Guidance on Essential Services and Functions in Canada During the COVID-19 Pandemic

https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/ntnl-scrt/crtcl-nfrstrctr/esf-sfe-en.aspx

Canada's National Strategy for Critical Infrastructure defines critical infrastructure as the processes, systems, facilities, technologies, networks, assets, and services essential to the health, safety, security or economic well-being of Canadians and the effective functioning of government. The Strategy classifies critical infrastructure in Canada according to ten sectors:

- Energy and Utilities
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Finance
- Health
- Food
- Water
- Transportation
- Safety
- Government
- Manufacturing

To protect public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, travel restrictions are in effect for foreign nationals seeking to enter Canada. In the case of the United States, the intent is to restrict leisure travel while minimizing the impact on business activities required for Canada's economic integrity.[Footnote1]
Domestically, a number of jurisdictions within Canada have announced that business closures and border measures are in effect. Provincial and territorial announcements have highlighted that only organizations necessary to provide "essential services" are permitted to operate.

Public Safety Canada has developed a set of functions deemed essential in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to help provinces/territories, Indigenous communities, and municipalities protect their communities while maintaining the reliable operation of critical infrastructure services and functions to ensure the health, safety, and economic well-being of the population. These services and functions can also help the private sector self-identify as essential.

Annex A: Essential Services and Functions by Critical Infrastructure Sector

Health

- Workers providing COVID-19 testing
- Workers that perform critical clinical research needed for COVID-19 response
- Caregivers (e.g., physicians, dentists, psychologists, mid-level practitioners, nurses and assistants, infection control and quality assurance personnel, pharmacists, physical and occupational therapists and assistants, social workers, counsellors, speech pathologists and diagnostic and therapeutic technicians and technologists)
- Hospital and laboratory personnel (including accounting, administrative, admitting and discharge, engineering, epidemiological, source organs, plasma and blood donation, food service, housekeeping, medical records, information technology and operational technology, nutritionists, sanitarians, respiratory therapists, etc.)
- Workers in other medical facilities (including ambulatory health and surgical, blood banks, clinics, community mental health, comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation, end stage renal disease, health departments, home health care, hospices, hospitals, long term care, procurement organizations, psychiatric facilities, and rural health clinics)
- Manufacturers, technicians, logistics and warehouse operators, and distributors of medical equipment, medical devices, personal protective equipment (PPE), medical gases, medical isotopes, pharmaceuticals and other health products, blood and blood products, vaccines, testing materials, cannabis for medical purposes, laboratory supplies, cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting or sterilization supplies, tissue and paper towel products, and safety gear/clothing
- Public health/community health workers, including those who compile, model, analyze and communicate public health information
- Blood and plasma donors and the employees of the organizations that operate and manage related activities
- Workers that manage health plans, billing, and health information, who cannot practically work remotely
- Workers who conduct public health functions, conducting epidemiologic surveillance, compiling, analyzing and communicating public health information, who cannot practically work remotely
- Workers performing cybersecurity functions at healthcare and public health facilities, who cannot practically work remotely
- Workers performing security, incident management, and emergency operations functions at or on behalf of healthcare entities, who cannot practically work remotely
- Workers who support food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, such as those residing in shelters or children in care

- Pharmacy employees
- Workers performing mortuary services, including funeral homes, crematoriums, and cemetery workers
- Workers who coordinate with other organizations to ensure the proper recovery, handling, identification, transportation, tracking, storage, and disposal of human remains and personal effects; certify cause of death; and facilitate access to mental/behavioral health services to the family members, responders, and survivors of an incident
- Health care professionals providing emergency care including dentists optometrists and physio-therapists
- Workers that provide critical personal support services in home and also provide residential services for individuals with disabilities, including those who maintain equipment for those with disabilities
- Workers required to carry out construction and restoration projects and services associated with the health sector, including new facilities, expansions, renovations and conversions of spaces that could be repurposed for health care space

Water

- Employees and others needed to operate and maintain drinking water and wastewater/drainage infrastructure
- Employees needed to maintain and test water quality
- Workers required to carry out construction and restoration projects and services associated with the water sector, including building and commissioning water and wastewater systems and supporting the health and safety of users of the system

Food

- Workers supporting groceries, pharmacies and other outlets that sells food and beverage products
- Restaurant employees necessary to support take-out and food delivery operations
- (packers, meat processing, fish processing, cheese plants, milk plants, produce, etc.) facilities; livestock, poultry, fish and seafood, slaughter facilities; pet and animal feed processing facilities; human food facilities producing by-products for animal food
- Animal food, feed, by-product and distribution of veterinary drugs; truck delivery and transport; farm and fishery labor needed to harvest and produce our food supply domestically
- Agriculture and aquaculture workers and support service workers including those necessary for the growing, harvesting and processing of field crops (e.g., wheat, soybean, corn, hay, etc.); those responsible for fuel ethanol facilities, biodiesel

facilities, renewable heating oil facilities, storage facilities, and other agricultural inputs
- Workers undertaking traditional harvesting activities, including fishing, hunting and agricultural activities
- Workers supporting the sanitation of all food manufacturing processes and operations from wholesale to retail
- Company in-house cafeterias used to feed employees
- Workers in food testing labs
- Employees of companies engaged in the production of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichments, and other agricultural production aids
- Animal agriculture workers to include those employed in veterinary health; manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.; transportation of live animals, animal medical materials; transportation of deceased animals for disposal; raising of animals for food; animal production operations; slaughter and packing plants and associated regulatory and government workforce, including provincial, territorial and federal inspectors
- Employees engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary to agricultural, aquaculture, and fishery production and distribution

Information and Communication Technologies

Communications

- Maintenance of communications infrastructure (wireline, wireless, internet, broadcast, satellite, news), including privately owned and maintained communication systems and/or networks supported by sub-contractors. technicians, operators, call-centres, wireline and wireless providers, cable service providers, satellite operations, undersea cable landing stations, Internet Exchange Points, and manufacturers and distributors of communications equipment and services
- Workers who support radio, television, and media service, including, but not limited to front line news reporters, studio, and technicians for news gathering and reporting
- Workers at independent system operators and regional transmission organizations, and network operations staff, engineers and/or technicians to manage the network or operate facilities
- Workers required to carry out construction and restoration projects and services associated with the communications sector, including engineering of fibre optic cables and wireless sites
- Installation, maintenance and repair technicians that establish, support or repair service as needed, including in critical consumer facing stores

- Central office personnel to maintain and operate central office, data centres, and other network office facilities
- Customer service and support staff, including managed and professional services as well as remote providers of support to transitioning employees to set up and maintain home offices, who interface with customers to manage or support service environments and security issues, including payroll, billing, fraud, and troubleshooting
- Dispatchers involved with service repair, restoration, supply chain operations
- Critical corporate support functions such as human resources, payroll, communications, security, finance, procurement, and real estate operations that support the customer and internal company networks

Information Technology

- Workers who support command centres, including, but not limited to network operations command centres, broadcast operations control centres and security operations command centres
- Data centre operators, including system administrators, HVAC & electrical engineers, security personnel, IT managers, data transfer solutions engineers, software and hardware engineers, and database administrators
- Client service centres, field engineers, and other technicians supporting critical infrastructure, as well as manufacturers and supply chain vendors that provide hardware and software, and information technology equipment and services (to include microelectronics and semiconductors) for critical infrastructure
- Workers responding to cyber incidents involving critical infrastructure, including medical facilities, governments and federal facilities, energy and utilities, and banks and financial institutions, and other critical infrastructure assets and personnel
- Workers supporting the provision of essential global, national and local infrastructure for computing services (incl. cloud computing services), business infrastructure, web-based services, and critical manufacturing
- Workers supporting communications systems and information technology used by critical infrastructure stakeholders
- Critical corporate support functions such as human resources, payroll, communications, security, finance, procurement, and real estate operations that support the customer and internal company networks

Energy and Utilities

Electricity industry

- Workers who maintain, ensure, or restore the generation, transmission, and distribution of electric power, including call centres, utility workers, reliability engineers and fleet maintenance technicians

- Workers required to carry out construction and restoration projects and services associated with the electricity sector, including for the generation, transmission and distribution of electricity power
- Workers needed for safe and secure operations at nuclear generation
- Workers at generation, transmission, and electric black start facilities
- Workers at needed for operations at independent system operators, regional transmission organizations, and balancing authorities
- IT and OT technology staff – for EMS (Energy Management Systems) and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems, and utility data centres; cybersecurity engineers; cybersecurity risk management
- Vegetation management crews and traffic workers who support
- Environmental remediation/monitoring technicians
- Instrumentation, protection, and control technicians
- Workers needed to support electric vehicle charging stations and electricity distribution systems that support them

Natural and propane gas workers in

- Natural gas transmission and distribution pipelines, including compressor stations
- Underground storage of natural gas
- Natural gas processing plants, and those that deal with natural gas liquids
- Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facilities
- Natural gas security operations centre, call centres, natural gas operations dispatch and control rooms/centres natural gas emergency response and customer emergencies, including natural gas leak calls
- Drilling, production, processing, refining, and transporting natural gas for use as end-use fuels, feed stocks for chemical manufacturing, or use in electricity generation
- Propane gas dispatch and control rooms and emergency response and customer emergencies, including propane leak calls
- Propane gas service maintenance and restoration, including call centres
- Processing, refining, and transporting natural liquids, including propane gas, for use as end-use fuels or feed stocks for chemical manufacturing
- Propane gas storage, transmission, and distribution centres
- Construction and restoration projects and services associated with the safe and reliable operations of natural and propane gas services

Petroleum workers in

- Petroleum product storage, pipeline, marine transport, terminals, rail transport, road transport
- Crude oil storage facilities, pipeline, and marine transport
- Petroleum refinery facilities

- Petroleum security operations centre employees and workers who support emergency response services
- Petroleum operations control rooms/centres
- Petroleum drilling, extraction, production, processing, refining, terminal operations, transporting, and retail for use as end-use fuels or feed stocks for chemical manufacturing
- Onshore and offshore operations for maintenance and emergency response
- Retail fuel centres such as gas stations and truck stops, and the distribution systems that support them
- Support to oil spills and other hazardous material response and cleanup, and those who supply the equipment necessary for the response and clean-ups
- Construction and restoration projects and services associated with the safe and reliable operations of petroleum services and associated environmental rehabilitation projects

Transportation

Essential transportation workers are defined as workers supporting or enabling transportation functions in any transportation mode (i.e. road, air, rail, marine), in support of the continued essential movement of goods and people, in circumstances where non-essential travel is restricted. For greater clarity, this includes but is not limited to:

- Workers responsible for inspecting rail transport infrastructure, controlling rail traffic, and rail operating equipment
- Workers responsible for operating dispatching passenger, commuter and freight trains and maintaining rail infrastructure and equipment
- Maritime transportation workers, including those in the commercial shipping sector who ensure the continuity of operations and the fluidity of commercial shipping, such as vessel crew, port workers, mariners, equipment operators, longshoremen, sailors, marine pilots, marine agents, representatives of foreign ship owners, maintenance workers, tug captains, and others
- Truck drivers, and conductors of other conveyances, involved in the transportation of essential goods and materials, and supporting infrastructure, capabilities, functions, and services
- Transportation workers in support of any emergency response
- Transportation service providers, including drivers, conducting transportation services necessary for activities of daily living (e.g. taxis, other private transportation providers, couriers)
- Workers in organizations that provide transportation services to businesses and individuals, including by air, water, road, and rail, including providing logistical support, distribution services, warehousing and storage, including truck stops and tow operators
- Transportation workers involved in construction work and necessary supporting services

- Workers in organizations that provide materials and services for the operation, maintenance and safety of the transportation system, such as clearing snow, collision response, and completing needed repairs to the transportation system (e.g. road repairs)
- Automotive and heavy vehicle repair and maintenance workers
- Postal and shipping workers, to include private companies
- Tow truck and vehicle rental workers
- Employees who repair and maintain vehicles, aircraft, rail equipment, marine vessels, and the equipment and infrastructure that enables operations that encompass movement of cargo and passengers
- Air transportation employees, including pilots, flight attendants and flight crew, air traffic controllers, ramp personnel, aviation security, and aviation management
- Workers who support the maintenance and operation of cargo by air transportation, including flight crews, maintenance, airport operations, and other on-and off-airport facilities workers
- Public/mass transportation workers, including those with maintenance, operations, and dispatch responsibilities

Manufacturing

- Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forestry products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood products
- Workers necessary for manufacturing, maintenance, and servicing in the defense and aerospace sectors
- Aircraft and ship Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO), including refuelling as well as routine maintenance
- Primary metal producers (e.g. steel and aluminum)
- Workers in mining and forestry, including workers on abandoned mines
- Workers necessary for the manufacturing of materials and products needed for the oil and gas sector
- Businesses that ensure global continuity of supply of mining and mineral materials and products, and that support supply chains in Canada, including: mining operations (mines and quarries) and metallurgical operations (smelters, refiners and recyclers); mineral exploration and development; mining supply and services that support supply chains in the mining industry including maintenance of operations, health and safety

Finance

- Workers who are needed to support financial transactions, advice, and services (e.g., banknote processing, payment, clearing, and settlement; wholesale funding; insurance services; benefit, compensation and pension services, wealth management; and capital markets activities)

- Workers who are needed to provide consumer and business access to banking and lending services (e.g. bank branches, ATMs, customer call centres, facilities management, and to move currency and payments (e.g., armored cash carriers)
- Workers who are needed to provide pension services and employee benefits services
- Workers who support financial operations, such as those staffing processing data and security operations centres and other control functions
- Workers and suppliers of information and communication technology, legal services, and other services, enabling the delivery of essential financial services named above

Safety

- Personnel in emergency management, law enforcement, Emergency Management Systems, fire, and corrections, including front line and management
- Workers who ensure the provision of Search and Rescue services, including those needed to coordinate and conduct search and rescue missions and communicate with those in distress
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- 911 call centre employees
- Hazardous material responders from government and the private sector
- Workers who maintain digital systems infrastructure supporting law enforcement and emergency service operations
- Workers managing medical waste
- Workers managing waste from pharmaceuticals and medical material production
- Workers at laboratories processing test kits
- Workers who support hazardous materials response and cleanup
- Workers who maintain digital systems infrastructure supporting hazardous materials management operations

Government

- Any service or activity whose disruption would result in a high or very high degree of injury to the health, safety, security, or economic well-being of Canadians or to the effective functioning of the government of Canada
- Workers involved in the creation, translation and publication of public notices, regulation, legislation, public service announcements or advertisement to ensure the dissemination of essential public information or to ensure the continuity of government
- Workers supporting ePassport, permanent residency, facial recognition, visas, Vital Statistics, Provincial or Territorial Identity card programs (e.g., drivers' licenses)
- Workers who support the operation, inspection, and maintenance of essential public works facilities and operations, including dams, bridges, heating and

cooling plants, water and sewer main breaks, fleet maintenance personnel, construction of critical or strategic infrastructure, structural engineering, geomatics, custodial health and safety requirements, environmental compliance, integrity of underground infrastructure, management of non-hazardous solid waste, traffic signal maintenance, emergency location services for buried utilities, maintenance of digital systems infrastructure supporting public works operations, and other emergent issues

- Workers who are critical to protect the health and well-being of individuals who participate in transportation; promote safety and efficiency in transportation; protect the environment from transportation-related pollution events
- Workers who support necessary functions to manage critical marine transportation and activity, including fishing activities and aquaculture operations required to maintain food supply
- Support workers for road and line clearing, and to ensure the availability of needed facilities, transportation, energy and communications networks
- Workers to ensure continuity of government property and building management
- Workers who provide temporary emergency government accommodations
- Security staff to maintain building access control and physical security measures
- Elections personnel
- Federal, provincial, territorial and municipal employees who support essential functions, support systems and services, and communications networks
- Federal, provincial, territorial and municipal employees who support the policy, program and operational systems and services needed to ensure the business continuity of government and the economic security of Canadians
- Trade Officials (FTA negotiators; international data flow administrators)
- Meteorological services
- Workers that maintain digital systems infrastructure supporting other critical government operations
- Workers at operations centres necessary to maintain other essential functions, such as income support
- Workers who support necessary credentialing, vetting and licensing operations for transportation workers
- Border and customs workers who are critical to facilitating trade in support of critical supply chain
- Workers that regulate and inspect products and businesses
- Members of the Canadian Armed Forces and employees of the Department of National Defence who are supporting operations or conducting critical activities
- Individuals employed in the Canadian Defence Industrial Base who support the essential services required to meet national security commitments to include but are not limited to, aerospace; mechanical and software engineers, manufacturing/production workers; IT support; security staff; security personnel, intelligence support, aircraft and weapon system engineers, mechanics and maintainers
- Personnel working for companies and their subcontractors, who perform under contract to Canada for the provision of materials and services for the Department of National Defence

- Personnel who support the development, production, testing, fielding or sustaining of our military weapon systems/software systems, or the infrastructure to support those activities

Other Services

- Workers such as plumbers, electricians, exterminators, escalator and elevator mechanics, home appliance service providers, and others necessary for maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences and buildings
- Educators supporting public and private K-12 schools, colleges, and universities for purposes of facilitating distance learning or performing other essential functions, if operating under guidelines for social distancing
- Hotel Workers where hotels are used for COVID-19 mitigation and containment measure
- Care and maintenance of contaminated sites
- Waste and Garbage collectors and processors (compost, garbage and recycling)
- Child care services for essential workers, and home child care services of less than six children
- Mental Health services, including for Indigenous and isolated communities (e.g. health and wellness lines)
- Professional and other services that support lawmakers and the court system to ensure individuals have access to justice where critical interests are at stake
- Those whose services are necessary to conduct hearings and ensure orders of an independent judiciary are enforced, including but not limited to: the administration of justice; criminal law; family law; and courts (e.g., prosecutors, legal aid and duty counsel, defence counsel or their representatives, sheriffs, court staff and victim support services)
- Probation Officers
- Veterinarians, veterinary technicians and necessary support staff
- Workers essential for assistance programs and government payments
- Workers supporting settlement and resettlement programs for newcomers
- Janitorial and cleaning services, including dry cleaners, laundry service providers, laundromats
- Health and welfare of animals, including boarding kennels, stables, animal shelters, zoos, aquariums, research facilities and other service providers
- Businesses that supply office products and services, including providing computer products and related repair and maintenance services, for individuals working from home and for essential businesses
- Workers needed to operate hotels, motels, shared rental units and similar facilities, including student residences
- Businesses that provide products and services that support research activities
- Land registration services, real estate agent services, home inspection services, and moving services

This list is meant to be broadly representative. Should it not sufficiently reflect the services and functions of critical infrastructure workers/employees, please send an email to CI-IE-COVID-19@canada.ca to request that a service or function be added to one of the categories above.