

COVID-19 Protocol for Atlantic Canada Travel

Under the Authority of the Chief Medical Officer of Health

Last Revised October 4, 2021

1.0 Introduction

This protocol is for people who live in Atlantic Canada and who must travel between Nova Scotia and another Atlantic province frequently or for certain situations.

While most of our [self-isolation requirements and exemptions/exceptions](#) apply generally to travel from outside Nova Scotia, we recognize that many people need to travel between Nova Scotia and other Atlantic provinces on a regular basis or for certain situations. This protocol aims to balance that need with measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Everyone must follow the Public Health Order issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. It requires people traveling from outside Nova Scotia to complete the [Nova Scotia Safe Check-in](#) form and self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival in Nova Scotia, unless they have an exemption under the Public Health Order or an exception granted for a specific purpose.

This guidance in this document is based on the latest available scientific evidence about this emerging disease and may change as new information becomes available. The Public Health Agency of Canada posts [regular updates and related documents](#).

2.0 Exemptions for self-isolation

There are some exemptions to the self-isolation requirement in the Public Health Order to address scenarios that are specific to travel between Nova Scotia and other Atlantic provinces.

People traveling for the reasons outlined in this section do not need to complete the Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form. However, they should be able to demonstrate to border officials that they are exempt from this requirement and that they will follow the travel protocol in this document. People who travel frequently across the Nova Scotia-New Brunswick land border can request a chit from border officials to display in their vehicle.

2.1 Exemption for workers and students

Many people must travel between Nova Scotia and another Atlantic province on a regular and ongoing basis (such as daily or weekly) to work or to attend a school or post-secondary institution. Some live in one province but use child care services in the other on a regular and ongoing basis. They are exempt from the requirement to self-isolate if they closely follow the travel protocol in this document.

2.2 Travel for veterinary services

People sometimes need to seek specialty veterinary services in a neighbouring province. Licensed veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians (RVT) also sometimes need to travel to neighbouring provinces to care for animals. When these people need to travel between Nova Scotia and other Atlantic provinces to access or to provide essential veterinary services, they are exempt from the requirement to self-isolate if they closely follow the travel protocol in this document.

2.3 Exemption for occasional necessary travel

Sometimes people who live in either Nova Scotia or another Atlantic province must occasionally make quick trips between these provinces to accomplish work, school or other tasks that are necessary and cannot be accomplished virtually. In these cases, people are exempt from self-isolation in Nova Scotia if they closely follow the travel protocol in this document.

3.0 Travel protocol

Everyone must follow the Public Health requirements in Nova Scotia and in other Atlantic provinces. People who are fully vaccinated (ie, 14 days have passed since they received their second dose) are exempt from isolation and the conditions in this protocol.

All travelers who are not fully vaccinated must meet the following conditions, whether they are going to another Atlantic province or coming into Nova Scotia:

- drive directly to and from the destination (such as a workplace or school)
- only use contactless services (i.e. gas and drive-thrus for food/banking)
- if staying overnight is necessary, they must isolate in their overnight accommodation
- wear a [non-medical mask in any indoor public space](#) other than their overnight accommodation
- have no close contact with anyone, except as required by the nature of their work or studies

When they return to Nova Scotia, travelers who were not fully vaccinated need to:

- minimize close contact with other people for 14 days (or the entire time if they are in Nova Scotia for less than 14 days)
- book up to three [COVID-19 tests](#) when they return - see section 4.1 below
- wear a [non-medical mask in any indoor public space](#) or when they are around other people in a private place outside of their home/accommodation
- avoid non-essential visits outside their home/accommodation
- avoid large gatherings
- monitor their health closely and if they start to feel sick, self-isolate and book a [COVID-19 test](#) or call 811 if they can't book the test online.

4.0 Testing

4.1 Testing when you do not have symptoms

People who have travelled to another Atlantic province are encouraged to get tested up to three times when they return Nova Scotia, even if they show no signs of illness. The first test should be on day 1 or 2. If they are still in the province, they should get tested again on day 6, 7 or 8 and on day 12, 13 or 14. There is no cost for testing and it is voluntary.

A negative test result does not give 100% certainty that a person does not have COVID-19. However, testing is recommended as an added layer of protection because a negative result is a good indication that the person is not likely carrying and transmitting the virus unknowingly.

4.2 Testing when you have symptoms

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 must complete the online assessment, book a [COVID-19 test](#), and follow the isolation directions provided. Even if you only have one mild symptom, you need to get tested.

People who have one mild symptom, other than fever or new or worsening cough, do not have to isolate while waiting for their test and results.

4.3 Booking a test

People can book an asymptomatic [COVID-19 test](#) online. Choose the asymptomatic option. Do not call 811 to book a test unless you cannot book it online.

5.0 Resources

Nova Scotia coronavirus website: novascotia.ca/coronavirus/

Guidance for the use of non-medical masks: novascotia.ca/coronavirus/masks/

Handwashing poster: novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/Hand-Washing-Poster.pdf

Nova Scotia Health Authority Public Health Offices: nshealth.ca/public-health-offices

Government of Canada information line: 1-833-784-4397 (toll-free)