The goal of COVID-19 Protocol for Fish Harvesters is to, as much as possible, prevent the introduction of the virus into the province and prevent transmission within the province while balancing the needs of Fish Harvesters in the carrying out of their duties. To do this, government allows a modified form of self-isolation for out-of-province fish harvesters when they travel to Nova Scotia as a requirement of their work.

All fish harvesters must follow the Public Health Order issued by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and any direction arising from that Order and directives given under the authority of the Health Protection Act and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

This document provides direction to fish harvesters for the prevention and control of COVID-19. This protocol 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 will be posting regular updates and related documents at www.phac-aspc.gc.ca.

1.0 Definitions and scope

1.1 Definitions

This protocol uses the term fish harvester to include skilled workers required to enter Nova Scotia to carry out fish harvesting and its required associated activities, which are conducted either on land or via fishing vessel. For the purposes of this definition, fish harvesting is the commercial or licensed activity of catching fish and other seafood for market or other approved activities. It does not include recreational fishery.

For example, fish harvesters would include:

- People who are engaged in the act of fish harvesting,
- People who are essential to the preparation, maintenance, and repair of required fishing infrastructure to support imminent or ongoing fish harvesting activities
This protocol uses the term **place of residence** to refer to the location where fish harvesters reside during their time in Nova Scotia. A place of residence can be a fishing vessel, house, hotel, RV, or vacation rental (house, apartment, cabin, etc.) that allows for isolation as per the requirements below.

The protocol also uses the term **workplace** to refer to the location where the fish harvesters conduct activities directly related to and including fish harvesting. This may be a land-based location or a fishing vessel.

### 1.2 Scope

This protocol only applies to fish harvesters who come from Canadian provinces or territories outside Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador. It does not apply to international workers. International workers are subject to the federal Quarantine Act.

This protocol only applies when these fish harvesters enter Nova Scotia to complete work directly related to planned fish harvesting. Work that is not directly related to fish harvesting, such as boat building and/or annual maintenance, does not fall under this protocol.

This protocol does not apply to temporary foreign workers. Employers wishing to bring temporary foreign workers into Nova Scotia to work in the seafood sector must follow the Guidance for Temporary Foreign Workers in Seafood in order to meet the requirements for these workers as described in the Public Health Order.

### 2.0 Entering Nova Scotia

#### 2.1 Overview

When fish harvesters must come to Nova Scotia to work, this Protocol for Fish Harvesters allows them to complete their work while self-isolating at their place of residence when not working. Isolation and other requirements are further detailed in Section 3.

#### 2.2 Process

Prior to each trip, fish harvesters must apply to enter the province by completing the Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form. They cannot enter the province until they receive approval.
They should apply about a week before they intend to travel. It will take up to 3 business days for their application to be reviewed. If they are approved, they will receive an approval letter via email. They must show this approval letter to border officials, along with documentation proving they are entering the province for work as fish harvesters.

Once they receive an approval letter, fish harvesters are permitted to enter and exit Nova Scotia via fishing vessel or drive to and from the airport or border crossing and their place of residence in the province, as long as they meet the requirements in Section 3 below.

3.0 Requirements

3.1 Fish harvesters coming from outside Atlantic Canada

Once they receive approval and enter the province, fish harvesters coming from outside Atlantic Canada must adhere to the following requirements:

- Self-isolate when they are not at work and while they travel to and from the workplace
  - Fish harvesters may self-isolate onboard a vessel if all other occupants of the vessel also follow this Protocol for Fish Harvesters – everyone onboard must remain in isolation (except while working) until the last crew member who arrived onboard completes the 14-day self-isolation period
- Use only contactless services (i.e. gas and drive-thrus for food/banking)
- Wear non-medical masks and/or PPE required for their work
- Maintain physical distance (2 metres/6 feet) while working as much as possible
- Wear a non-medical mask in public spaces where they are working
- Leave their accommodations only to travel to the worksite
- Have meals delivered or use curbside pickup
- Have all required supplies such as groceries, toiletries, fishing supplies, and fuel for fish harvesting delivered to the workplace and/or accommodations
- Travel directly between the worksite and accommodations – no other trips into the community are permitted (no shopping, visiting, or tourism activities)
• Monitor their health closely, and if they develop symptoms, self-isolate and complete the [COVID-19 self-assessment](https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus) to book a test – even if you only have one mild symptom, you need to get tested

• Conduct routine cleaning and sanitization of shared spaces onboard vessels

### 3.2 Fish harvesters coming from New Brunswick

Effective June 23, fish harvesters coming from New Brunswick have two options. They can choose the one that is most advantageous for their situation.

#### 3.2.1 Enter as New Brunswick resident

Fish harvesters can apply via the [Nova Scotia Safe Check-in](https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus) to enter Nova Scotia as a New Brunswick resident. New Brunswick residents are permitted to enter Nova Scotia for any reason. Their isolation requirements are based on their vaccination status and testing. When Nova Scotia residents go to New Brunswick and return, they have the same requirements. The requirements are:

• People who had two doses of vaccine at least 14 days before arriving in Nova Scotia are not required to self-isolate. Testing is still recommended.

• People who received one dose of vaccine at least 14 days before they arrive in Nova Scotia must self-isolate for seven days. They must have two negative tests results in order to leave isolation after seven days. They must complete the full seven days, regardless of when they receive their test results. If they do not have their second negative test result after seven days, they must continue isolation until they get their second negative test result.

• People with no vaccination must fully self-isolation for 14 days. Testing is recommended the beginning and end of their isolation.

Only vaccines approved by the World Health Organization will be accepted.

People who receive a first or second dose of vaccine less than 14 days before they arrive in Nova Scotia cannot apply that dose to their vaccination status. For example, a person who gets one dose less than 14 days before they arrive is considered to have no vaccination. A person who gets a second dose less than 14 days before they arrive is considered to have one dose.
Testing must be done in Nova Scotia, not in advance of arrival. See more information about getting a test in Nova Scotia in Section 4 of this protocol.

These travelers must complete the **Nova Scotia Safe Check-in** form. They will be able to upload their proof of vaccination into their Safe Check-in form. They will receive automatic approval on the condition that they are prepared to show their proof of vaccination to border officials.

Starting on their second day in the province, each traveler will receive daily check-in emails to which they must respond. Once a person has met their isolation obligations based on vaccination status and testing, they can unsubscribe from the daily check-in email via the unsubscribe link in the email.

### 3.2.2 Enter as a fish harvester

Fish harvesters can apply via the **Nova Scotia Safe Check-in** to enter Nova Scotia as fish harvesters and wait for their application to be approved. If they are approved, they have very similar isolation requirements based on vaccination status and testing as New Brunswick residents. The only difference is that New Brunswick residents must isolate fully while fish harvesters can work and must isolate when they are not working:

- Fish harvesters who had two doses of vaccine at least 14 days before arriving in Nova Scotia are not required to self-isolate. Testing is still recommended.

- Fish harvesters from New Brunswick who received one dose of vaccine at least 14 days before they arrive in Nova Scotia must isolate when they are not working for seven days. They must have two negative test results in order to leave isolation after seven days. They must complete the full seven days, regardless of when they receive their test results. If they do not have their second negative test result after seven days, they must continue isolating when they are not working until they get their second negative test result.

- Fish harvesters from New Brunswick with no vaccination must isolate when they are not working for 14 days as outlined in section 2.2 of this protocol. Testing is still recommended as outlined in Section 4.

All the other conditions in Section 3.2.1 apply to fish harvesters from New Brunswick.
This provision is only for fish harvesters from New Brunswick who enter Nova Scotia. It does not apply to fish harvesters traveling from other provinces and territories or other countries. It does not apply to Nova Scotia fish harvesters who go to New Brunswick and return – they cannot go to work and otherwise isolate, they must isolate fully and potentially stop earlier than 14 days based on vaccination status and testing.

### 4.0 Testing

#### 4.1 Testing when you have no symptoms

Fish harvesters who have no symptoms should get tested on day 1 or 2 in Nova Scotia. 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. This testing schedule serves as a guide for fish harvesters because we recognize that their work schedule, especially those who work at sea, may not fit with this testing schedule.

Testing should be done even if you have no signs of illness. There is no cost for testing. While this testing is voluntary, it is strongly recommended for fish harvesters. There is no cost to fish harvesters.

Even if specialized workers are allowed to stop isolating based on vaccination status and testing, they should still complete all three tests (if they are in the province long enough to do all three).

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

For fish harvesters who enter Nova Scotia from New Brunswick, testing is only required if you have one dose of vaccine, your travel was only between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and you wish to stop isolating earlier than 14 days as outlined in Section 3.2.

Testing for the purposes of stopping isolation must be done in Nova Scotia, not in advance of arrival. It must be a standard PCR lab test which takes up to 72 hours to be processed in Nova Scotia. It cannot be a rapid test which gives a result in minutes.
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. If you can’t book the test online, you can call 811.

4.3 Booking a test

Fish harvesters can get a standard PCR lab test if they arrive by air at the Halifax Stanfield International Airport. They can also book COVID-19 tests at testing sites around the province by completing the COVID-19 self-assessment to book their tests. Follow the directions that the assessment gives. Do not call 811 to book a test unless you cannot access the online self-assessment.

Fish harvesters can leave their work site or their accommodation just to get tested. They should wear a non-medical mask when going between their vehicle and the testing site and stay 2 metres/6 feet apart from others. They should not take a bus or shuttle. Using their own transportation is strongly recommended. However, they can take a taxi, wearing a nonmedical mask, if there is no other alternative.

5.0 Resources

COVID-19 self-assessment

Nova Scotia coronavirus website

Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form

Guidance for Temporary Foreign Workers in Seafood

Nova Scotia Health Authority Public Health Offices

Guidance for the use of non-medical masks

Handwashing poster

Government of Canada coronavirus website

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