



Accommodation

Finding a place to stay is a top priority during an evacuation. Learn about your options for temporary accommodation through Emergency Support Services (ESS) and frequently asked questions about receiving accommodation support.

There are two options available for accommodation support through ESS:

Option 1: Accommodation allowance

The accommodation allowance is financial support to help you find your own place to stay. This could mean staying with family/friends, booking a hotel/motel, or even a campsite. The allowance is paid directly to you, to help support your housing needs during your evacuation.

The accommodation allowance is \$200/night per household of one to five members, and \$400/night per household of six or more members.

If eligible, you can receive the allowance by Interac e-Transfer. Speak with your ESS responder or apply online with your BC Services Card account at ess.gov.bc.ca

Option 2: Hotel/motel referral (or group lodging facility)

A referral is a form that will give you access to a specific service like a hotel or motel. It will cover your stay for a set number of nights. Hotels may still ask for a credit card for a damage deposit, even with an ESS referral. If you do not have a credit card let an ESS responder know.

To receive a hotel/motel referral, speak with your ESS responder.

How long will I receive accommodation support?

Accommodation support is temporary, usually 72 hours, and based on your immediate needs. The length of support depends on your evacuation, and your emergency needs.

How can I receive the accommodation allowance?

You may be eligible to receive the accommodation allowance via Interac e-Transfer, or by cheque. Cheques will be mailed within 6 to 8 weeks.

Can I still stay with friends or family if I receive the accommodation allowance?

Yes. The accommodation allowance can be used in any way that works best for your needs, including staying with friends or family.

Will I be placed in a hotel if I get the accommodation allowance?

No. You are responsible for finding and booking your own place to stay.

I received a hotel/motel referral, can I switch to the accommodation allowance?

Yes, but not for overlapping days of support. For example, if you received a hotel stay for three nights, you may be eligible for the accommodation allowance after your hotel stay has expired. Speak with your ESS responder for more information or call the BC Evacuee Helpline at 1-800-387-4258.

Can people in the same household get different types of housing support?

No. Household members must receive the same type of support. If household members are independent of each other, like roommates or separated partners, they should register and receive support separately.

Can the accommodation allowance be backdated?

No, ESS is a needs-based program, and support is not backdated.

I already paid for my own accommodation. Can I get reimbursed?

No. ESS does not reimburse accommodation costs that were paid out-of-pocket before support was approved.

Am I responsible for hotel damages?

Yes. You are responsible for any damage you cause during your stay.

Can I get accommodation that meets my accessibility needs?

Let your ESS responder know about your accessibility needs when you register. They will work to find a solution that meets your needs.

What happens if the evacuation order is lifted, but I still need accommodation help?

ESS offers short-term support. If you need ongoing housing support, please refer to local agencies or community services that can help with long-term housing needs.