

Specialized worker exception from self-isolation

What change are you making for workers who need to come into Nova Scotia?

Rather than considering each request individually, we are now asking workers who meet our criteria to complete the [Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form](#) before they come to Nova Scotia. They will be able to do their specialized work and they must self-isolate while they are not working.

Does this apply to all essential workers in Canada? What about other countries?

If you are considered an essential worker by your employer or by the province or country where you live, that does not necessarily mean you fit our criteria as a specialized worker. We have specific criteria that allows specialized workers to come into the province and do urgent and critical work that nobody else in Atlantic Canada can do. They must self-isolate while they are not working.

Anyone coming from outside of Canada falls under the federal Quarantine Act and will also require permission from the federal government. Contact Canada Border Services Agency at 1-888-957-7224 or tccu-ustcc@cbsa-asfc.gc.ca for information.

Does this apply to workers who are named in the public health order as having exemptions?

No. Workers who already have an exemption in the public health order do not need to complete the Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form and do not need to self-isolate as long as they are traveling due to a requirement to work in Nova Scotia. If they are traveling from outside Atlantic Canada for a vacation or a visit, they do need to complete the form and self-isolate just like other travelers.

What are the criteria workers need to meet to be able to come and work in Nova Scotia?

When there is urgent and critical work in Nova Scotia that requires specialized skills that are unavailable in Atlantic Canada, we allow workers with those specialized skills to come from outside the region to do the work. For example:

- people who are essential to the inspection, installation or repair of specialized equipment
- people who are essential to the maintenance and repair of critical infrastructure
- people who are essential to the completion of large construction projects

Workers who meet these criteria can come to Nova Scotia, do their specialized work, and self-isolate while they are not working.

Should the form be completed by the business or the worker? Can multiple exceptions be provided through one form?

The Nova Scotia Safe Check-in form must be completed by the person entering Nova Scotia, prior to entering. Each worker must complete a form.

Are there any special requirements for larger employers who need to send a group of workers to Nova Scotia or who have multiple workers arriving from one or more business outside of Atlantic Canada

In addition to the Safe Check-in process completed by each worker, a business is required to provide details of their workplace COVID-19 prevention plan to covid19info@novascotia.ca prior to travel if:

- a business operating in Nova Scotia has more than 10 workers from one or more businesses arriving from outside of the Atlantic provinces within a one-month period
- more than 10 specialized workers from one business are entering Nova Scotia from outside of Atlantic Canada within a one-month period

How do they do their work and self-isolate?

Specialized workers must self-isolate when they are not at work and while they are travelling to and from the workplace. They should have a plan for how to do this before they arrive. While working, they must follow physical distancing and other public health guidelines outlined in the [Directive on Exceptions for Specialized Workers and COVID-19](#).

What exactly is a specialized worker allowed to do once in the province?

The worker can:

- work at a worksite while following all precautions set out in the [Directive on Exceptions for Specialized Workers and COVID-19](#), and in any plan in place for the worksite
- drive to and from their worksite/job location and the place where they are staying in the province (such as a hotel)
- drive to and from the airport or border crossing and the place where they are staying in the province

Can specialized workers go out to get food or other essentials? Are they allowed travel in the province?

These workers must self-isolate when they are not at work. That means they must arrange to have food and other essentials delivered. They cannot travel, go shopping or visiting, or do any tourism activities. If their work requires them to travel between work locations, this travel must be minimized, with every effort made to avoid contact with the public.

How do you track these workers and ensure they are self-isolating when not at work?

Prior to each trip to Nova Scotia, specialized workers must complete the [Safe Check-in form](#). They will receive an email acknowledging that they have an exception to work in Nova Scotia and they will need to show it to border officials. They will also receive a daily electronic check-in that is tailored to specialized workers and reflects their ability to go to work, but otherwise self-isolate.

If a specialized worker is in Nova Scotia for a month, for example, do they need to self-isolate the entire time when not at work?

No. They would have to self-isolate for the first 14 days. After that, they would be free to be out and about when not working, while still respecting the province's public health rules such as physical distancing, masks, and gathering limits. Learn more about [Nova Scotia's public health rules](#).

Does a specialized worker have to wear a mask all the time, or just in indoor public places?

Specialized workers must wear a non-medical mask and/or PPE required for their work and must maintain physical distancing while working (2 metres/6 feet away from others) as much as is feasible. They must always wear a non-medical mask in public spaces (indoor and outdoor), although they should not be in public spaces unless it is necessary for their work.

Can a group of workers self-isolate together? Can they carpool together to and from the worksite?

Yes, as long as none of them has symptoms of COVID-19, and they start their isolation period at the same time. If a worker develops symptoms, they need to isolate themselves from their co-workers (and anyone else) and contact 811.

Can a Nova Scotia worker go outside Atlantic Canada for urgent and critical work without having to self-isolate when they return?

No, this policy is only for workers from outside Atlantic Canada who come to do specialized work in Nova Scotia.

Are there fines or other penalties if a specialized worker does not self-isolate when not working?

There are penalties in the Health Protection Act. For a first offence, there is a \$1,000 fine. If you are found guilty of a second or subsequent offence, you could be fined up to \$10,000 or sentenced to imprisonment for up to one year, or both.