

Emergency Support Services (ESS) Program Direct Payments Guidelines

Introduction

In order to support First Nations/Local Governments (FN/LG) in the delivery of the ESS program, The Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness (the province) may approve direct purchase options in order to provide more options for evacuee supports.

In order to carry out direct purchases, the FN/LG must seek prior approval from the local Regional Manager. Standard ESS procedures should be adhered to whenever possible. Depending upon the situation and nature of the need, FN/LG should also consider supporting evacuee need through:

- Community organizations
- Expenditure Authorization Form (EAF)
- Resource Request (RR)

Direct Purchases

FN/LG may directly purchase supports by following these guidelines:

- The registration and referral process, including needs assessment, should be carried out with all evacuees.
 - Suppliers which are still operational should be used as normal
- Prior approval must be sought from local Regional Manager before proceeding with direct purchase
- If approved, purchases must be made by the FN/LG directly.
 - The FN/LG Government is listed as the supplier on the referral form.
 - The actual service provider is listed in the comments box.
 - The Province cannot reimburse individual ESS responders and/or individual staff for purchases
- Purchases must adhere to the principles in the [ESS Program Guide](#) and maximum rates prescribed on the [Rate Sheet](#) (found under ESS Forms).
 - FN/LG will be responsible for expenses which do not adhere to these guidelines or exceed the rates.
 - Purchases should be made in accordance with the MEMP principle (most efficient, most economical and most effective).

Reimbursements

FN/LG will receive reimbursement by following these guidelines:

1) **ESS Response costs:**

- FN/LG must track expenditures for evacuee support costs outside the scope of referrals. These include, but are not limited to: reception center costs, food for volunteers, and volunteer overtime.
 - For tracking and reconciliation purposes the province recommends using the standard [Response Claim Submission Form](#)
 - These costs must be tracked and submitted separately from referrals.
 - These costs must be submitted to the local regional office.
 - The province recommends submitting these costs electronically via email.

- Email subject lines should adhere to the following format:
For submissions to your local region:
FN/LG Name – RC # - Task #
(example: CITY OF KAMLOOPS – RC 001 - Task #123456)

FN/LG must maintain records on evacuees and supports provided through paper registration/referral forms or the Evacuee Registration Assistance (ERA) Tool.

- The province may ask for these records for audit purposes.
- The province may withhold reimbursement if they are unable to verify that supports were received by the evacuee.

2. **ESS Evacuee Support costs (referral-based submissions):**

- The province recommends the use of the ERA online submission tool. If not used then;
 - One invoice or referral form per evacuee/task.
 - Each referral must be matched to the supporting documentation that correlates to that specific evacuee. E.G. Receipts, hotel invoice etc.

- FN/LG submits referrals and supporting documentation via email to ESSFinanceInquiries@gov.bc.ca. Please ensure that the email includes the following documentation:
 - Evacuee Referral invoices.
 - PDFs of all supporting documentation, invoices/receipts.