
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate
Readiness

Emergency order frees up accommodation for evacuees, emergency personnel

VICTORIA – To help ensure accommodation is available for critical-response personnel and the tens of thousands of people evacuated due to wildfires, the Province is restricting travel for the purpose of staying in temporary accommodation in several communities in the Okanagan.

“Our Province is facing the worst wildfire season in our history. Tens of thousands of people have been evacuated and crews on the ground are battling to save people’s homes,” said Premier David Eby. “We’re grateful for everyone who has listened to our call to change plans and not travel in the central Interior and the southeast. But very large numbers of people are evacuated in the Okanagan and we especially need more accommodation there. This order will help ensure we have accommodation available for the people who need it in this time of crisis.”

The Province is introducing a new order under the provincial state of emergency. Under this order, effective today until end of day on Sept. 4, 2023, people may not travel to stay in temporary accommodations for non-essential purposes in several communities. This includes hotels, motels, inns, bed and breakfasts, hostels, RV parks, and campgrounds.

This order applies to temporary accommodation in the following cities:

- Kelowna-West Kelowna;
- Kamloops;
- Oliver;
- Osoyoos;
- Penticton; and
- Vernon.

“We’re repeating our call for people to not travel to the central Interior and southeastern B.C. – and we need people to cancel any non-essential travel that takes up accommodation in communities in the Okanagan,” said Bowinn Ma, Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. “This new order will ensure that accommodation is available for evacuees and critical-response personnel like firefighters and health-care workers. We are working closely with the BC Hotel Association to quickly secure accommodations as they become available and are grateful for the industry’s co-operation in supporting people in our communities.”

The order does not impact travel through to other regions, but the Province is calling on everyone to avoid non-essential travel to the central Interior and southeast to ensure roadways are kept clear for emergency-response operations, including further evacuations. People should check information from the BC Wildfire Service, EmergencyInfoBC and DriveBC before

heading out.

Essential travel includes:

- providing emergency or critical services;
- sheltering for evacuees;
- travelling for health or medical reasons;
- transporting essential goods and supplies;
- attending court or complying with a court order;
- attending a funeral service;
- avoiding the risk of abuse or violence;
- exercising parental responsibilities;
- moving or assisting with moving to a different principal residence;
- carrying out a temporary work-related purpose, including volunteer work;
- attending classes or training; and
- exercising an Aboriginal or treaty right.

Learn More:

To read the ministerial order,

visit: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/mo/mo/m0243_2023

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