**Northern Health Region**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

June 9, 2025

We recognize the uncertainty and challenges experienced by those impacted by the wildfires in our region. We continue to explore options, seek clarification, and identify solutions to support affected employees, across all classifications and personal circumstances.

Here are some important updates and answers to common questions we have received to date for employees who have been evacuated and work at a Northern Health Region (NHR) facility that has closed as a result of the evacuation.

**Wage Maintenance Period**

* Regular wages shall be maintained for the initial 72-hour period following a mandatory evacuation order.

**Scheduling Updates**

* Impacted employees are to contact Scheduling within the 72-hour period to discuss options available to them which include:
	1. Option to work at a site where NHR residents have been transferred to;
	2. Option to work at a site either with the NHR or another Regional Health Authority near where they have temporarily relocated to;
	3. Utilize vacation, banked time, stats, personal wellness days etc. or;
	4. Request an unpaid leave of absence.

**Contact scheduling by calling 1-844-306-0040** to discuss your individual plans and options available to you.

When calling, follow the prompts as below:

* + Option 1: Home Care
	+ Option 2: Clinical (Flin Flon & The Pas)
	+ Option 3: Clinical (Thompson)
	+ Option 4: MAPS

If leaving a message, clearly state first and last name, classification and department and current contact number to be reached at.

**Working in Another Region**

Employees who have indicated availability to work in a different region will have their information shared with the applicable Regional Health Authority (RHA). The receiving RHA will contact employees directly for available shifts.

* Employees will complete a timesheet for hours worked in the other region
* The timesheet must be approved by the receiving RHA who will submit to NHR Scheduling for coding
* Employees will be paid by the NHR at their regular NHR rate of pay for hours worked in another RHA

**Unpaid Leave of Absence & Employment Insurance**

* Employees choosing to take an unpaid leave of absence should refer to **Appendix A** for detailed information on how to request a leave and apply for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits.

**Health Benefits**

* Recognizing that some employees may not have earnings in June, the NHR will cover the June benefit premium contributions for: Health, Dental, Life Insurance and Disability & Rehabilitation Benefits. These premiums will be **recovered** once employees are able to return to work. This contribution ensures continued benefit coverage through **July 31, 2025**

**Income Protection**

* If an employee was receiving income protection prior to the order to evacuate and has sufficient medical documentation, the medical leave of absence would continue;
* Any new requests will be assessed by the employer and reviewed on a case by case basis, subject to satisfactory medical documentation.
* Time away from work as a result of mandatory evacuations will not be considered as absences under any attendance management programs (ie. ASAP).

**Mental Health & Wellness Supports and Resources**

Our thoughts continue to be with each of you and we remind you to take care of yourself and reach out with questions and access available resources and supports as needed.

* [Provincial Wellbeing Hub](https://healthproviders.sharedhealthmb.ca/wellbeing-hub/) – Provides one-on-one support for individual staff or group debriefing and help connect you to appropriate resources during challenging times. Call 204-926-9040 or toll-free 1-844-820-2010; hours: 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. daily.
* Manitoba Blue Cross Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – Available 24/7. Call 1-800-590-5553 or email workplacewellbeing@mb.bluecross.ca.
* Cognitive Behaviour Therapy with Mindfulness (CBTm) – Self-guided or facilitator-led program for healthcare staff and first responders. Call 204-944-7075 or visit [cbtm.ca](http://www.cbtm.ca/)

**To submit a question for a future FAQ, please email:** **NRHAAskYourCEO@nrha.ca**

Appendix A

**Northern Health Region Employees**

**Information Sheet**

**Leave of Absence and Applying for Employment Insurance Benefits**

If an employee is unable to work due to wildfire evacuation one of the options available to them is to take an unpaid leave of absence from the NHR and apply for Employment Insurance (EI) Benefits if they wish.

**How to Request an Unpaid Leave from NHR which will prompt a Record of Employment (ROE):**

1. Complete the Leave of Absence Form in Cognito [NHR\_0111: Leave of Absence Request](https://www.cognitoforms.com/NorthernHealthRegion2/NHR0111LeaveOfAbsenceRequest)
	1. Reason for Leave Option - indicate “Other”
	2. Reason for Leave (additional details for scheduling) box – enter wildfire evacuation
2. This form will then go to your manager for approval and will be sent to Payroll/Scheduling
3. Scheduling will update your schedule to reflect unpaid leave
4. Payroll will issue a Record of Employment (ROE), following the first pay date that has no earnings. A copy of this ROE is sent electronically to Service Canada

**How to Apply for Employment Insurance Benefits:**

* Apply for regular benefits online by visiting: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/eligibility.html>
* When you apply, you'll need:
	+ Your social insurance number (SIN);
		- If your SIN begins with a 9, you need to supply proof of your immigration status and work permit
	+ The last name at birth of one of your parents;
	+ Your mailing and residential addresses, including the postal codes;
	+ Your banking information to sign up for direct deposit;
	+ Details about all employment in the past 52 weeks or since the start of your last claim, whichever is shorter
* Eligibility for EI is determined based on the criteria in place through the Government of Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada.

Here is additional information on Employment Insurance Benefits as it relates to hazardous weather or natural disaster: [Hazardous weather: Important notices - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/hazardous-weather.html)