

COVID-19 UPDATE

Keeping You Safe



Thunder Bay Regional
Health Sciences
Centre

To: All staff and professional staff

From: Dr. Stewart Kennedy, COVID-19 Incident Manager

Date: Tuesday, November 24, 2020

RE: **Updated Travel Restrictions – Travel outside of Northwestern Ontario.**

The health and safety of all staff, professional staff, patients, care partners and the community is our utmost priority. In response to the prevalence of COVID-19 in our community, our Hospital will enhance travel restrictions.

As of Wednesday November 25 at 8:00 am, non-essential travel outside of Northwestern Ontario in the past seven days will result in a failed entrance screening.

This measure is in alignment with the recommendation issued yesterday by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) that all residents avoid non-essential travel outside of Northwestern Ontario and that employees follow employer policies on returning to work after traveling. The TBDHU adds that hosting visitors from other areas is not advisable and should be limited to essential reasons. It is recommended to cancel or postpone any current plans for non-essential travel and consider other options, including connecting or participating virtually.

Northwestern Ontario is considered to be the area including Manitouwadge to the Manitoba Border. Please refer to the attached map of Northwestern Ontario.

What this means for staff and professional staff:

- Those who fail screening must contact their manager and Occupational Health & Safety (staff), or Medical Affairs (professional staff);
- If you left Northwestern Ontario prior to November 25, you will fail screening upon your return and be required to self-isolate and monitor for symptoms for a period of seven days. This will not impact your compensation;
- If you choose to leave Northwestern Ontario for non-essential travel as of November 25, you will fail screening and be required to self-isolate and monitor for symptoms for a period of seven days. You will not be compensated by the Hospital for the isolation period;
- Depending on the circumstance, accommodations may be possible, such as rapid COVID-19 testing combined with PPE for staff essential to patient care, use of vacation time, or remote work options;
- Limited exceptions for essential travel may apply with protocols applied. For example, staff members whose work involves travel, such as flight transfers of

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patients, as well as essential locums, will be allowed to maintain service, with OH&S, Infection Prevention & Control and/or Medical Affairs approval.

Travel restrictions also apply to patients who require non-urgent care, volunteers, learners, Care Partners and Essential Care Partners.

The screening question regarding travel outside of Northern Ontario will be updated to reflect this change.

Enhanced travel restrictions can be difficult, especially with the holidays approaching and for those who are separated from friends and family. However, we must be extra vigilant for the protection of all, including the most vulnerable patients in our care. Your continued dedication to our COVID-19 pandemic response is highly appreciated.

If you have questions regarding travel restrictions, please contact your manager, and Occupational Health and Safety at 684-6212 or ohs@tbh.net.

Travel restrictions can change frequently and will be updated as the situation evolves.

All Hospital COVID-19 updates are available on the iNtranet at <https://comms.tbrhsc.net/covid-19-information/>.