



## **2.14 Community Navigator – First Nations Community Navigator for Emergency Support Services**

### **2.14.1 GENERAL**

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) and First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) have a signed Declaration of Commitment that highlights a shared intention to embed cultural safety and cultural humility across all four pillars of emergency management including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. This shared intention recognizes that the manner, in which emergency management is conducted can have a lasting impact on First Nations health and wellness.

*The Declaration of Commitment is based on the following guiding principles of cultural safety and humility:*

- *Cultural humility builds relationships founded in mutual trust and respect and enables cultural safety.*
- *Cultural safety and humility must be understood, embraced, and practiced at all levels of the emergency services system including governance, organizational, and within individual practice.*
- *We have achieved cultural safety when First Nations and Indigenous People tell us we have.*

During emergencies and disasters, whole neighbourhoods, or communities may be evacuated to an Emergency Support Services host community. Host communities may be unfamiliar with the needs required to support evacuees due to a lack of knowledge related to the evacuees' culture, protocols, and specialized services.

To support evacuees, the host and/or evacuating community may utilize a Community Navigator. When a First Nations community is evacuated, the use of a First Nations Community Navigator may further support evacuees by connecting evacuees with supports not commonly offered in an Emergency Support Services Reception Centre or lodging facility.

By utilizing a First Nations Community Navigator communities can ensure service delivery is aligned with First Nations perspectives on health and wellness and support the cultural safety and humility of the First Nations people during evacuations. The First Nations Community Navigator role further supports First Nations evacuees by providing them with assurance that they will be heard, respected, and have their needs met.

The First Nations Community Navigator is often known to community members, has intimate knowledge of the community and its cultural practices and protocols. They also have established a trust base relationship with community members.

#### ***Related Policies and Guidelines:***

- **2.15 Cultural Activity Location Support**
- **2.02 Task Authorization**
- **5.03 Evacuee Living Assistance**



- 5.02 Expense Reimbursement
- [Financial Assistance for Emergency Response and Recovery Costs: A Guide for BC Local Authorities and First Nations \(revised January 2008\)](#)

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## 2.14.2 DEFINITIONS

- See [Terms and Definitions](#)
- **Community Navigator:** is an individual identified by the community to act as a liaison between the Emergency Operations Centre, Emergency Support Services, support agencies, and evacuees. Advocates for evacuees and facilitates solutions to complex and/or unique evacuee needs.
- **Cultural Activity Location Support:** is a designated location for the purpose of providing cultural care services.
- **Evacuee:** is a resident whose primary residence is directly impacted in the defined geographic area of an evacuation order within the issuing authority's jurisdiction.
- **First Nations Community Navigator:** is a Community Navigator who performs the duties noted above in the Community Navigator. A First Nations Community Navigator also has in depth knowledge of the affected First Nations peoples' culture, practices, and protocols. Supports, demonstrates, promotes, and facilitates the implementation of culturally safe practices within Emergency Support Services program delivery.
- **Meeter and Greeter:** is an individual who meets, greets, and triages evacuees within Reception Centres, and is often the first person an evacuee comes into contact with from Emergency Support Services.
- **Primary residence:** is the dwelling where an individual or family spends most of their personal time. A person can only have one primary residence at any time.
- **Support agency:** is an agency that provides support and/or resources to another agency (e.g. First Nations Health Authority, Indigenous Services Canada, and the Canadian Red Cross).

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## 2.14.3 POLICY STATEMENT

- (1) First Nations Community Navigators and Community Navigators are eligible expenses for reimbursement.
  - a. To receive reimbursement, the community must:
    - i. Follow the same prescribed reimbursement process used for other resources (e.g. [Expenditure Authorization Form](#) ).
  - b. PREOCs will ensure that communities are aware this resource is eligible for reimbursement.
  - c. PREOCs will ensure communities are aware of the process for receiving reimbursement and/or resource sourcing.
- (2) The First Nations Community Navigator may be identified by the evacuated community or may be sourced from a support agency such as the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), or community health society.



- (3) The need for a First Nations Community Navigator is identified by and at the discretion of the impacted community.
- (4) A First Nations Community Navigator's specific responsibilities may vary depending on the community's needs. Responsibilities may include:
- a. accompany individuals to cultural activity locations
  - b. duties normally undertaken by the Meeter and Greeter
  - c. accompany and support individuals during the Registration and Referrals process
  - d. provide services in multiple locations, such as Reception Centres, lodging facilities, and food service locations.

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#### **2.14.4 REFERENCES**

*Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2019)*

*BC Canada Bilateral Agreement (2017)*

*FNLC/BC/Canada Tripartite Agreement MOU (2018)*

*FNHA/EMBC LOU (renewed 2021)*

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Date: July 20, 2022

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