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WORKING TOGETHER IN AN EMERGENCY

THREE-STEP SOCIAL SECTOR ACTIVATION GUIDE FOR HOST COMMUNITIES

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Kamloops Food Policy Council



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partnership with
United Way British Columbia



Our learnings and research took place on traditional and unceded territory of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc within Secwepemcúl'ecw (Secwepemc Nation). There are more than 200 distinct First Nations in B.C., each with their own unique traditions and history. Indigenous people have always stewarded and nourished this land; these communities have been displaced for centuries and are now often most affected by climate disasters. We commit to learning from and walking alongside those who have always called this land home. We recognize an emergency response approach rooted in equity, relationality and fostering cultural safety is essential to how we move forward together.



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ABOUT THE GUIDE

This Three-Step Social Sector Activation Guide for Host Communities is a step-by-step guide that provides structure for a coordinated social response. The purpose of this guide is to offer recommendations on how a host community's social sector can work alongside Emergency Support Services (ESS) to better support evacuees. The goal of this work is to enhance local social sector coordination, increase service availability and establish equitable emergency response practices within host communities. Below is a graphic summary of the guide.

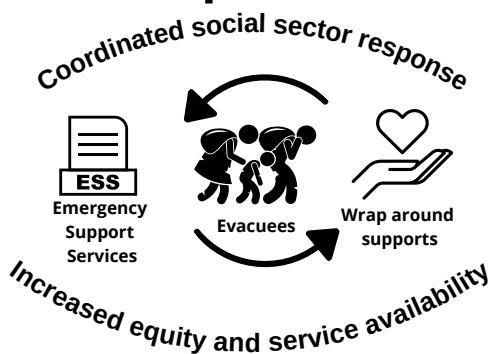
Step One



Step Two



Step Three



An Impactful Approach

Relationships | Cultural Safety | Equity | Trauma-Informed

Host communities can effectively support evacuees using community-based approaches when they understand the desires and needs of different populations throughout the region. Building respectful relationships with these communities is paramount to this work. By building these relationships before an emergency, host communities can increase their ability to respond in an appropriate and holistic way. Relationally we connect to those we know and trust. Each person affected by these disasters will be coming from a different place culturally, emotionally, socially, physically, economically, spiritually, and mentally. An equitable and trauma-informed approach that fosters cultural safety is essential for meeting each person's needs.

Before an Event

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Establish plans for a Social Sector Resource Centre | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identify potential vulnerabilities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Establish a local Social Response Task Force | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identify funding opportunities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identify roles and responsibilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Establish an external and internal communication strategy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Create a Social Response Task Force contact list | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learn about resources |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Identify local Social Sector Conveners(s) | |

Upon Activation

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implement Social Sector Resource Centre plan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refer to Social Response Task Force contact list |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contact identified Social Sector Convener(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assess funding needs and current capacity |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connect with Community Navigator(s) from the evacuated community | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Activate external and internal communication strategy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host meeting with the Social Response Task Force | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apply for funding opportunities |

ABOUT THE GUIDE

Who the Guide is For

When communities are evacuated during an emergency, they often relocate to nearby locations known as “Host Communities”¹. This guide is for host communities and provides recommendations on how a local network of organizations in the social sector can organize themselves before and during an emergency event. When a host community is “activated”², local Emergency Support Services (ESS) step in to provide immediate basic needs for evacuees. This guide is to be used by local ESS, community emergency response representatives, and social sector organizations that play a key role in emergency response in host communities. In the guide, the “Social Sector” encompasses community organizations and/or charities, Indigenous organizations, governments, and institutions working towards the health, safety, and welfare of all beings. Information on the rationale and process behind the guide can be found in Appendix A.

Objectives

This Three-Step Social Sector Activation Guide for Host Communities is designed to:

- offer pre-event planning guidance for the social sector
- create a structure for the social sector to respond alongside ESS during activation
- improve equitable response practices and increase safety and service availability for evacuees during and post ESS

What to Expect in the Guide

The guidebook includes information on the foundations of an equitable and socially focused emergency response, step-by-step recommendations for organizing the social sector before and during an event, a Social Response Task Force contact list template, a provincial resource guide, communication tips, a local resource guide template and information on the rationale and process behind the guide.

How to Use this Guide

This framework can be adapted to meet localized emergency response. Distinct communities pre-plan and respond differently depending on the type of event, services available, and capacity at the time.

¹ Justice Institute of British Columbia. (n.d.). Host communities. Introduction to Emergency Support Services. Retrieved from <https://iess.jibc.ca/modules/module-2-ess-overview/ess-response-process/host-communities/>

² Justice Institute of British Columbia. (n.d.). ESS activation levels. Introduction to Emergency Support Services. Retrieved from <https://iess.jibc.ca/modules/module-2-ess-overview/ess-response-process/ess-activation-levels/>

STEP ONE: AN IMPACTFUL APPROACH

The impact is in the approach. Host communities can take many steps before an emergency to lay the groundwork to respond in a holistic way. Emergency response can be transformed to meet unique needs by establishing a foundation for this work rooted in relationality, safety, and equity.

Relationships

Building respectful relationships with communities throughout the region is essential to this work. Community-based approaches can be taken to support evacuees in an emergency when hosts understand the desires and needs of arriving communities. Relationally we connect to those we know and trust. In building these relationships before an emergency, hosts can respond in an appropriate and holistic way.

- *Questions for reflection: Do you have relationships with communities that may be evacuated to your local community? Is the relationship reciprocal and based on mutual respect? Are you connected with other host communities that may require support or supplies when activated?*

Cultural Safety

A host community is a place of refuge for evacuees, fostering cultural safety is vital for creating spaces where all people feel respected and safe. This kind of work is a self-reflective and life-long process.

Indigenous people are disproportionately impacted by climate disasters. The history of colonization and its impacts on Indigenous communities is essential to know and understand within emergency response to take steps toward cultural safety.

As shared by Jessica Ball (2022), the concept of cultural safety asks: How safe did the service recipient experience an encounter in terms of being respected and assisted in having their cultural location, values, and preferences taken into account?”³

- *Questions for reflection: Are front line workers and volunteers fostering cultural safety? Do evacuees have access to their cultural means and practices? Do you have a foundational understanding of the history and impacts of colonization in Canada?*

“Cultural humility is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic conditioned biases, and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a life-long learner when it comes to understanding another’s experience”

- First Nations Health Authority ⁴

³ Ball, J., (2022). Cultural safety. Early Childhood Development Intercultural Partnership. Retrieved from <https://ecdip.org/cultural-safety/>

⁴ First Nations Health Authority. (2016). FNHA’s policy statement on cultural safety and humility. First Nations Health Authority. 11.

STEP ONE: AN IMPACTFUL APPROACH

Equity

Each person affected by these disasters will be coming from a different place socially, culturally, emotionally, physically, economically, mentally, and spiritually. An equitable approach to emergency response is founded on meeting the unique needs and intersections of every person.

- *Questions for reflection: Is your local emergency response approach based on how it will meet the unique and diverse needs of evacuees? Does your local response include personnel and organizations that can meet and support complex needs?*

Trauma-Informed

A trauma-informed approach is critical during an emergency, as it is rooted in safety. This practice approach encompasses how to support those who may have previously experienced trauma and or are currently in a traumatic situation. Six principles that guide a trauma-informed approach include:

- Safety
 - Trustworthiness and transparency
 - Peer support
 - Collaboration and mutuality
 - Empowerment, voice, and choice
 - Cultural, historical, and gender issues⁵
- *Questions for reflection: Are front line workers and volunteers trained in trauma-informed practice? How can your local response be more trauma-informed? How can physical spaces such as resource and reception centres be trauma-informed?*



"Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single particular technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level."
- Centre for Preparedness and Response⁶

⁵ Center for Preparedness and Response. (2020). 6 guiding principles to a trauma-informed approach. Center for Preparedness and Response. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm

⁶ Center for Preparedness and Response. (2020). 6 guiding principles to a trauma-informed approach. Center for Preparedness and Response. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm

STEP TWO: BEFORE AN EVENT

This section provides recommendations for steps the social sector and local ESS representatives can take before an event to get the social sector more prepared for activation. These are recommended steps that can be adapted and modified to distinct communities, each host community will have its own unique response.

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1. Establish plans for a Social Sector resource centre location near/alongside ESS reception centre. (responsibility of local ESS)

- *Where can the social sector be stationed to provide wrap-around support for evacuees? Is this location near or within the reception centre? How accessible is this location for evacuees?*
- Notes: _____

Optional steps for establishing a Social Sector resource centre plan:

1. Collaborate with local ESS coordinator/ representative
 2. Advocate for and request local ESS to include a resource centre location in their emergency response plan
 3. Openly discuss location of resource centre to ensure it is accessible for evacuees and the social sector
 4. Share resource centre plans with social sector and other key emergency response actors
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2. Establish a local Social Response Task Force of representatives that will commit to coming together during activation. Depending on the host community size and services available, representatives can include:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Members from other communities in the region | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Management BC | <input type="checkbox"/> United Way British Columbia | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Support Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Authority (Emergency Support and Mental Health) | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First Nation Emergency Services Society | <input type="checkbox"/> First Nations Health Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Protection Organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial Health Services Authority (Psychosocial) | <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation Organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chief and Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Response Organizations (Red Cross and Salvation Army) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional District | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Community Services (mental health, emergency shelter, food security, substance use, family services, language and cultural support, child care providers etc) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendship Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ+ Organizations | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delegated Indigenous Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Faith Based Organizations | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BC Housing | | |

STEP TWO: BEFORE AN EVENT

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3. Meet with the Social Response Task Force and identify roles and responsibilities.

Clearly outline roles and what each organization can provide during an emergency.

- *Prior to an event, host a roundtable meeting where each organization can share what they see as their role in emergency response. It is recommended to give organizations advanced notice they will be asked to publicly identify their role in localized emergency response.*
- *Also recommended are annual reviews of localized content including practice scenarios or trainings to allow everyone to know the process and ensure clarity around roles and responsibilities before an event.*

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4. Create a Social Response Task Force contact list that includes organizational roles in an emergency. (see Appendix B)

- *It is recommended that the contact list be reviewed and updated bi-annually, having an up-to-date contact list is key for an effective response.*

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5. Identify local Social Sector Convener(s) that will contact the local Social Response Task Force upon activation.

- *A Social Sector “Convener” is a local representative that will call upon the Social Response Task Force when evacuees are arriving to the host community. The Social Sector Convener is the communication person between local ESS, Community Navigator(s) from evacuated communities, and the Social Response Task Force. It is recommended the Social Sector Convener has knowledge of ESS procedures and local reception sites.*
- *Prior to an event, it is recommended that the Social Sector Convener works closely with local ESS and builds relationships with surrounding communities.*
- *If possible, it is recommended the Social Sector Convener include this role within their work or organizational portfolio to assume responsibility and availability during an event.*
- *Notes:* _____

For example: United Way BC has assumed responsibility as the Social Sector Convener in Kamloops. Upon activation, the City of Kamloops Emergency Support Services Coordinator will contact the designated representative who will activate the social sector. United Way BC coordinates meetings with the Kamloops and Areas Social Response Task Force and holds the contact list for the group.

In smaller host communities, or places with less formalized emergency response structures one or two individuals may hold the role of both ESS Coordinator and Social Sector Convener.

STEP TWO: BEFORE AN EVENT

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6. Identify potential vulnerabilities of evacuees and which agencies can address these needs.

- *What vulnerabilities could individuals be facing when arriving to the host community? (ie. mobility, mental health, substance use, language barriers, cultural safety, income etc) Are members of your local Social Response Task Force able to support these vulnerabilities?*

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7. Identify funding opportunities to support social response. (see Appendix C)

- *It is recommended that local ESS and the Social Convener work closely with their regional EMBC representative before an event to learn about funding opportunities that may be available during an event to support the social sector response.*
- *EMBC Resilience Centre Funding*
 - *Applied by municipality, First Nations communities or local authority*
- *EMBC Community Recovery Manager and Community Navigators*
 - *Applied by evacuated community*
- *Other funding may include: United Way BC Emergency Fund, Municipal Funds, Regional District, Canadian Red Cross, Salvation Army, Indigenous Organizations*

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8. Establish an external and internal community strategy.

- *How will your host community get information to evacuees? Does your community or municipality have a designated communications person? Where will this information be available online and in person?*
- *How will your local Social Sector Task Force communicate internally during activation?*

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9. Learn about resources that help build community capacity to respond.
(see Appendix C)

- *Information on Emergencies and Evacuations in BC*
- *Funding Opportunities*
- *Building Emergency Response Capacity*
- *Indigenous Resources*
- *Health and Wellness Resources*
- *Cultural Safety*

STEP THREE: UPON ACTIVATION

This section provides recommendations for steps the social sector and local ESS representatives can take during activation to have a more coordinated social response.

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2.1. Implement Social Sector resource centre plan. (responsibility of local ESS)

- *Set up space for the social sector inside or alongside the reception centre to provide information, outreach and local resources to evacuees.*
- *If possible, organizations from the evacuated community can set up in the resource centre to provide support/services directly for their community members.*

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2.2. Contact the Social Sector Convener and share information on the evacuated community. Information shared may include: where the resource centre will be located, where evacuees are arriving from, when they are arriving and any available information on the communities population and needs. (responsibility of local ESS)

- *The Social Sector Convener should try to receive as much information as they can about the evacuees, this may include being in attendance at initial response meeting with EMBC, members of the evacuated community and local ESS.*

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2.3. Contact the local Social Response Task Force and share the location of the resource centre and any available information on evacuees (responsibility of Social Sector Convener)

- *The Social Response Task Force will be contacted via email to meet with the group as soon as possible. Recommended subject line "Emergency Response Meeting Call - Social Response Task Force"*

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2.4. Host meeting with the Social Response Task Force and Community Navigator(s)/ members of the evacuated community (responsibility of Social Sector Convener)

STEP THREE: UPON ACTIVATION

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2.5. Local Social Response Task Force organizes themselves alongside ESS and coordinates their response depending on needs and services available, initial tasks include:

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3.1 Connect with Community Navigator(s) (or other representatives) from the evacuated communities to better understand the population and their needs.

- *During activation, it is the responsibility of local ESS, the Social Sector Convener and/or other identified organization(s) to communicate with the evacuated community and respond in a collaborative way that best meets the evacuees needs. Ideally, local ESS and the Social Sector Convener will have established relationships with surrounding communities before an event.*

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3.2 Refer to Social Response Task Force contact list for roles of different social actors and services available. (see to Appendix B)

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3.3 Assess funding needs and current capacity of organizations to respond.

- *What additional support or capacity may the social sector need to respond? What funding is available? Can the local government apply on behalf of the social sector? Can the evacuated communities apply for funding to support the response in the host community?*

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3.4 Activate internal communication strategy among the Social Response Task Force.

- *This may include an internal group chat or online group and scheduled meetings times etc*

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3.5 Activate external communication channel to share up-to-date resources with evacuees. (see Appendix D & Appendix E)

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3.6 Apply for funding opportunities if applicable. (see Appendix C)

- *Work closely with local ESS and EMBC to access funding opportunities to support the social sector response within the host community.*

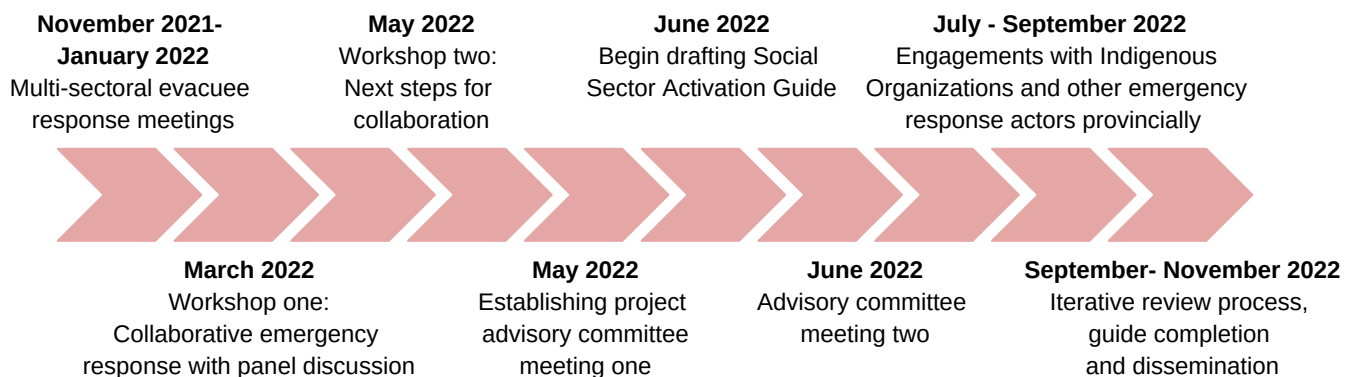
APPENDIX A: RATIONALE AND PROCESS BEHIND THE GUIDE

In British Columbia, climate disasters have an increasing impact on communities. When communities are evacuated, they often relocate to nearby locations known as “Host Communities”.⁷ When a host community is “activated”,⁸ local Emergency Support Services (ESS) step in to provide immediate basic needs for evacuees. These services are critical and essential for meeting one’s basic life-supporting needs. As we know humans have an array of needs, including social, cultural, physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional needs. Social sectors exist in communities to provide enhanced intersectional support for all demographics; this guide serves to create a structure for the social sector in host communities to provide holistic wrap-around support for evacuees alongside ESS.

This guide was created in Kamloops, a primary host community in the Interior of British Columbia located within unceded Secwépemc Territory. In response to the atmospheric river floods in November 2021, Emily Pletsch, Food Security and Emergency Response Coordinator with Kamloops Food Policy Council, and Kristi Rintoul, Community Impact Manager, Community Impact & Investment with United Way British Columbia developed a partnership to strategize how the social sector can effectively work alongside ESS during an activation, the identified question guiding this work is:

To improve collaboration between non-profit agencies, Indigenous organizations, and government (municipal, provincial and federal), what systems or practices need to be in place, in order to enhance the collective community response during an emergency? (i.e.: What is needed to provide localized, wrap-around services for evacuees and for those returning home?)

The timeline for the creation of this guide includes multiple engagements and iterative processes between November 2021 and November 2022.



This work would not have been possible without the support, insight and feedback from multiple dedicated community-driven people and organizations in Kamloops and throughout the province. It is only by doing this work together that we can discover approaches to emergency response that meet the unique needs of everyone.

⁷ Justice Institute of British Columbia. (n.d.). Host communities. Introduction to Emergency Support Services. Retrieved from <https://iess.jibc.ca/modules/module-2-ess-overview/ess-response-process/host-communities/>

⁸ Justice Institute of British Columbia. (n.d.). ESS activation levels. Introduction to Emergency Support Services. Retrieved from <https://iess.jibc.ca/modules/module-2-ess-overview/ess-response-process/ess-activation-levels/>

APPENDIX B: SOCIAL RESPONSE TASK FORCE TEMPLATE

Example contact list from Kamloops and Areas Social Response Task Force

Organization	Contact	Position	Email	Phone	Secondary Contact	Role and Services in Emergency Response
United Way BC	Name	Position	name@unitedwaybc.ca	555-5555	name2@unitedwaybc.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kamloops Social Sector Convener - Call for response and recovery fund - Support response coordination - BC211 - iVolunteer
City of Kamloops	Name	Position	name@kamloops.ca	444-4444	name2@kamloops.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ESS team hosts the reception centre and offers short term, basic, life-sustaining supports to evacuees while they are ordered from their homes during an emergency which may include lodging, food, clothing and incidentals etc - Establish plan for resource centre location - Contact Social Sector Convener upon activation
Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc	Name	Position	name@ttes.ca	666-6666	name2@ttes.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide ESS services during evacuation events - Hosting evacuees with RV's and Tenting at Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc - Hosting livestock at nearby ranch
Mount Paul Community Food Centre	Name	Position	name@cfc.ca	777-7777	name2@cfc.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space (gathering, donation, coordination) - Two kitchens - Garden space - Meals, food hampers - Volunteers

APPENDIX C: RESOURCES

Information on Emergencies and Evacuations in BC

Emergency Info BC

- <https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/>

BC Fire Service

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/wildfire-situation>
- BC Wildfire Service Mobile App
- BC Wildfire Twitter

First Nations Emergency Services Society - Emergency Updates and Information

- <https://www.fness-eoc.ca/>

Regional District, Municipality or Community

- Twitter
- Webpage

Funding Opportunities

Emergency Management Financial Supports

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/local-emergency-programs/financial>

United Way British Columbia

- <https://uwbc.ca/>

Canadian Red Cross

- <https://www.redcross.ca/>

The Salvation Army

- <https://salvationarmy.ca/>

Building Emergency Response Capacity

Emergency Management BC - Community Preparedness

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/local-emergency-programs>

First Nations Emergency Services Society - Preparing for an Emergency

- <https://www.fness-eoc.ca/preparing-for-an-emergency>

iVolunteer

- <https://www.ivolunteer.ca/>

Health Emergency Management BC - Mental Health and Wellness Recovery Toolkit

- <http://www.phsa.ca/health-emergency-management-bc-site/Documents/>

APPENDIX C: RESOURCES

Indigenous Resources

Crisis and Support

- KUU-US (Indigenous) Crisis Line - 1-800-588-8717
- Métis Crisis Line - 1-888-638-4722
- Phone Counseling (Indigenous) - Hope for Wellness 1-855-242-3310

First Nations Health Authority

- <https://www.fnha.ca/>
- FNHA Virtual Doctor of the Day: 1-855-344-3800
- Medical Office Assistants are available seven days per week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- <https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/ehealth/virtual-doctor-of-the-day>

Health and Wellness Resources

BC211

- <https://bc211.ca/>

Healthline

- Call 8-1-1
- <https://www.811healthline.ca/>

Crisis and Support Numbers

- Interior Crisis Line Network - 1-888-353-2273
- Suicide Crisis Line- 1-800-784-2433
- Provincial Mental Health Supports- 310-6789 (no area code)

Canadian Mental Health Association

- <https://cmha.ca/>

Cultural Safety

Principles of Cultural Safety

- <https://ecdip.org/cultural-safety/>

Cultural Safety in Emergency Support Services

- <http://haznet.ca/cultural-safety-emergency-support-services/>

APPENDIX D: COMMUNICATIONS

Each host community will have a different communications plan depending on the evacuee's needs and the resources available. It is highly recommended to have centralized communication and appointed personnel during activation to ensure the right information is getting to evacuees. Some helpful communications strategies can include:

- Hiring a communication personnel that works with both ESS and the Social Response Task Force
- Adding new and up to-date resources to BC211
- Up-to-date local resource guide (print and available on the web)
- Online social media groups
- Webpage or live feed on local ESS website

Questions for reflection: Are evacuees getting the information they need? Can the social sector get information to evacuees? Do evacuees know about local resources and supplies available? Are changes to resources available being updated regularly? Who is responsible for updating and sharing information?

APPENDIX E: LOCAL RESOURCE GUIDE TEMPLATE

Organization	Service Type	Address	Number	Website
Emergency Support Services (Case Management) and First Nations Emergency Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Support Services (ESS Registration Location) • First Nations Emergency Services Society • Emergency Information BC • Red Cross 				
Local Community Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC211 • Family Supports and Services • Indigenous Organizations • Social Service Agencies (Localized needs-based services) • Animal Agencies 				
Food Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Bank • Community Meal List/ Calendar • Food Security Organizations 				
Mental Health and Wellness Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Health Authority • First Nations Health Authority • Canadian Mental Health Association • Local Mental Health and Wellness Services 				
Crisis Line 24/7 Phone Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interior Crisis Line Network - 1-888-353-2273 • KUU-US (Indigenous) Crisis Line - 1-800-588-8717 • Métis Crisis Line - 1-888-638-4722 • Phone Counseling (Indigenous) - Hope for Wellness 1-855-242-3310 • Suicide Crisis Line- 1-800-784-2433 • Provincial Mental Health Supports- 310-6789 (no area code) 				
Emergency Shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Shelters, Transition Houses and Safe Houses 				