

Emergency Support Services Remote Mutual Aid Guide

Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

Version 1.0

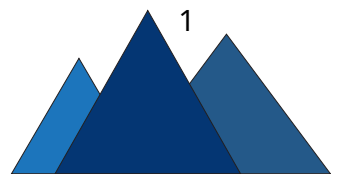


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1. Guidelines

1.1 Introduction

These guidelines were created to facilitate Remote Mutual Aid (RMA) between one or more ESS teams that are using the Evacuee Registration & Assistance (ERA) tool. This process goes beyond sharing of suppliers between ESS teams and will be used to support an ESS team(s) responding to a high volume of evacuees.

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) ESS Branch is available to support this process and will maintain a list of ESS Teams available to provide Remote Mutual Aid, hosting a secure MS Teams channel, for sharing documents and supporting ESS Teams where needed. If these services are not required, this guide can be used without provincial support.

Requesting RMA is done through your PREOC or your regional office. This is to ensure that any team providing support is covered under task.

The following options list a recommendation and an alternative process of operating RMA. While these options are a recommendation for supporting RMA, they are not the only possibilities. Teams have the flexibility to determine how they wish to conduct RMA.

1.2 Requesting RMA

- Remote mutual aid (RMA) should be requested with a resource request through an EMCR PREOC or regional office.
 - Once activated, support from various RMA teams can be coordinated by the province.
 - Requesting team will be referred to as the “host community or host team”
 - The province can coordinate with the host community/host team to confirm the level of support required.
- RMA is utilized when the need for support goes beyond current team capacity.
- RMA is supporting mutual aid with the use of the Evacuee Registration and Assistance Tool (ERA).
- RMA is utilized in addition to other mutual aid agreements.
- RMA vs. BC Evacuee Helpline:
 - Only ESS teams can issue referrals.
 - BC Evacuee Helpline and Self-Serve supports are e-Transfer only.

- Best practice is to be aware of number of available supports so not to overload supplier, specifically number of available hotel rooms and shared suppliers.

2. Option 1 (recommended)

2.1 Process

This method can be used for initial evacuee registration and/or for issuing extensions for continued supports.

At the Reception Centre

When ESS responders at a Reception Centre (RC) want support and a Remote Mutual Aid ESS Team has stood up to assist, this process can be followed:

- An evacuee is welcomed at the RC by a Meet and Greet responder. This responder will interview the evacuee to determine if the evacuee requires immediate supports.
- If the evacuee **does not** have a phone but require referrals, they are directed to the Registration and Referral responders in the RC.
 - **Reminder: commercial accommodation will not be back dated or reimbursed.**
- If the evacuee **does** have lodging confirmed (such as shelter allowance) and their immediate needs are being met, the meet and greet responder will record the evacuee's basic contact information on the Remote Mutual Aid (RMA) spreadsheet. **Including file number, DOB, first and last name.** Information for only one household representative is needed.
- Determine if the evacuee has identification as they will be required to show it when they pick up their referrals. If they do not, they will be asked to confirm their personal information.
- The evacuee can leave the RC and wait for a call from an RMA responder as long as they will be available at the phone number provided and if applicable, in a cell service area.
 - **Please note:** the evacuee should be informed of the approximate wait time to receive a call from an RMA responder. It's important the spreadsheet containing the evacuee information be kept confidential to protect privacy.
- The ESS responder should search for the evacuee on ERA to confirm status.

- The ESS responder should confirm if the evacuee is currently registered and status of the file.
- The ESS responder should confirm if the evacuee is self-registered and eligible for e-transfer supports.
 - If the evacuee is not self-registered – or has BC Services Card set up – refer evacuee to begin ID verification process with BC Services.
 - Encourage evacuees to self-register in the Evacuee Registration and Assistance tool through the BC Service app.
- The host community is encouraged to provide clear communication to the RMA teams. Including:
 - Extension dates
 - Supports given
 - Expectations
 - Ex: If applicable, winter clothing allowance, issuing gas cards etc.

The Remote Mutual Aid (RMA) Responder

- The integrated spreadsheet is held with the host community and distributes names in small groups directly to RMA teams (20 – 50 at a time).
- Once the RMA responder access to the spreadsheet and begins a file, the RMA responder will be responsible for completing the file.
 - The RMA responder will work directly with the evacuee to ensure that the needed supports are given and troubleshoot concerns or issues.
 - It is encouraged that RMA responders add Case Notes to the file, especially if there are concerns or unique situations. This supports the host RC community if they need to go back into the file to support evacuees.
- If there are issues that the responder cannot immediately support with, escalate to designated lead through the designated email or MS Teams channel.
- Once the registration and needs assessment are complete, referrals can be created in ERA. The RMA responder should print the referral and then select cancel (this will still produce a referral but prevents the referral from saving onto their computer).
 - If the evacuee qualifies for e-Transfer the RMA responder will initiate the process.

Back to the RC

- A designated RMA “lead” should be identified within the host community to lead and support RMA teams inquiries and questions.
- A designated RMA email address should be created/used to allow direct communication with the teams for escalating notes and details as required.
- The RMA responder will prepare referrals for printing by the host RC. The evacuee will be advised of a time frame for pick up from the RC.
- RMA responders will print referrals will be alphabetized and placed in a secure area awaiting evacuee pick up.
- Once directed - evacuee returns to the RC, confirms identity, and picks up referrals.
- With the designated RMA lead – as assigned within the host community - it is encouraged that the lead supports the RMA teams with the following:
 - Escalations and questions from teams, i.e., if there are questions/concerns with a file.
 - If an RMA team is unable to find or complete a file
 - Return point of communication once the RMA teams complete files and if they need referrals printed or ID verification.
 - Manage the shared document and/or provide teams with groups of names (20 – 50 at a time) to work through. Once a team completes the files of their groups of names, the lead will provide more files.
 - General designated host community point of contact for RMA teams for support.

3. Option 2 (Alternate)

3.1 Process

At the Reception Centre

When ESS responders at a Reception Centre (RC) want support and a Remote Mutual Aid ESS Team has stood up to assist, this process can be followed:

- An evacuee is welcomed at the RC by a Meet and Greet responder. This responder will interview the evacuee to determine if the evacuee requires immediate supports.

- If the evacuee **does not** have a phone but require referrals, they are directed to the Registration and Referral responders in the RC.
 - **Reminder: commercial accommodation will not be back dated or reimbursed.**
- If the evacuee **does** have lodging confirmed (such as billeting or shelter allowance) and their immediate needs are being met, the meet and greet responder will record the evacuee's basic contact information on the Remote Mutual Aid (RMA) spreadsheet. **Including file number, DOB, first and last name.** Information for only one household representative is needed.
- Determine if the evacuee has identification as they will be required to show it when they pick up their referrals. If they do not, they will be asked to confirm their personal information.
- The evacuee can leave the RC and wait for a call from an RMA responder as long as they will be available at the phone number provided and if applicable, in a cell service area.
 - **Please note:** the evacuee should be informed of the approximate wait time to receive a call from an RMA responder. It's important the spreadsheet containing the evacuee information be kept confidential to protect privacy.
- The spreadsheets will be collected by an experienced supervisor or designate at the RC. The supervisor, or designate, will update a live shared document using MS Teams.
- If using MS Teams is **not possible** due to technology limitations, this spreadsheet can be emailed, this must be done from a government or secure email (not a personal account) to protect privacy.

The Remote Mutual Aid (RMA) Responder

- The RMA responder will access the shared document via MS Teams and call the evacuee/head of household. The RMA responder will register the evacuee(s) in ERA. If the evacuee(s) self-registered in ERA, then the RMA responder will begin the needs assessment.
- Once the registration and needs assessment are complete, referrals can be created in ERA. The RMA responder should print the referral and then select cancel (this will still produce a referral but prevents the referral from saving onto their computer).
- The RMA responder will prepare referrals for printing by the host RC. The evacuee will be advised of a time frame for pick up from the RC.

- The shared document is updated by the RMA team indicating referrals are ready for printing.
 - The RMA responder indicates in the shared document that referrals are processed and ready for printing. Then, a responder at the RC will search for the evacuee and print the referrals (In situations with extensions, we will need to ensure that the RC understand which referrals need to be printed as there could be many – can be done by adding support numbers in the shared document)
 - The RMA responder saves the pdf file of the referrals that should be printed and emails that to the RC responder. Note: Under no circumstances should we email this file to the evacuee as this poses a risk for financial risk and control.
- If the evacuee qualifies for e-Transfer the RMA responder will initiate the process.

Back to the RC

- The RC supervisor, or designate, will monitor the shared spreadsheet in MS Teams for updates and print referrals when required.
- Printed referrals will be alphabetized and placed in a secure area awaiting evacuee pick up.
- Evacuee returns to the RC, confirms identity, and picks up referrals.
- The shared document is updated confirming evacuee has picked up their referrals.

4. Additional Resources

The following resources can be used to support RMA host communities and teams. Some of the materials have been created by communities to support EMCR for the use of RMA.

4.1 ESS Program Guide

[ESS Program Guide \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://gov.bc.ca)

4.2 Supplier Sharing Guide:

Please see *RMA Guide Annex 1*.

4.3 RMA Process Flow Chart – Host Community.

Please see *RMA Guide Annex 2*.

4.4 RMA Process Flow Chart – RMA Team

Please see *RMA Guide Annex 3*.

4.4 Mutual Aid Spreadsheet

Please see *RMA Guide Annex 4*.