



May 7, 2021

## **Travel for Medical Appointments is Essential Travel – First Nations Health Benefits**

On April 23, the Province of British Columbia issued an order to allow only essential travel between three regional zones in BC. The order is intended to stop the spread of COVID-19. At this time, the order remains in place until May 25.

It is important to take care of your physical and mental health. Medical transportation (MT) is considered essential, and clients and their escorts on MT trips may still travel between zones for medical appointments.

### **Tips for essential medical travel during current travel restrictions:**

#### **Community Patient Travel Clerks**

- Confirm with health providers that appointments have not been cancelled or changed due to travel restrictions.
- For out-of-area trips already booked, confirm with hotels/facilities that bookings have not been affected or cancelled.
- When booking a trip, explain that the travel is for medical purposes and considered essential. Request medical rates where possible.
- Plan ahead for reduced schedules on BC Ferries and other transportation services.
- Remind clients to arrive early for their trips, as there may be additional processes before departure.

#### **MT clients**

- Arrive well ahead of your scheduled departure time, as there may be some additional screening.
- If you are asked the reason for your trip, explain that you are travelling for essential purposes.
- Wear a face mask. Masks are mandatory in ferry terminals and onboard BC Ferries. Unless exempt, people not wearing masks in indoor public settings may be subject to a \$230 fine.
- Purchase meals from restaurants, bars or pubs that offer takeout or outdoor patio service and follow distancing guidelines. Current provincial health orders include a ban on indoor dining.

The First Nations Health Authority provides updates on COVID-19, vaccinations and provincial health orders at [www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca).

**For more information** on Medical Transportation coverage through First Nations Health Benefits, visit [www.fnha.ca/benefits/medical-transportation](http://www.fnha.ca/benefits/medical-transportation) or call toll-free 1-855-550-5454.