

July 14, 2020

Dear engagement partner:

Over the past several weeks, we hosted stakeholder consultations with many sectors, business associations and organizations to provide information and have conversations related to the reopening of the Nova Scotia economy. Your participation in these sessions was critical as we moved forward to restore activity in Nova Scotia. Thank you for your ongoing commitment as we continue to work together.

Since first implemented in March, there have been many changes to the Public Health Order throughout the reopening process. From gradual increases in gathering limits, to the easing of travel restrictions, these changes reflect a careful balance between the maintenance of public health and the restoration of economic and social activity.

We anticipate further changes and announcements over the coming months. It will be important for you to stay informed about these changes, and how they impact your operations. You will need to determine if your plans need to be revised to reflect changes announced by government. For example, your business may be subject to new gathering limits if hosting certain events. Your revised plans do not need to be submitted to government for review and approval. Related questions can be sent to [NSEconomy@novascotia.ca](mailto:NSEconomy@novascotia.ca). You can also reach out to your sector association for information and direction.

I would encourage you to regularly visit our COVID-19 website at <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus> to stay updated. You can also subscribe to our Public Health newsletter by emailing a request to [covid19info@novascotia.ca](mailto:covid19info@novascotia.ca).

As part of creating public places that limit the opportunities for the spread of COVID 19, Public Health now strongly recommends that people wear a non-medical mask whenever they are in places where it's hard to maintain social distance (like public transit, stores, malls and restaurants). It is important that businesses and organizations support the wearing of non-medical masks by the public in these settings by displaying signs at entrances, providing masks to those who do not have one and having staff who serve the public wear non-medical masks. More information on non-medical masks is at <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/staying-healthy/#masks>.

The Restaurant Association of Nova Scotia's re-opening plan that was approved by the NS government states that "For staff who cannot always physically distance two metres, the use of non-medical masks or face coverings is required...". Legally, where there is additional detail in a sector re-opening plan regarding requirements to operate, e.g. barriers at bars, masks, they are required to adhere to those. Therefore, it is mandatory for servers to wear masks in restaurants and licensed establishments as per the RANS re-opening plan.

On July 3, borders among the Atlantic Canadian provinces were "re-opened", meaning residents of Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador and New Brunswick could visit Nova Scotia without having to self-isolate for 14 days. Travellers entering Nova Scotia from outside the Atlantic Canadian bubble must fill out a tracking and self-declaration form available online.

Non-bubble visitors must provide an address where they will be staying and self-isolating for 14 days and a phone number where they can be reached 24/7. If visitors supposed to be self-isolating do not answer their phone after three attempts in one day, police will be called, and in-person checks will be conducted. The fine for violating the Health Protection Order is \$1,000 for a first offence. More information on the requirements for self-isolation is at <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/when-to-seek-help/#self-isolate>.

Most people follow the rules. However, should you have concerns and believe visitors from outside our region are not following the public health requirements, you can contact local police as enforcement of federal and provincial isolation requirements is through law enforcement agencies.

In the revised order there are only a few groups of workers who are exempt from the 14-day isolation period when arriving in Nova Scotia:

- workers in the trade and transportation sector who are employed in the movement of goods and people across the Nova Scotia border while performing work duties; and
- Canadian military personnel, Coast Guard, first responders, including police, fire and paramedics while performing work duties.

Any other worker (even if classified as essential by their employer) must isolate for the first 14 days up arrival or return to Nova Scotia.

If a business or organization has essential work (e.g. maintenance or repairs) that requires bringing specialized workers from outside of Atlantic Canada they can submit a detailed request to [NSEconomy@novascotia.ca](mailto:NSEconomy@novascotia.ca) for an exception to the 14-day isolation requirement. Even if such an exception is granted, the business or organization will need to have a protocol in place to minimize the contact that out-of-province workers have with others while at work and for them to stay isolated while not working.

Some Nova Scotians work in other parts of Canada or outside the country and regularly travel between these two locations. When they return to Nova Scotia, these individuals are required to isolate for the first 14 days but can do this at their family home. Other family members living in the same location do not have to isolate and can go to work and community activities as usual.

I recognize that the “new normal” of living with COVID 19 presents many challenges and that there is much uncertainty. Thank you for your ongoing support to create COVID-safe environments while we re-open businesses and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Strang', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Robert Strang MD, MHSc, FRCPC  
Chief Medical Officer of Health

**Resources:**

Provincial website

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus>

Sector association plans (questions and plan submissions)

[nseconomy@novascotia.ca](mailto:nseconomy@novascotia.ca)

Occupational Health and Safety (safety questions)

[1-800-952-2687](tel:1-800-952-2687)

[laesafetybranch@novascotia.ca](mailto:laesafetybranch@novascotia.ca)

Labour Standards (your rights and obligations at work)

[1-888-315-0110](tel:1-888-315-0110)

[labourstandards@novascotia.ca](mailto:labourstandards@novascotia.ca)

Business Navigators (reopening information and business supports)

[1-844-628-7347](tel:1-844-628-7347)

[busnavigation@novascotia.ca](mailto:busnavigation@novascotia.ca)