



Hay River Fire Re-Entry FAQs – updated September 8, 2023

Who decides that it is safe to return to Hay River?

The trigger for reentry for the town of Hay River will occur when the Town of Hay River Council in consultation with the following determines that it is safe to return:

- The Town of Hay River's Emergency Coordinator
- The Town of Hay River's Emergency Operations Coordinator
- Environment and Climate Change Wildfire Incident Commander
- The Community Emergency Management Committee
- Municipal And Community Affairs

Is the fire still burning?

The fire is large and will continue to burn and be attacked and contained. The re-entry has been decided based on the risk specifically to Hay River. Crews will be diligent in monitoring the fire and ensuring Hay River remains safe.

Is there a chance that we will need to evacuate again?

The risk in Hay River is at an acceptable level for return and should remain low as the fall and winter come. Crews will continue to monitor and contain the fire and evacuation may be one of the options if there was an unexpected significant change in conditions.

How has the fire been contained?

At a high level, an area that has been cleared of burnable material has been created between the fire and the town to control the fire. Additionally, hot spots have been extinguished for a distance into the fire from the cleared area.

What does an Evacuation Notice mean for those reentering the community?

An Evacuation Notice will be in place to indicate a fire event is in the area and that crews will be working on the fire. Residents should pay attention to fire and evacuation preparedness instructions.

Are the highways safe to travel on in the NWT?

The NWT Highway Conditions Map is at <https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/services/highway-system/highway-conditions-map>

How will I be notified that I can come home?



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Hay River will try to get information about re-entry out via the media but there will also be information on the town website at <http://hayriver.com> or the Town of Hay River Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Townofhayriver/>

Why are some people allowed to come back before the general public?

Essential workers that will prepare the Town for citizens to return will be brought back sooner. This list includes:

- Health Services
- Pharmacy
- Transportation
- Town Public Works and Services
- Town Protective Services
- RCMP
- Department of Infrastructure – Public Works and Services; Highways; Airport
- Utilities
- Power / Electrical
- Heat / Plumbing / Mechanical
- Telecommunications
- Water/Sewer
- Garbage
- Fuel Services
- Schools / Day Care
- Grocers
- Hoteliers / Housing NWT

Why does it take 4 days from when essential workers arrive until the public is allowed to return?

Essential workers will need time to return from where they evacuated to and then address any issues to be up and running. These include:

- Confirmation that utilities such as electricity, propane, water and sewer are functional. All systems will need to be tested prior to the public's arrival.
- Hay River Health Services will require a time frame for workers to return and to bring the hospital back online.
- Fire crews need to identify if and how the public will be protected from areas that work is still continuing.
- Time will be required for citizens to register and then aircraft scheduled for a return.



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Some of my possessions have been moved off of my property, is there help to move items back?

Hay River is organizing help in concert with the Hay River Metis Government Council. When details are available they will be made public.

I may need a ride to my home when I fly in to Hay River, is there a service?

Hay River is working on a bus service that will be waiting for you to come off your flight and drive you home.

How do I register for a flight home?

A pre-registration system similar to Yellowknife's will be set up once dates are known. Citizens will have a period of time to register for flights that will depart in yours or a nearby community and then return to Hay River.

Details will be released when they become available.

Will my fuel costs be covered?

The Government of the Northwest Territories is providing funding for those that drove to evacuate. The Evacuation Travel Support Program details are at <https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/public-safety/financial-support-and-donating>

I don't live in Hay River, can I stay in Hay River until my municipality is open?

There is no support for evacuees in Hay River. Due to the ongoing wildfire fighting activities, Hay River will not be in a position to assist evacuees from other communities.

I'm not from Hay River, can I stay where I am until my municipality opens?

If you are staying in Alberta please go for details to <https://www.alberta.ca/northwest-territories-wildfire-evacuation> . For other questions NWT Residents and evacuees can call 1-844-259-1793 or email DisasterAssistance@gov.nt.ca

My business has been impacted, is there support?

There is support for businesses at https://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/en/services/SEED_evacuation_relief

My health is compromised, should I come home now?



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HRHSSA Services will have minimal services initially and may take up to 30 days to resume all services, you should consult your health supports before returning if you have a condition impacted by smoke. Questions on health and social services:

- o <https://www.nthssa.ca/en/services/wildfire-health-services-updates/health-services-evacuees-qa>
- o <https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/newsroom/gnwt-announces-funding-evacuees-and-small-businesses>

The evacuation has been stressful, is there someone I can talk to?

Mental Health Supports are available at

<https://hayriver.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Mental-Health-Support-Available-for-Evacuees.pdf>

I did not receive income while I was away. Is there a program to assist me?

The Evacuee Income Disruption Support program can be directed to EIDS@gov.nt.ca . Q&A are at <https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/services/evacuation-travel-support-program/questions-and-answers>

Will health services be available?

Health services will operate with reduced staffing and services for a period after re-entry. Check with your health provider for details.

Should I purchase groceries in the South prior to coming home?

Grocery stores will reenter through Phase 1 – Essential Services to properly staff, order inventory and stock shelves ahead of the general public's entry in Phase 2.

Who do I call with questions?

NWT Residents and evacuees can call 1-844-259-1793 or email DisasterAssistance@gov.nt.ca to ask evacuation and re-entry questions.

Hay River Emergency Management Information Line is available at 1 833-699-0188 between 8AM and 5PM.

When will schools reopen?



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School staff will be permitted to reenter through the Phase 1 – Essential Services phase. Details on when school registration and classes will start will be provided by the District Education Authority and/or the individual schools.

When will the Liquor Store open?

The liquor store will open through Phase 2 - General Public reentry phase.