



May 2023 | ESS BULLETIN

# Updates to Cultural Safety and Evacuee Care in a Reception Centre

Distributed to all Local Emergency Programs for ESS Responders

**We'd like to share changes and reminders to support our commitment to continuous learning and improving the evacuee and responder experiences.**

A Reception Centre is designed to be a safe gathering place where evacuees can register with ESS, identify emergency needs, and receive supports.

We ask Responders to take a solution-focused, compassionate, culturally-safe approach to meet unmet needs, which can significantly improve the evacuee's experience during an already stressful time. We recognize solutions may not always be within regular ESS supports and that this may be challenging.

Solutioning should include escalation of requests to the Emergency Operations Centre or Provincial Regional Emergency Operation Centre. This may also include engagement of additional partner organizations.

**NEW**

## Changes to Communication about Eligible Items

The ESS referral form includes a note that "alcohol, tobacco and gratuities are not eligible expenses" in alignment with government financial policy. This information had routinely been verbally communicated to all evacuees receiving supports. We've received feedback that this practice can feel culturally unsafe.

**MOVING FORWARD, RESPONDERS WILL NO LONGER REFERENCE THE PURCHASE OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND GRATUITIES AS INELIGIBLE ITEMS.**

Providing this information on the referral form is sufficient. Responders are encouraged to highlight examples of eligible items like; food, personal hygiene products, diapers, etc.

**You can bring concerns about Cultural Safety to the attention of your ESS Director or Emergency Program Coordinator.**



## Working with the ERA Tool

ERA is a pathway to improving evacuee choice and reduces reliance on paper referrals. 82 communities have now onboarded ERA and many communities have shared their own tips and tricks when working with the ERA tool and supporting evacuees.

Consider asking the evacuee if they'd like to sit beside you to watch you enter their information on the screen while completing the needs assessment.

*OR*

Consider completing a needs assessment with a partner so one Responder is always focused on the conversation with the evacuee.



For questions about the ERA Tool email: [essmodernization@gov.bc.ca](mailto:essmodernization@gov.bc.ca)



### *Did you know?*

A Community Navigator can be designated to support at the Reception Centre. Connect with your EOC or PREOC for questions.

For an opportunity to learn about self-care, support for your colleagues and tips on Cultural Safety & Humility, please review the recently recorded JIBC Webinar.

