



Backgrounder: Amendments to the March 21 COVID-19 Public Health Order - Travel Restrictions and Self-Isolation Protocol

On April 27, the NWT Chief Public Health Officer introduced amendments to the March 21 Public Health Order, which restricted travel in the Northwest Territories with limited exceptions.

These amendments add new requirements for NWT residents, non-residents, and several categories of workers coming into the Northwest Territories.

Purpose of these new requirements

Anyone who has been outside the Northwest Territories presents a higher risk than those who have remained within the territory for a long period of time because there is community spread in other jurisdictions whereas the Northwest Territories is in containment.

These new requirements will close the gaps in persons crossing our borders into the NWT to keep our residents safe within the NWT, while making sure essential workers can still serve our territory, and we can keep priority public infrastructure projects moving.

Who do these amendments apply to?

It applies to any of the following types of workers who have been outside the Northwest Territories within the last 14 days:

- **NWT residents who have been outside the NWT**
- **Essential Service Workers**
- **Those supporting essential service workers:** otherwise referred to as Supporting Workers, providing childcare and dependent care.
- **Workers employed on public infrastructure projects with open, non-remote worksites where workers interact with community residents on a daily basis:** otherwise referred to as Infrastructure Workers, this would include projects for the GNWT, and federal, municipal, and Indigenous Governments and Organizations.
- **Corrections officers:** when accompanying inmates traveling in and out of the NWT
- **Flight crews, airline workers, import/export supply chain transportation workers**
- **Persons transiting through the NWT on their way to another destination**

There are also requirements companies employing these workers must follow.



What is an open non-remote work site?

An open, non-remote work site is a site that might be either in the community or just outside of the community, where workers interact potentially with community residents every day, either by being able to head to a convenience store during their lunch break or when returning to their residence in the community at the end of each shift.

What is now required, and why?

There are several measures being put in-place to close gaps and reduce risk, while maintaining the level of service our residents need.

- **All NWT Residents who have been outside the NWT** and are in self-isolation must now complete their Self-Isolation Plan within 24 hours and check-in with ProtectNWT on their 2nd, 6th, 10th, and 14th days of self-isolation using the approved check-in online ProtectNWT form.
- **Flight crews, airline workers, import/export supply chain transportation workers** must self-isolate while not working if in the NWT for longer than 36 hours.
- **Persons transiting through the NWT on-route to another destination** must socially distance if here for less than 12 hours and must self-isolate if here for longer than 12 hours until such time as they leave the NWT.
- **Essential Service Workers, Supporting Workers, Infrastructure Workers, and Corrections Officers not required to immediately start work must comply with self-isolation plan requirements now in-place for returning residents:** this means filing a Self-Isolation Plan before entering the territory, and sticking to it. And it means doing so in one of the isolation hubs.
 - This will help eliminate unnecessary interaction with the broader community in which they are staying, and allow the GNWT to track these workers while they are in the territory.
- **Employers of Essential Service Workers, Supporting Workers, Infrastructure Workers, and Corrections Officers must apply to have their workers not self-isolate for 14 days before starting work.** They do so by submitting a form to ProtectNWT. Submitting the form does not mean automatic approval by the CPHO. As part of this application they



must also submit to ProtectNWT a completed Workplace Risk Assessment and Field Level Risk Assessment using approved WSCC forms.

- **Where their Employer has applied to not have them self-isolate, Essential Service Workers, Supporting Workers, Infrastructure Workers, and Corrections Officers must fill out a declaration which must be submitted to ProtectNWT and includes the following information:**
 - Contact information for themselves
 - Contact information for their employer
 - Where they have been for the last 14 days before entering NWT
 - The nature of their work over next 14 days,
 - Where they will be in the first 14 days after entering NWT

 - **Based on the application from the Employer, the Worker's Self-Isolation Plan, the Declaration, and any further information required, special permission may be granted by the Chief Public Health Officer for these workers to not self-isolate for 14 days in order to start work:** this permission must be granted through Protect NWT before a worker enters the territory

 - **Each worker who receives permission must:**
 - Self-isolate when not on shift
 - Check in with Protect NWT on 2st day, 6th day, 10th day, 14th day to reaffirm the declaration they have provided upon entry, and to confirm they have none of the following symptoms:
 - Fever
 - New or worsening cough
 - Shortness of breath
 - A general feeling of unease, or being 'under the weather'
 - Muscle aches
 - Fatigue
 - Sore throat
 - Runny nose
 - Headache
 - Diarrhea
 - Vomiting
 - Loss of smell



- **If they develop any of these symptoms, they must immediately self-isolate in their accommodations, contact a local health care provider, and comply with all directions going forward.**

- **All employees must make every effort to socially distance from members of the public and co-workers while working:** there are [social distancing protocols](#) which must be followed, and companies must have processes in place to make this happen.
 - **Rationale:** these workers are interacting with communities more than others would. Putting in place these mechanisms will better protect our communities.

- **All employees must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment as determined by a Workers Safety and Compensation Commission Field Level Risk Assessment, and all employers must make it available**
 - **Rationale:** This clarifies and makes mandatory advice for this particular group of workers.

- **Workers cannot travel outside of the community they are in for personal reasons**
 - **Rationale:** Limiting the number of communities workers come in contact with reduces risk for everyone in our territory.

Notes about implementation

- The GNWT is not responsible for providing suitable accommodations for self-isolation for employees while they are within the territory.

- It is recommended that employers coordinate with employees to have all necessary information submitted 1-2 weeks ahead of their employees' arrival in the NWT