scope of practice specified by ESS program. First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may wish to use PSLVs in the set up and operation of these sites. If a task/incident number has been provided and approval given by a Regional Manager, PSLVs will be covered under the same PSLV provisions as any other authorized service (liability and workers compensation coverage etc). PSLVs will still be required to follow procedures when activated in these services (signing in/out of Task Registration Form etc).

Warming and Cooling centres are only PSLV authorized after a task number has been issued and Regional Manager approval has been received.

It is a recommended practice that ESS volunteers be used only for the set up/tear down of these sites as ESS training does not address the unique needs of individuals that use these centres. Although PSLVs can be authorized for set up and operation of these sites, it is up to the EPC/ESSD to ensure volunteer safety is always the number one priority.

HEALTH

Evacuees may have a broad spectrum of health matters that require additional supports. These may be pre-existing conditions or may have been caused by the event itself. Though health is not within the scope of ESS, it is important for ESS responders to manage these cases appropriately.

Any emergency medical concerns must immediately be reported. It is recommended practice to have a qualified first aid attendant on site whenever practical. The administering of first aid or emergency interventions do not fall within the scope of ESS.

ESS volunteers are not to provide health assessments or advice and can only record general information about an evacuee's health related to their need (for example - do you have enough medication). Any specific details (such as medical condition or medication type) cannot be collected by the ESS responder. This is due to [Freedom of Information and Privacy Act](#) and unintended consequences of inappropriate information being shared about individuals within the ESS system.

If individuals have health concerns, they need to contact their health care provider or emergency medical services. In consultation with Health Emergency Management BC (HEMBC) the ESS program will provide guidance to evacuees who have evacuated and not retrieved their medications. ESS responders should not be placed into the position of asking household member's personal medical condition, specifics on medications, or make notation on ESS forms. Information and guidance in Appendix G provide additional support to evacuees when requested support is out of scope.

VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

Evacuees and their families may be avoiding an abusive situation. Fear of encountering an abuser at an RC or accommodations may add to the burden of worry already caused by the emergency. Further, research indicates that instances of domestic abuse increase after an emergency event has occurred. There may be a substantial risk of physical, emotional or spiritual harm, therefore ensuring the safety and security of the evacuee is a priority.

The following are recommended practices for ESS responders:

- Do contribute to building a [trust-based relationship](#), where "relationship" is the foundation from which all activities happen.
- Refrain from asking prying questions or attempt to learn more than is necessary about the situation, as this may cause trauma.
- Use trauma-informed practice. This can be demonstrated by the following behaviours:
 - o Acknowledging traditional territories
 - o Introducing with your name, ancestry and your pronouns (if that feels comfortable to you)
 - o Speaking with a smile, taking time for pauses to check in.
- Explain the option of having a file marked "restricted" and ask if the evacuee would like their file to be restricted. A restricted file would mean:
 - o Personal details and location will not be disclosed without their consent.
 - o A supervisor will take custody of the file and store it in a secure location.
- Inform the evacuee of **Victim Link BC**, a confidential service available 24 hours a day. It provides information and referral services to all victims of crime and offers immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence, including victims of human trafficking exploited for labour or sexual services.
 - o Dial 211
 - o Call toll-free at 1-800-563-0808
 - o Text at 604-836-6381
 - o Email at victimlinkBC@bc211.ca

Victims of family and sexual violence can receive information and services from Victim Link BC by dialing 211.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN

In some emergencies, children or youth (defined as anyone under 19 years of age) may appear at an RC unaccompanied by their parents or guardians. Ensuring their safety and knowing when to appropriately inform responsible authorities is a priority. These guidelines are intended to protect both children and ESS responders.

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When an unattended child appears at an RC, ESS Responders must register the under-age person on a Restricted file. This file should include names of parents and caregivers. ESS may then provide immediate care, as appropriate, to children who arrive at an RC without a parent or guardian. During emergency evacuations, children may show up with an extended family member, a neighbour/ family friend or child care provider. These children must be registered on a Restricted file.

ESS Responders have a duty to report to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) if they have reason to believe the child may need protection (under the [Child Family Community Services Act](#), section 13). A recommended practice is to have the EPC contact a First Nations Community Navigator or Band Leader in cases which involve Indigenous children and when child protection is not needed.

- The MCFD can be reached 24/7 by calling 1-800-663-9122.
- [Reporting Child Abuse in BC](#) has information and resources that support decision making around reporting.
- If you are ever unsure as to the safety of a minor (accompanied or unaccompanied) you can contact the number above and speak to a Social Worker for direction

Depending on the size and nature of the event, MCFD may play a role in an RC. They may:

- Assess and respond to child protection issues surfacing among the evacuees.
- Communicate with foster parents and group home staff regarding the placement and care of children or youth who are placed with them and find accommodation.
- Request or provide information to relevant parties concerned with locations of displaced children.
- Provide information about existing supports to parents and caregivers dealing with children's reactions to the disaster.

Child Activity Area and Child Care Provisions:

- A separate space within the Reception Centre may be set aside for children's activities.
- At all times children within a Reception Centre should be in the care of their parent/guardian. When a Child Activity Area is set up, it is suggested that the child be within arms reach of their parent/guardian.
- This space needs to be sufficiently open to allow space for appropriate supervision.
- This space should be securely located away from entrances and exits.
- If children arrive under the care of a teacher or day care provider, these responsible persons should be asked to remain with the children at the RC.
- It is recommended that Child Care not be activated due to perceived risk, however if required there must be at minimum two Responders that are qualified/certified Child Care providers supervising at all times. An alternative solution is to contract out this service to a qualified/certified childcare provider.

ESS EXPENDITURE AND PAYMENT PROCESS

The successful delivery of ESS requires timely and accurate administration to ensure evacuees are supported and suppliers are reimbursed on time. This section outlines expenditure policies and procedures that are specific to the ESS program.

Suppliers are reimbursed by the Province after submitting completed invoices and original referral forms along with appropriate supporting documentation to EMBC Headquarters.

Reimbursement of costs incurred by ESS responders are provided under the Volunteer [Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Policy \(5.06\)](#). Usually, these costs are paid by a First Nation Government or Local Authority and reimbursed through a response claim to an [EMBC Regional Office](#).

Evacuee Living Assistance and reimbursement for volunteers is provided under EMBC task/incident number. Task/incident numbers are obtained by calling the ECC at 1-800-663-3456. The ECC may request a cost estimate of the ESS event. This is the First Nation Government or Local Authority's best guess as to the ESS cost of the event and does not represent a limit on spending.

AVAILABLE SUPPORTS

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may provide ESS for up to 72 hours with a task/incident number from the Province if the provisions of [Policy 5.03](#) and this Program Guide are followed.

- During this time First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are accountable for the decisions they make.
- Supports offered outside the eligibility matrix, or without consideration for the MEMPS Principle will result in delays or denial of supplier payments.
- ESS may be extended if there is an evacuation order in effect and evacuees are unable to return home. Extensions for ESS should not exceed 3 months and require significant justification after 1 month.
- All requests for extensions or exceptional approvals of ESS must be requested by the EPC and approved through EMBC by contacting the ECC or activated PREOC.

Requests for extensions must be approved by EMBC

The financial limits on each category of ESS support (food, clothing, shelter, transportation, incidentals) are listed on the [ESS Rate Sheet](#), which is affixed to the referral form. If ESS supports are provided via the ERA tool, the summary page will provide the amounts for the evacuee. Requests to exceed these limits must be obtained from an EMBC Regional Manager or the Regional Duty Manager by contacting the ECC or activated PREOC. Details of the authorization must be noted in the comments section of the referral form.

The issuance of a task/incident number does not indicate that First Nations Governments and Local Authorities will be reimbursed for all expenditures in support of an emergency event. Approval for expenditure outside the ESS program must always be sought from EMBC through the ECC or activated PREOC.

EVACUEE REGISTRATION AND ASSISTANCE (ERA) TOOL

Prior to 2020, all Registration and Referrals were administered using a paper forms system. In 2020 the digital Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool became available across BC. The ERA tool enhances the delivery of ESS through several features including evacuee self-registration, Interac e-Transfer, online supplier submissions, secure and easy access to registration and referral information through data export.

Local ESS Programs may choose to use the ERA Tool, continue to rely on the paper forms, or a combination of both. For those using the ERA Tool, paper forms remain a reliable contingency option if connectivity or other reasons limit responder access to the Tool. It is recommended to keep a stock of ESS Forms on hand.

The ERA tool requires mandatory training offered through the JIBC self guided course. This training must be completed prior to gaining access to the ERA tool.

EMBC Regional Offices can provide more information on the use of the Tool, including how to get the ERA Tool for your team. More information can also be found on our [Launch ESS page](#).

ESS Program forms can be ordered by First Nation Governments and Local Authorities using the instructions on the [ESS Responder Resources page](#). The ERA tool can be accessed at ess.gov.bc.ca.

IDENTIFICATION OF EVACUEES

Due to the emergency nature of the ESS program, identification is not required to receive immediate referral-based support. However, there are situations where the ESS program does require identification including

- e-Transfer available through Evacuee Registration Assistance profile
- When ongoing extensions require eligibility confirmation

ID must include a photograph of the evacuee as well as their full name and date of birth.

List of accepted government-issued ID for e-Transfer:

- Indigenous status card
- Passport (an international passport is acceptable if it includes the name, date of birth, photo and signature of the applicant and is accompanied by a professionally translated version if not in French or English)
- Driver's license
- Enhanced Driver's License
- Canadian military ID card
- Government-issued ID card
- Government-issued enhanced ID card
- Health card Canadian citizenship card (issued before February 1, 2012)
- Canadian permanent resident card
- U.S. permanent resident card (green card)

DENYING SERVICE

ESS responders' priority should be ensuring their own health and safety. There are situations when ESS should not be provided to evacuees due to safety concerns. The two main reasons to deny supports are as follows:

- a) When there is abusive language/behaviour and a concern for Responder safety
- b) After services have been denied by a service provider (ex. hotel eviction)

When denial of services occurs, record if it is due to health and safety concerns with the responder or denial from a service provider. ESS notes should avoid emotion-based language and seek to incorporate factual descriptions (ex. client used abusive language). When denying services ensure that a supervisor has been informed prior to denial and that the denial does not place the responder at more risk. For additional support please contact your Regional Manager.

There are other situations that exclude an evacuee from ESS supports based on their Needs Assessment. Please consult Policy 5.03 and this ESS Program Guide for more information on program eligibility.

SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are responsible for establishing and maintaining relations with local business interested in supporting the program (called suppliers). Supplier consent forms must be utilized to ensure an understanding of the ESS program and procedures. At minimum, these relationships need to be renewed on an annual basis.

When choosing a supplier during an incident, it is advisable to provide equal opportunities to local businesses including Indigenous businesses. This is done at the discretion of the ESS team based on availability and ability to support a given need.

Supplier consent agreements need to be renewed on an annual basis.

EMBC is not involved in the creation or maintenance of supplier relationships, and generally does not engage with corporate headquarters of larger businesses.

INSURANCE

The following are considered wise practices for working with evacuees:

- Ask evacuees if they have insurance as part of their Needs Assessment.
- An Insurance claim should be made as soon as possible and prior to using ESS supports.
- If evacuees have difficulties contacting their insurance company or are uncertain about their coverage, only essential ESS supports should be provided pending clarification of insurance.
- It is critical that evacuees be encouraged to access their insurance as soon as possible. Some policies are time sensitive and may require immediate action.
- Insurance does not immediately exclude evacuees from ESS support. ESS may still be provided on a limited basis if insurance does not provide full coverage or takes time to access.
- Avoid discussions about insurance policies and deductibles. If there are specific concerns relating to the provision of ESS to an insured individual, it is recommended to provide ESS to cover the evacuee's immediate needs. After providing ESS supports, teams should raise the concerns to the Regional Office if needed.
- Indigenous persons who live on Band Lands, may have their insurance provided through the Band. This insurance often does not cover Additional Living Expenses and the evacuee may still require ESS supports.
- During extended events insurance coverage may not cover evacuees for the duration they are out of home (on evacuation order). These evacuees may seek ESS supports after their coverage has ended and should not be excluded from ESS supports.
- Assistance in resolving insurance related concerns is available by calling the **Insurance Bureau of Canada** toll-free at 1-844-227-5422 or e-mail: askibcwest@ibc.ca.
- IBC can also be invited to attend a Reception Centre if ongoing insurance issues become a problem. This service can be sourced through a Resource Request.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada can assist in resolving insurance related concerns. Contact them at 1-844-227-5422

During an emergency evacuation affected individuals may not be sure which company they hold a policy with. Insurance claim line numbers are often published on the website of the bank, credit union, or other agency that sold the policy.

EXTRAORDINARY EVACUEES

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities should consider evacuating vulnerable populations during an Evacuation Alert. There may also be times when individuals believe it is in their best interest to evacuate from their community before an Evacuation Alert or Order is in effect. In such situations, the First Nations Government or Local Authority should consider each case and authorize extraordinary evacuees as needed. These extraordinary evacuees will require an Extraordinary Evacuee Authorization Form (EEAF) to receive ESS supports. Without authorization, these individuals will be an unauthorized evacuee and will not receive ESS supports. **It is critical to advise the supporting ESS team that there are members from your community that have received authorization to evacuate prior to an Evacuation Alert or Order.** It is also recommended to confirm the Reception Centre location and hours of operation.

More information including the Extraordinary Evacuee Authorization Form is available in the [Evacuation Operational Guide for First Nations and Local Authorities in British Columbia](#). Individuals which have not received authorization must rely on their own resources during self-evacuation.

FOOD

Restaurant Meals: Meal rates do not cover gratuities or the purchase of alcohol, which are the responsibility of the evacuee. If a restaurant is co-located with a hotel, a referral may be written for both meals and accommodation if both are owned by the same business.

Groceries: Evacuees staying in a location with a kitchenette or with friends/family may prefer to cook their own meals. ESS responders need to ensure that evacuees have adequate refrigerated storage for perishable goods. Purchases of tobacco, cannabis or alcohol are not considered eligible grocery costs.

Bulk Food Orders: Requests for bulk food orders for evacuees or response workers should be forwarded to Logistics at the EOC. The ESS Referral form is not intended for bulk purchases.

Dietary Requirements: Recognizing many people have diverse dietary requirements, providing flexibility in options is important for health reasons. It is a wise practice to ensure food restrictions are accommodated and diabetic-friendly options are available.

LODGING

Hotel/Motels: ESS may use the **Provincial Government rates for hotels/motels**. These rates are lower than regular rates and are therefore preferential when selecting suppliers. Government rates are generally based on single occupancy but are also to be used as a benchmark to determine family rates. As a guideline, add \$10.00 for each additional adult and \$5.00 for each youth 13 to 18 years. If a family's size requires use of more than one hotel/motel room, the regular government rate may apply to each room. If no hotels offering the provincial government rate are available, teams must negotiate for the best rate.

Additional charges (such as room service or damages) are not covered by ESS and must be paid by the evacuee upon departure from the hotel. These costs are paid by either the evacuee, the First Nation Government or Local Authority or the Hotel.

Note: It is important to be mindful in booking hotel and motel rooms to consider safety for people experiencing vulnerabilities, differences in accessibility, or concerns for physical safety. Evacuees or Community Navigators/ First Nations Community Navigator may be able to recommend lodging options which support cultural, spiritual or physical safety (with the understanding that these spaces are not always available). These lodgings may provide unique services or be in areas which promote independence and/or provide additional safety for the evacuee.

Billeting in Private Homes: Those billeting evacuees in their home may receive reimbursement through the ESS program. The billeting rate is \$30 per day (add \$10 for each additional adult and youth, and \$5 for each child 12 years and under). A billeting form "Billeting Invoice for Host Family" must be completed by the host and affixed to the referral form in order to receive reimbursement from the Province. Instructions on how to submit for reimbursement can be found on the back of the Billeting Invoice for Host Family form.

Families staying in private homes may also choose to eat in restaurants or receive a referral for groceries. At the request of the evacuee, the billeting host may be named as the "person purchasing goods".

Group Lodging (GL): Referral forms are given to evacuees attending a GL facility. The payment process for GL facilities is the same as is used for commercial lodging with the exception that the billeting rate is to be used in calculating cost estimates. Invoices are sent directly to EMBC Regional Office on a Response Claim Submission form. When possible, ESS must negotiate a rate for use of the building (provided it is not a community owned facility) ahead of time.

Categories of Support

Detailed breakdowns of each of the support categories are included in the Registration and Referrals course. Maximum expenditures for each category are located on the **ESS Rate Sheet**. ESS responders need to ensure evacuees understand what is not included in eligible expenses and the obligation for the evacuee to pay for anything in excess of these limits. ESS responders are not required to give out the maximum eligible amounts of each category and must use the MEMPS principle to assess need.

CLOTHING

The clothing allowance is provided to protect the health and modesty of evacuees to ensure they have adequate clothing while evacuated. It is expected that if an Evacuation Alert has been in place, evacuees will have packed their essential clothing needs. The established maximum is \$150 per adult or child, which may include footwear or items such as baby or adult diapers. An additional \$50 supplement may be added during periods of extreme winter weather with Regional Manager approval.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation costs are provided to enable evacuees to travel to receive ESS supports only if they cannot do so on their own. ESS responders may provide Referrals for taxis or bus passes. Routine transportation costs (i.e. to and from work or personal appointments) are not provided by ESS.

Gas cards may also be authorized for extraordinary events that require evacuees to travel over 100km to the nearest Reception Centre. As this support is event specific, speak with your Regional Manager or PREOC to confirm availability, approval and process for distribution.

INCIDENTALS

An incidentals rate of up to \$50 maximum per person may be used to cover miscellaneous items such as personal hygiene products, laundry supplies, pet food, over the counter medications and other immediate needs as required.

Additional Incidentals may be authorized for extraordinary events that have exhausted support provided by nongovernment organizations. These must be pre-authorized by EMBC, speak with your Regional Manager or PREOC to confirm if this is available.

EXCEPTIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Occasionally it is necessary to request additional supports to meet evacuee needs. This may be in the form of exceptions to maximum allowable amounts or an extension of the time period ESS may be offered in. Exceptions and extensions represent an additional financial commitment from the Province and require authorization from EMBC before being approved. Supports offered beyond the prescribed maximums and the approved time period without approval will result in significant delays or denial of supplier payments.

Depending upon the situation, approval may be granted from:

- Regional Manager (RM) or Senior Regional Manager (SRM)
- Regional Duty Manager (RDM)
- Provincial Duty Manager (PDM)
- PREOC Director
- PECC Director
- ESS Specialist

Requests for extensions must be approved by EMBC

Procedure

1. EPC or delegate contacts the ECC at 1-800-663-3456
2. ECC obtains details and contacts appropriate EMBC Representative;
3. EMBC Representative then either:
 - a. Contacts the EPC directly to discuss; or
 - b. Asks the ECC to communicate decision to EPC.
4. EMBC Representative will advise the ECC of any extraordinary expenditure approvals to be noted in the Operations Log.
5. EPC ensures the ESS team is made aware of approvals/denials of requests.

DIRECT PURCHASE

Standard ESS procedures should be adhered to whenever possible. Depending upon the situation and nature of the need, First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may also consider supporting evacuee need through:

- o Community organizations
- o Expenditure Authorization Form (EAF)
- o Resource Request (RR)

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may directly purchase supports by following these guidelines:

- The registration and referral process, including needs assessment, should be carried out with all evacuees.
 - o Suppliers which are still operational should be used as normal
- Purchases must be made by the First Nation Government or Local Authority directly.
 - o The First Nation Government or Local Authority is listed as the supplier on the referral form.
 - o The actual service provider is listed in the comments box.
 - o EMBC cannot reimburse individual ESS responders and/or individual staff for purchases

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- Purchases must adhere to the principles in the ESS Program Guide and maximum rates prescribed on the Rate Sheet. The First Nation Government or Local Authority will be responsible for expenses which do not adhere to these guidelines or exceed the rates, unless approved by EMBC.
 - Purchases should be made in accordance with the MEMPS principle.
 - Extraordinary expenditures beyond the regular rates and extensions to supports must be approved by EMBC.

Reimbursements

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities will receive reimbursements by following these guidelines:

- First Nations Governments and Local Authorities must maintain records on evacuees and supports provided through paper registration/referral forms or the ERA Tool.
- First Nations Governments and Local Authorities must track expenditures for Referrals.
 - EMBC recommends using the standard [Response Claim Submission Form](#), and entering the referral number into column C.
 - EMBC may ask for these records for audit purposes. EMBC may withhold reimbursement if they are unable to verify that supports were received by the evacuee.
- First Nations Governments and Local Authorities submit a reimbursement package to ESSFinanceInquiries@gov.bc.ca, including:
 - The referral tracker, including all referral numbers and expenditures.
 - PDFs of all supporting documentation, including the Referrals and all invoices/receipts.
- For protracted events, First Nations Governments and Local Authorities may submit reimbursement packages by date period rather than for the entire event
- Inquiries on the status of payments should be directed to ESSFinanceInquiries@gov.bc.ca

Email subject lines should adhere to the following format:

FN/L Government Name – Task # - \$ Amount
(example: City of Kamloops – Task # 22-1234 - \$10,000)

SUPPLIER INVOICING PROCESS

Once a supplier receives an authorized Referral Form they may provide the specified support in accordance with the Supplier Consent Form and the supplied ESS Rates Sheet. Charges for goods and services must not exceed the attached ESS rates. If utilizing ERA, the ESS rates are printed on the referral form. Services must be provided only to those individuals listed on the Referral Form and within the specified 'Valid Only' dates.

Expenditures for evacuees are provided under [Policy \(5.03\)](#). Suppliers are reimbursed by the Province and may submit for payment using one of four methods.

Preferred option: Submit invoices, receipts, and Referrals online through the Evacuee Registration Assistance (ERA) tool by using the ESS supplier portal. EMBC Finance will be able to reimburse ESS suppliers faster by reviewing these submissions online, processing claims and issuing payments with fewer steps.

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If ESS suppliers need assistance regarding the navigation and submission via the ERA tool, they can contact the ERA Tool Support team using the contact information provided on the landing page. Following successful ERA submission additional questions regarding their submission, can be directed to EMBC Finance at ESSFinanceInquiries@gov.bc.ca.

Option Two: Mail original invoices, receipts and original referral forms along with appropriate supporting documentation to EMBC Headquarters. EMBC's mailing address is included on ESS referral forms.

Option Three: ESS forms and Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) documents cannot be sent through personal email. Protecting responder and evacuee personal information remains a priority while delivering ESS remotely. First Nations Governments and Local Authorities email accounts can be used in all correspondence with evacuees and EMBC. First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are responsible to provide access to appropriate email accounts, including when responders use personal computers.

Suppliers can email Referrals and copies of purchase receipts or invoices to ESSFinanceInquiries@gov.bc.ca. Photos of documents will not be accepted - the documents must be scanned into a PDF format. It is a wise practice for suppliers to keep original copies of referral forms and receipts as these may be requested later. Email subject lines should adhere to the following format:

Supplier's legal name – Referral # - \$ Amount
(example: ABC Corporation – Referral # 123456 - \$100).

Option Four, Secure File Transfer: Supporting evacuees may generate many digital documents. Some email accounts may have trouble with attachment file sizes. Secure file transfers offer an alternative option for submission to EMBC. First Nations Governments and Local Authorities who wish to use the Provincial Government's secure file transfer service should notify their PREOC or Regional Manager. Following a First Nation Government or Local Authority's request the Provincial ESS program will provide an invitation to send files and the required system access information. Files sent from other file transfer service providers will not be accepted.

HOTEL DAMAGES

Accommodation suppliers can be reimbursed for damages relating to evacuee damage using the following steps.

- a) Supplier reports damages that they have been unable to recuperate costs from the evacuee or their insurance provider
- b) The supplier documents steps taken to recuperate costs and conversations with both the evacuee and their insurance provider
- c) EMBC confirms the damage with the supplier and would reimburse the supplier after the evidence of damages and repair cost documentation has been reviewed and approved.

This process would only be available to temporary lodging facilities and not private residences providing billeting. Reimbursement would only be provided for damages assessed as being over 1,000 dollars and be up to a maximum of 10,000 dollars.

Suppliers must first seek to reimburse costs from the evacuee and their insurance provider prior to requesting reimbursement from EMBC.

PAYMENT PROCESS

Once EMBC Finance receives an invoice package from a supplier they may begin the payment process. This involves the following steps:

- Matching invoices and submitted receipts to Referrals (clear organization of these documents by the supplier reduces time to payment)
- Assess invoices, Referrals and receipts to ensure a match between the invoiced services and those approved on the referral, as well as ensuring services adhere to EMBC regulations
- EMBC Finance may work with the supplier, EMBC Regional Offices, ESS Headquarters Division and local ESS teams to solve issues
- Solutions involving payment in excess of the amounts noted on the referral require documented rationale and approval from the Director of Emergency Support Services
- Once all requirements have been satisfied EMBC Finance may authorize payment

Errors made on referral forms, missing or incomplete information or the provision of ineligible items, or services in excess of the specified ESS Rates can cause **delays or reduction to payment.**

FORM RETENTION

Once completed ESS Evacuee case files have been collected by the Documentation Unit and separated accordingly, their retention is determined in accordance with the Operational Records Classification System. Information gathered on ESS Evacuee case files contains private and confidential information that is collected under the authority of the **EPA** and is subject to the requirements of the **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**.

Evacuee case files include:

- ESS File – Registration and Services Record
- Referral Forms
- Change of Information Forms

RESPONSIBILITIES

First Nations Governments and Local Authorities are responsible to retain ESS Evacuee case files in an easily accessible secure location (office) for the period of six months upon completion of the event. The event is considered complete when both ESS and Recovery support has been concluded and the information contained is no longer required by the First Nation Government or Local Authority for operational purposes.

After this period the First Nation Government or Local Authority must transfer ESS Evacuee case files to their Regional EMBC office. Evacuee case files are to be arranged by EMBC Task/incident number and accompanied with list detailing all Task/incident numbers included. The transfer of the Evacuee case files must allow the item to be tracked through a courier service or Canada Post (registered, priority, express, expedited).

First Nation Government and Local Authorities should not be encumbered by the delivery costs of these procedures, which are eligible through the submission of a Response Claim Submission form.

The Evacuee case files will be sent to a secure off-site government storage for a period of three years, after which they are destroyed.

APPENDIX A - RESPONSE TO APARTMENT FIRES

Apartment fires may occur at any time without warning and often affect populations experiencing vulnerabilities with additional needs for assistance. These circumstances can present a challenge for any ESS Team.

Important factors in achieving a successful response include:

- Pre-planning for response and recovery
- Inter-agency coordination
- Developing a pro-active public information plan
- Making time for the practice of cultural safety and humility

PREPAREDNESS

Planning for apartment fires needs to be included in a First Nation Government or Local Authority's ESS Plan. As governments prepare this plan, they must consider the additional pressures an apartment fire might place on their ESS team. Preparation for these larger and more complex events must consider the following:

- Number of ESS responders that may be required.
- Callout procedures for larger events
- Preparing potential RCs and GL Facilities for use
- Supporting ESS with an EOC
- Development and maintenance of relationships with support organizations, including suppliers, NGOs and community organizations.
- Preparing adequately for supports to populations experiencing vulnerabilities.

ESS teams need to identify key community partners and resource providers including:

- EMBC Regional Managers
- First Nation Health Authority
- Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR) staff
- BC Housing
- Mutual Aid partner communities
- Local support organizations such as Aboriginal Friendship Centers, the **Canadian Red Cross**, **The Salvation Army**, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).

Apartment fire planning must include a public information plan to include media contacts and designate a community spokesperson. A wise practice for this plan is to have it reviewed with a cultural safety and humility lens to prevent unintended harms. A plan which takes a pro-active approach by reaching out to media can avoid inaccuracies and confusion. It is important that all team members follow the public information plan to ensure consistent messaging in support of response and recovery efforts.

RESPONSE

At the direction of the EPC, open an RC and keep it open until all evacuees have been supported. After the initial rush of registrations and Referrals there will still be a requirement for ESS assistance for late registrations, people experiencing vulnerabilities, and requests for information. Some ESS responses to apartment fires may benefit from the support of an EOC. An EOC can assist with access to resources and improve inter-agency coordination.

Planning for the transition to recovery needs to begin as soon as possible. This may require collaboration with longer term support organizations in order to assist evacuees throughout the transition and address unmet needs in support. Plans need to aim for the end of ESS assistance and supports within 72 hours and be aware of the process for extension. Ensure evacuees understand the expectation to have a personal plan in place before ESS support ends and ask if they need support in this development.

TRANSITION TO RECOVERY

The public information plan can also support the transition to recovery. It is wise practice for the EPC to convene a public meeting (preferably within 24 hours of the emergency) in order to share information and identify unmet needs. This meeting can help create a shared understanding of the situation and improve the coordination of agencies with evacuees and each other. Request media assistance with publicizing the meeting. Encourage all evacuees to attend, as well as ESS Responders, representatives from the Fire Department, the landlord, community service agencies, MSDPR and EMBC. Consider the accessibility needs including mobile, visual and language, of evacuees and other people experiencing vulnerabilities in the public information plan.

DEMOBILIZATION

Approval to demobilize a Reception Centre or Group Lodging facility should be obtained from the EOC ESS Branch Coordinator if activated. Instructions on demobilization are found in the Reception Centre Operational Guidelines.

Debrief both ESS responders and community partners. Host an After-Action Review to identify lessons learned and update the community ESS plan accordingly.

After Action Reviews can include culturally sensitive methods such as the examples below.

- [The Circle Way](#)
- [Appreciative Inquiry](#)
- [The Virtues Project](#) student cards
- Share these lessons with other ESS Teams, community partners and EMBC.

APPENDIX B - RESOURCES TOOLKIT

The below table contains hyperlinks to **information highlighted in this colour** throughout the Program Guide. The full URLs are included to benefit the print editions of this guide. Note that these links may be updated so it is best to check the online version of the guide for the latest information.

Resource Name	Location
BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres	https://bcaafc.com/
British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS)	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/bcems/bcems_guide.pdf
Canadian Red Cross	https://www.redcross.ca/
Child Family Community Services Act	http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96_046_01
Bill C-92 (new federal leg)	https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-92/first-reading
Bill 41 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act	https://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/41st-parliament/4th-session/bills/first-reading/gov41-1
Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility in Emergency Management Services for First Nations People in B.C.	https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-EMBC-Cultural-Safety-and-Humility-Declaration-of-Commitment.pdf
EMBC Policy 5.03/5.06	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/emergency-management-bc/policies
EMBC Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers registration forms	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/policies/105_pslv_registration_form.pdf
EMBC Regional Office	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=602AB81297A741928FA51D82CFA64CA8
EMBC Website	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=C0AA22EC22424D7080F1CAEE7E951DA6
Emergency Info BC	https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/
Emergency Program Act	http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_9611_1_01
Emergency Support Services Responder Resources page	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=BBDFB635C75240B08679D532F7444277
ESS Rate Sheet	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=BBDFB635C75240B08679D532F7444277
Evacuation Operational Guidelines	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=9F2AD295318E4F0386B12DBB292EBDBF
Financial Assistance for Emergency Response and Recovery Costs: A Guide for	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/dfa/financial_assistance_guide.pdf

Local Authorities and First Nations	
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act	https://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96165_00
Group Lodging Operational Guidelines	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=BBDFB635C75240B08679D532F7444277
HealthLink BC	https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/
Indigenous Services Canada	https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada.html
Insurance Bureau of Canada	http://www.ibc.ca/bc/
Justice Institute of British Columbia	https://www.jibc.ca/programs-courses/schools-departments/school-public-safety/emergency-management-division/government-and-corporate/emergency-support-services
Ministry of Children and Family Development	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=72456B2580484EF58351DCDBA81B9903
Prepared BC	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=0C01537370884EA886AA49A117651C94
Provincial Government Rates for Hotels/Motels	http://csa.pss.gov.bc.ca/businesstravel/
Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=0FBA8ED8117C4BD3B3C2A8D56A60A9A5
Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer Rates	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=C0657A196AFD4879813FDACA34B0FE4D#5.06
Reception Centre Operational Guidelines	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=BBDFB635C75240B08679D532F7444277
Reporting Child Abuse in BC	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=A9E711005942446B9BA511694A2A1FEF
The Salvation Army	https://salvationarmy.ca/
Victim Link BC	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=18AD0E75BD1C4B0AB99F9C806C734190

APPENDIX C - ACRONYMS

BCEMS - BC Emergency Management System

CRC - Canadian Red Cross

EAF- Expenditure Authorization Form

ECC - Emergency Coordination Centre

EMBC - Emergency Management BC

EOC - Emergency Operations Centre

EPA – Emergency Program Act

EPC - Emergency Program Coordinator

ESS - Emergency Support Services

ESSD - Emergency Support Services Director

GL - Group Lodging

ICS - Incident Command System

IDCBC - Integrated Disaster Council of BC

ISC - Indigenous Services Canada

JIBC - Justice Institute of British Columbia

MCFD - Ministry of Children and Family Development

MEMPS Principle - Most Efficient, Most Economical, Most Effective and Safe

MSDPR - Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

NGO - Non-Government Organization

NESS - National Emergency Strategic Supplies

PECC - Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre

PREOC - Provincial Regional Emergency Operation Centre

PSLV – Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer

RC – Reception Centre

RR – Resource Request

TSA - The Salvation Army

APPENDIX D - GLOSSARY

Action Plan: Contains objectives and specific tasks for the operational period. The Action Plan may be oral or written. When written, the Action Plan may have several forms as attachments (e.g., traffic plan, safety plan, communications plan, map, etc.)

Activation: When a natural disaster, emergency or an event forces a community to evacuate and the First Nation Government or local authority initiates their ESS plan.

Allocated Resources: Resources dispatched to an incident.

Auditing: The examination of records to determine if those records are accurate and in accordance with the program's processes and regulations.

Available Resources: Incident-based resources that are ready for deployment.

Branch: The organizational level having functional or geographic responsibility for major parts of incident operations.

The British Columbia Emergency Management System (BCEMS): The British Columbia Emergency Management System is a comprehensive management scheme that ensures a coordinated and organized Provincial response and recovery to any and all emergency incidents. The broad spectrum of components of the BCEMS includes: operations and control management, qualifications, technology, training and publications.

Chain of Command: A series of management positions in order of authority.

Child Care Unit: Unit within the Operations Section responsible for providing a safe environment for child care at an RC.

Command: The act of directing and/or controlling resources by virtue of explicit legal, organizational, or delegated authority.

Community Navigator: Is an individual identified by the community to act as a liaison between the Emergency Operations Centre, Emergency Support Services, support agencies, and evacuees. Advocates for evacuees and facilitates solutions to complex and/or unique evacuee needs.

Coordination: The process of systematically analyzing a situation, developing relevant information, and informing appropriate command/management authority of viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to meet specific objectives. The coordination process (which can be either intra- or inter-organization) does not involve dispatch actions. However, personnel responsible for coordination may perform command or dispatch functions within the limits established by specific organization delegations, procedures, legal authority, etc.

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Compassionate communication: a method that creates relationships based on empathy, compassion, cooperation and harmonious respect for self and others. Compassionate communication is also known as non-violent communication.

Critical Resource: Material, personnel and finances that are in short supply and are needed by more than one incident management team or are needed for high priority assignments.

Cultural Safety and Humility: An outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in EM. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving ESS. Cultural safety includes and goes beyond cultural awareness, which refers to awareness of differences between cultures. It also goes beyond cultural sensitivity, which is about realizing the legitimacy of difference and the power of one's own life experience can have on others (Koptie, 2009).

Delegation of Authority: A statement provided to the Incident Commander by the Organization Executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints, and other considerations or guidelines as needed. Organizations may require written Delegation of Authority to be given to Incident Commanders prior to their assuming command on larger incidents.

Deputy: A qualified individual who, could be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases, a Deputy could act as relief for a superior and therefore must be fully qualified in the position. Deputies can be assigned to the Manager, General Staff, and Branch Coordinators. Deputies can be utilized at the site and site support level e.g.: RC, GL, EOC, PREOC, and PECC.

Disaster: A calamity caused by accident, fire, explosion, or technical failure, or by the forces of nature that has resulted in serious harm to the health, safety or welfare of people, or in widespread damage to property (as defined in the Emergency Program Act).

Dispatch: The implementation of a command decision to move a resource or resources from one place to another.

Documentation Unit: Unit within the Planning Section responsible for collecting, recording, and safeguarding all documents relevant to the response.

Emergency: A present or imminent event that is caused by accident, fire, explosion, or technical failure, or by the forces of nature and requires prompt coordination of action or special regulation of persons or property to protect the health, safety and welfare of people, or to limit damage to property (as defined in the Emergency Program Act).

Emergency Management: An organized effort to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency.

Emergency Management BC: EMBC is the Province's lead coordinating agency for all emergency management activities, including planning, training, testing and exercising, to help strengthen provincial preparedness.

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Emergency Operations Centre (EOC): A designated facility established by an organization or jurisdiction to coordinate the overall organization or jurisdictional response and support to an emergency response.

Emergency Program Coordinator (EPC): The individual within a community who has coordination responsibility for jurisdictional emergency management.

Emergency Response Plan: The plan that each jurisdiction has and maintains for responding to incidents based on a hazard and risk analysis.

Emergency Support Services (ESS): Those services provided on a short-term basis to evacuees in emergency situations.

Emotional Support Unit: Unit within the Operations Section responsible for counselling services to evacuees and ESS personnel.

ESS Branch Coordinator: Within all levels of the BCEMS organizational structure (EOC, PREOC and PECC) there is an ESS Branch in the Operations Section. The coordinator is focussed on the support and requirements of the ESS Program at each respective level of operations.

ESS Director (ESSD): The individual responsible for the management and coordination of a local ESS program/team. They are also responsible for ESS planning and response activities.

ESS Support Organization: The term used to designate assisting and cooperating organizations.

Evacuation Alert: Advises the affected population of a potential or current threat which may lead to an Evacuation Order.

Evacuation Order: Means that the local community elected leaders have determined that to best ensure the safety of the impacted population has issued an order to leave the specified area immediately.

Evacuee Registration Assistance (ERA) Tool: A digital tool that supports the delivery of the ESS program.

Finance Section: The Section responsible for all incident costs and financial considerations including the Time Unit, Procurement Unit, Compensation/Claims Unit, and Cost Unit.

First Aid Unit: Unit within the Operations Section responsible for providing emergency First Aid.

First Nations Community Navigator: Is an individual identified by the community to act as a liaison between the Emergency Operations Centre, Emergency Support Services, support agencies, and evacuees. Advocates for evacuees and facilitates solutions to complex and/or unique evacuee needs. A First Nations Community Navigator also has in depth knowledge of the affected First Nations peoples' culture, practices, and protocols. Supports, demonstrates, promotes, and facilitates the implementation of culturally safe practices within Emergency Support Services program delivery.

Function: In BCEMS, function generally refers to the five major activities e.g., Command/Management, Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance (In some instances, Sections, Branches and Units are loosely referred to as functions as well). The term function is also used when describing the activity involved, e.g., the planning function.

General Staff: A group of management personnel reporting to the Manager. The General Staff consist of:

- Operations Section Chief
- Planning Section Chief
- Logistics Section Chief
- Finance Section Chief

Group Lodging (GL): Congregate care facility for the lodging and feeding of evacuees.

Group Lodging Manager: The individual responsible for the overall management at the GL.

Incident(s): An occurrence either human caused or by natural phenomena, that requires action by response personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property, environment and reduce economic and social losses.

Incident Commander/Manager: The individual responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site. The term 'Incident Commander,' shall be deemed to include Unified Command.

Incident Command Post (ICP): The location at which the primary command functions are executed. The ICP may be co-located or shared with the incident base or other incident facilities.

Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.

Information Officer: A member of the Command/Management Staff responsible for interfacing with the public and media or with other organizations requiring information directly from the

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incident. There is only one Information Officer per incident. The Information Officer may have assistants.

Jurisdiction (Jurisdictional): The range or sphere of authority. Organizations have jurisdiction at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority for incident mitigation.

Jurisdictional Organization: The organization having jurisdiction and responsibility for a specific geographical area, or a mandated function and includes key ministries as defined in the Emergency Program Act.

Level One ESS: A localized event that can be managed using a minimal number of ESS resources. (Example – single house fire).

Level Two ESS: A significant event that requires the full use of a First Nation or Local Government's ESS resources. Possibly includes the activation of an RC and an EOC. (Example – fire in an urban apartment complex effecting hundreds of units).

Level Three ESS: A major emergency that exceeds a First Nation or Local Government's capacity to respond and requires assistance from neighboring jurisdictions or the Province. (Example – interface wildfire that causes an entire city to evacuate).

Liaison Officer: A member of the Command/Management Staff responsible for coordinating with representatives from external cooperating and assisting organizations.

Logistics Section: The Section responsible for providing resources (material and human) and support to the response.

Management Staff: The ESS management staff consists of the Manager, Information Officer, Safety Officer, and Liaison Officer. They may have an assistant or assistants as needed.

Management Team: The management team consists of the Manager, Officers (Information, Safety, Liaison) and General Staff (Section Chiefs).

Meet & Greet Unit: Unit within the Operation Section of an RC responsible for initial triage and welcoming of evacuees to the centre.

Modernization: The process of improving the Provincial ESS program through updating and transforming the program to increase efficiencies.

Mutual Aid Agreement: Written agreement between organizations and/or jurisdictions in which they agree to assist one another upon request by furnishing resources.

Officer: The title for the personnel responsible for the Command/Management Staff positions of Safety, Liaison, and Information.

Operational Guidelines: An organizations' written procedure(s) that establishes a commonly accepted course of action and specifies the functional limitations of personnel in performing emergency operations.

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Operational Period: The period scheduled for execution of a given set of operational actions as specified in the action plan. Operational Periods can be of various lengths, although usually not over 24 hrs.

Operations Section: The Section responsible for all tactical operations (services direct to evacuees) at the RC or GL facility.

Organization Representative(s): An individual assigned to an incident from an assisting or cooperating organization who has been delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting that organization's participation at the incident. Organization Representatives report to the Liaison Officer.

Pet Care Unit: Unit within the Operations Section of an RC, responsible for a safe and secure location to temporarily house domestic pets while evacuees are at the RC.

Planning Section: The Section responsible for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of information related to the incident, and for the preparation and documentation of Action Plans.

Primary Services Branch: Branch within the Operations Section responsible for Meet & Greet, Registration, Referrals for Food, Clothing Lodging, Inquiry and On-Site Goods Distribution in an RC. Also Check In/Check Out, Sleeping Area and Meals Distribution Units in a GL Facility.

Provincial Central Coordination Level: A coordination level within the BC Emergency Management System, which is activated to coordinate all provincial resources. This level interacts with the Provincial Regional Coordination Level.

Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC): Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre will be established to manage activities at the Provincial Central Coordination Level. The five functions provided by PECC are Management, Operations Coordination, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. The PECC level follows the same basic organizational support levels in BCEMS.

Provincial Regional Coordination Level: A coordination level within the BC Emergency Management System which is activated to coordinate provincial resources on a regional basis. This level interacts with local authorities and Ministry EOCs.

Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre (PREOC): A Provincial Regional Operations Centre manages activities at the Provincial Regional Coordination Level and coordinates the joint efforts of government and non-government organizations.

Reception Centres (RC): A safe gathering place where evacuees can register, are interviewed to determine their immediate emergency needs, and are referred to suppliers for assistance.

Reception Centre Manager: The individual responsible for the overall management at the RC.

Referral: The second step in the registration and referral process. The providing of services to evacuees. A form that provides ESS from a specific supplier.

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Referrals (for Food, Clothing and Lodging) Unit: Unit in Operations Section of an RC that refers evacuees to community suppliers to meet their immediate needs.

Referrals Unit Supervisor (RUS): The RUS assists and supports Referral responders in completing ESS Referral forms for evacuees and seeks approval for expenditures beyond ESS rates.

Registration: The first step of the registration and referral process. Process through which the details of an evacuee and their family are collected.

Registration Unit: Unit within the Operations Section of an RC that records the whereabouts of evacuees for the purpose of Family Reunification.

Resources: Personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incident(s).

Section: That organization level with responsibility for a major functional area of the RC or GL facility, e.g., Operations, Planning, Logistics, Finance.

Site Support Level: A coordination level within the BC Emergency Management System that is activated to provide policy direction and resources support to an Incident Commander.

Supervisor: Individuals within organizational units that are assigned specific managerial responsibilities, e.g., Check In/Check Out Unit or Meals Distribution Unit.

Supplier: An entity that provides ESS to an evacuee through a referral.

Task(s): Specific actions taken to achieve operational objectives for an operational period.

Task/incident Number: A control number assigned by EMBC to each response or training event for the purpose of tracking an approved response and providing support for ESS responders with WorkSafe BC and personal liability coverage.

Unit(s): The organizational element having functional responsibility for a specific function within the sections of Operations, Planning, Logistics, or Finance.

Volunteer/Staff Management Branch: Branch within Logistics Section that is responsible for the management of personnel at the RC or GL facility. This includes the recruitment, screening, orientation, assignment, training, evaluation and recognition of personnel.

APPENDIX E – FORMS

ESS Level One Response Action Checklist

ESS LEVEL ONE RESPONSE ACTION CHECKLIST

The most common ESS activations are Level 1 events affecting a single family or a small number of individuals at one location. The checklist below is included in the Level 1 ESS Training Package and should be used by ESS responding to a Level 1 event.

ESS TEAM MEMBER:

Name of Responder: _____

Community: _____

CALL-OUT INFO:

☐ Date & Time: _____ ☐ Called out by: _____

☐ EMBC Task Number: _____ ☐ Number of affected homes: _____

EMBC Emergency Coordination Centre Ph. 1-800-663-3456.

☐ Name of evacuee/ family representative: _____

☐ Evacuee's current location (i.e. address of incident or alternate location): _____

☐ Cause of evacuation (i.e. fire, flood, etc.): _____

☐ Other Level One ESS Response volunteer(s) attending the incident: _____

All volunteers participating in this response must sign in on an EMBC Task Registration Form.

☐ Response Kit, which includes the following:

Response Kit		
<input type="checkbox"/> Referral Forms	<input type="checkbox"/> ESS Rates Sheets	<input type="checkbox"/> Supplier Consent Forms
<input type="checkbox"/> EMBC or Agency ID	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Resource List	<input type="checkbox"/> ESS Fact Sheets

Suggested additional supplies, if available: blankets, comfort kits, teddy bears, socks, dog leashes, pet carriers, etc.

ON SITE OF INCIDENT:

☐ Check in with the Incident Commander (usually a firefighter or police officer) as soon as you arrive.

☐ Advise supervisor immediately if the incident involves a death or other traumatic event.

☐ Do ground yourself and establish a personal connection with evacuees before proceeding with delivery.

Determine Eligibility		
(1) Is the home uninhabitable because of an emergency (i.e. fire, flood, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
(2) Does the evacuee indicate they require assistance to meet their immediate short-term needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<i>If No to either (1) or (2), the evacuee is not eligible for an ESS Referral.</i>		
<i>If Yes to both (1) and (2), proceed with the following questions below.</i>		
(3) Does the evacuated person or family have insurance to cover their loss?		
<input type="checkbox"/> No – ESS assistance may be provided up to 72 hours.		

ESS LEVEL ONE RESPONSE ACTION CHECKLIST

☐ Yes, or Uncertain – Insurance coverage unknown or evacuee needs interim assistance until insurance coverage can be accessed. Take steps to assist evacuee in connecting with their insurance provider.

4. What are the services required?

☐ Food ☐ Lodging ☐ Transport *If unavailable to pack before evacuation:* ☐ Clothing ☐ Incidentals

PROVIDING EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES:

Referral Forms Issued for:

☐ Restaurant or ☐ Groceries

☐ Commercial Lodging or ☐ Billet

☐ Clothing

☐ Incidental

☐ Transportation

☐ Attach ESS Rates sheet to white (supplier) copy of each Referral form and issue to evacuee to deliver to the suppliers.

Remind suppliers and evacuees that the evacuee is responsible for any extra costs (i.e. tobacco, alcohol, movies, phone calls, etc.)

☐ Give yellow copies of Referral forms and a copy of the ESS Rates sheet to evacuee for their reference.

☐ Attach green copies of all Referrals issued to the Action Checklist.

☐ Confirm details of the response and the stand down of activation with EMBC Emergency

Coordination Centre: 1-800-663-3456

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED TO EVACUEE:

☐ Community Resources List

☐ Local ESS Contact Phone Number

☐ Other: _____

NEWS MEDIA:

If you are approached by the media, follow the protocol provided by your team's Local or First Nation Government. For event-specific information, they should be referred to the Incident Commander.

DO NOT:

- Give out the family's name or location – you must always protect their privacy.
- Give details on the assistance you have provided to the family.
- Speculate on the incident – such as causes, damage, future development, etc.
- Comment on questions of controversial nature.

FOLLOW UP – WITHIN 3 DAYS OF EVACUATION

Date & Time: _____

☐ Contact the evacuee to see if they need referral to other community resources for support or material assistance. List Referrals, if any: _____

☐ Submit a completed EMBC Task Report to the local Emergency Program Coordinator (EPC), highlighting any unusual aspects or challenges. The EPC will then submit to the EMBC Regional Office.

☐ Send pink copies of all ESS Referral forms to EMBC HQ.

APPENDIX F – VIRTUAL WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Many ESS functions can be performed remotely by utilizing telephones and/or the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) tool. Responders can contribute to remote operations over the phone or via email using Local or First Nations' Government email accounts.

EMBC supports the delivery of ESS forms to suppliers and evacuees by digital methods in support of virtual work environments. This includes emailing Evacuee Registration Assistance (ERA) generated PDFs or scans of paper forms to evacuees and EMBC Finance as required. Files which are too large to email can be sent to EMBC using the Provincial Government's secure file transfer service. All electronic files must be sent in PDF format (see the ESS EXPENDITURE AND PAYMENT PROCESS section for details).

ESS functions which may be performed virtually include:

- Conducting evacuee registration
- Providing Referrals and e-Transfers to evacuees (through the use of ERA)
- Performing Needs Assessments
- Coordinating supplier supports
- Providing information
- Facilitating access to partner agencies for provision of emotional support

The following suggestions may help facilitate the use of virtual work environments:

- Ensure responders are aware of the team's policy or direction on supporting virtual work environments (including use of personal phones)
- Maintain regular communication to keep members engaged, provide supports and develop awareness of the current situation
- Assess whether your team has enough dedicated phone lines
- Ensure internet access is available from remote work locations
- Ensure responders have access to ESS forms
- Develop documentation methods to support responders
- Ensure responders have the tools and knowledge to send PDF referral forms electronically
- Assess what other tools might be required to offer virtual service
- Ensure responders have access to First Nation Government or Local Authority email accounts for correspondence with suppliers and evacuees. Responders may use their personal computers if they have access to these email accounts.
- Consider initiating a call centre model during larger responses
- As virtual environments present a communication barrier to many, ESS Responders should ensure they are mindful of Cultural safety and humility practices.

ESS forms and Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) documents cannot be sent through personal email. Protecting responder and evacuee personal information remains a priority while delivering ESS remotely. First Nation Government or Local Authority email accounts should be used in all correspondence with evacuees and EMBC. First Nation Government and Local Authorities are responsible to provide access to appropriate email accounts, including the use of personal computers.

APPENDIX G – EVACUEE MEDICATION

During an evacuation an evacuee may lose access to important prescribed medication. If individuals have health concerns, they must contact their health care provider or emergency medical services.

In consultation with Health Emergency Management BC (HEMBC) the ESS program can provide the following guidance to responders assisting evacuees who have not retrieved their medications. ESS responders must not ask about or record medical details (such as medical condition or medication type) in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act and to avoid any consequences resulting from this information being shared within the ESS system. **ESS Referrals cannot be approved for prescription medication.**

To support medication needs the ESS responder on site or at an RC in the function of Registration may follow the steps below.

Ask the following questions:

- “Do you or any others registering with you take medications?”
- If “yes” then,
- “Do you have sufficient supply for the next 72 hours?”
- If “no” refer the evacuee to the RC Health Services Branch for assistance (if activated).
- No notation is printed on their ESS File regarding their medical condition.
- ESS responders do not ask any further questions regarding the household’s medical situation which is private and personal information.
- If a member of the household has forgotten to retrieve their medication; the Health Services Branch or ESS responder advises the evacuee to present themselves at a pharmacy and ask for an “Emergency Prescription Refill”.

The College of Pharmacists of B.C. Professional Practice Policy 31 provides guidance to pharmacists when providing patients with an emergency supply of prescription drugs for continuity of care in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the Pharmacy Operations and Drug Scheduling Act (“PODSA”) Bylaws section 19(7)(d).

A pharmacist may exercise professional judgment to provide a patient with an emergency supply of prescription drugs for continuity of care following guidance principles. If financially difficult and a PharmaCare beneficiary who has met their deductible, PharmaCare coverage will function as normal and reasonable supplies under the circumstance may be dispensed, subject to deductibles or co-pays as usual. Additional information can be obtained from HealthLinkBC at <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/pharmacist-services>.