

FAQs to support the Public Health Protection Act Order

Childcare:

Can unregulated settings stay open?

Unlicensed childcare providers can continue to operate as long as they meet the requirements under the Day Care Act. Unlicensed providers are permitted to provide care for up to 6 children of any age (including their own), or up to 8 school-aged children (including their own).

What about access to childcare for essential workers?

There is no change in childcare closures at this time. Licensed providers are required to remain closed. Unlicensed providers are permitted to operate as long as they comply with the Day Care Act.

Border:

What should people expect at checkpoints?

The goal at our borders is to ensure people entering Nova Scotia know there is a state of emergency and that they need to self isolate for 14 days. There are some exceptions. These include healthy individuals who cross the border on a regular, ongoing basis for work or to carry out legislated duties, including health care workers, child protection workers, critical infrastructure workers, law enforcement and corrections workers.

Inspection staff are stationed at all border crossings – whether land, sea or air – and are stopping non-commercial traffic to inform and hand out information. They are not tracking individuals.

What about people who work and live near the border and come back and forth for work?

Healthy people who cross the border on a regular, ongoing basis for work or to carry out legislative duties are exempt from the self-isolation order. Other exemptions for cross-border travel into Nova Scotia include:

- healthy workers in trades and transportation sectors who move goods and people,
- people travelling into the province for essential health services and one support person
- healthy workers employed by medical supply businesses
- Canadian military personnel, coast guard and RCMP
- First responders including police, fire, paramedics

Those listed above must practice social distancing of two metres or six feet to the best of their ability, closely self-monitor, and self-isolate if they become unwell.

Where can I go to get exercise?

If you don't have symptoms and you haven't been told to self-isolate, you can go for walk in your neighborhood or use your yard if you have one. This should be for exercising, not to socialize with neighbors and friends.

While provincial and municipal beaches and parks are closed; some trails are still open. Use trails in your immediate area. Many trails are operated by municipalities and community groups so check before you go out to see what's open. Make sure you can maintain a social distance of 2 metres or 6 feet while on the trail.

Enforcement:**How should people report?**

Before calling police, we encourage people to have a conversation, if possible, to explain why self isolating and social distancing is necessary.

If a call to police is needed please call a non-emergency number for the police that serve your community. Do not call 911.

What are the fines?

Police are authorized to enforce orders under the Health Protection Act. If Nova Scotians and businesses do not practice social distancing and self-isolation, they will face fines of \$1,000 for individuals and \$7,500 for businesses. Multiple fines can be given for each day an individual or business fails to comply.

Police can also enforce offences under the Emergency Management Act. For example, fines for charging higher than fair market prices for goods and services or not adhering to assembly or travel directives.

Apartments:**I live in an apartment where there are common spaces like a gym, pool and recreation room – should they be closed?**

All fitness establishments, including those in workplaces or apartment buildings, must be closed by order of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Ideally, recreation and common areas in apartment buildings should be closed, but if they remain open, they cannot have more than 5 people in them at any one time and social distance of 2 metres or 6 feet should be maintained. They should also be regularly cleaned and disinfected, at least twice daily or as required.

Travel and self isolation

What if I'm traveling between provinces and just passing through Nova Scotia?

Everyone should limit non-essential travel. If you have to travel and need to cross through Nova Scotia, you are required to self-isolate while in the province, maintain social distance of 2 metres or 6 feet and limit contact with other people.

What if I'm picking up my child from university in another province or I'm moving to Nova Scotia?

Anyone entering Nova Scotia who is not considered an essential service is required to self-isolate for 14 days when they arrive.

When one person comes back from travel or is told to go into self-isolation, should the whole household be self-isolating for 14 days?

Anyone returning from travel needs to self-isolate and remain separate from family members as much as possible. The family should regularly clean and disinfect common areas, at least twice daily. They should self-monitor for any symptoms of illness. Others in the home do not have to self-isolate unless the person who travels becomes unwell.

What if I live with someone who has to travel across the border for work? Do I have to self-isolate?

If someone in your household has to travel across the border to work on a regular, ongoing basis, they do not have to self-isolate unless they become unwell. If they become unwell, the entire household will need to self-isolate.

Businesses:

What sectors are considered essential and do not have to follow the social distancing rules?

Essential-service sectors in Nova Scotia, which are exempt from the social gathering limit of no more than five people are:

- health
- food, agri-food and fisheries
- transportation
- construction and manufacturing
- IT, telecommunications and critical infrastructure
- public services, such as police, fire and ambulances

If I work in a non-essential business, like a call centre, do I go to work?

Any business that can maintain social distance of 2 metres or 6 feet between clients and customers can stay open. If social distance can't be maintained, the business must limit the number of customers or clients on its premises to no more than 5 people at a time.

Businesses should regularly clean and disinfect workspaces and high-touch areas at least twice a day or as required, and ensure employees are practicing good hygiene.

What if I can't always maintain social distance with customers?

If you cannot maintain social distances of 2 metres or 6 feet, you are required to limit the number of customers or clients on the premises to no more than five people at a time.

Businesses should regularly clean and disinfect workspaces and high-touch areas at least twice a day or as required, and ensure employees are practicing good hygiene.

What if I can maintain six feet of social distance in my workplace?

If you work in or run a business where social distancing guidelines of 2 metres or 6 feet can be maintained, there can be more than five people on the premises.

Businesses should regularly clean and disinfect workspaces and high-touch areas at least twice a day or as required, and ensure employees are practicing good hygiene.

What about malls?

Currently malls can remain open, provided social distance of 2 metres or 6 feet can be maintained between customers. In stores where this is not the case, no more than 5 customers or clients can be on the premises at any one time.

What if I provide health services and I own my own business (for example a physiotherapist)?

People who are self-regulated health professionals, like a physiotherapist, and operate their own business can only provide in-person emergency or urgent care services. They can also provide virtual care for non-emergency /elective care services if authorized to provide virtual care within their scope of practice.

Anyone in a non-regulated health profession, like a naturopath, must close. One exception is podiatrists who must follow the directive related to regulated health professions.

Should public transit continue running?

Public transit can continue to operate. Where possible, they should have passengers maintain social distance. High-touch surfaces should also be regularly cleaned and disinfected.

Should hotels stay open?

Businesses and organizations who can maintain social distancing requirements of 2 metres or 6 feet can stay open. Like all businesses and organizations, hotels should regularly clean and disinfect high-touch areas at least twice a day or as required, and ensure employees are practicing good hygiene.

Is there any direction on what Taxi drivers should do to protect drivers and clients and still be in compliance with public health orders?

General guidelines recommend frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces between each customer.

What organizations and professions are exempt from the social distancing requirements AND the 5-person social gathering limits?

- Hospitals
- Any court operating essential services
- Correctional facilities for adults and youth
- Probation offices
- Unlicensed child-care facilities
- Homeless shelters
- Health professions who are independent practitioners engaged in community practice including doctors, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, nurses, continuing care workers, home care workers, paramedics
- People who provide, service or repair medical equipment like wheelchairs and home oxygen equipment
- Residential facilities for persons with disabilities
- Residential settings for children in care of the province
- Long-term care facilities and home care agencies
- Food production plants
- Fishing vessels

Municipal entities and contractors:

- Taxi services
- Police and fire services
- Municipal utilities (water, wastewater, stormwater)
- Maintenance of utilities and municipal facilities
- Transportation
- Road maintenance/repair
- Municipal ICT systems and services
- Public Transit
- Solid Waste, garbage and litter collection and disposal
- Urban Forestry
- Municipal logistic, distribution, storage, inventory and repair services

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