

For more information about the Community Assistance Team in British Columbia, email communityassistance@redcross.ca or visit our [website](#)

General

What is the Community Assistance Team?

- The Community Assistance Team is a pilot project designed to assist communities in British Columbia and Yukon in increasing their resilience to disasters by providing support with disaster preparedness and response planning and supplementing emergency response activities.
- The Community Assistance Team works collaboratively in partnership with communities to identify, assess, and build action plans that are tailored to the needs of each community.
- The Community Assistance Team utilizes appreciative inquiry and strengths-based approach in working with communities.
- The goal of this community-led project is to support local communities in becoming stronger and more resilient through disaster preparedness and response planning and by complementing existing processes.

Who can participate in the Community Assistance Team pilot project?

- The Community Assistance Team is designed to support all communities in BC. We encourage all communities to submit an Expression of Interest. Communities selected to participate in this pilot project will be announced in June 2023. The projects will begin as early as fall 2023.
- Priority will be given to Indigenous, remote, and rural communities.
- Communities will be selected based on several considerations which may include but are not limited to:
 - Communities that have experienced repeated emergencies;
 - Communities that have the capacity to work with the Community Assistance Team to complete the project; and
 - Community vulnerabilities, hazards, and risks.
- Communities interested in partnering with the Red Cross will need to identify staff and/or community members to work alongside the Community Assistance Team for the duration of the project. Projects can be short-term, mid-term or long-term, and will last from one month to one year.
- Expressions of Interest are being accepted between **March 13, 2023** and **April 14, 2023**. Interested communities can obtain an Expression of Interest form [here](#) or by emailing communityassistance@redcross.ca.

Why would a community want to participate in the Community Assistance Team pilot project?

What are the benefits?

- The overall goal of the Community Assistance Team is to help strengthen the capacity of communities to prepare for and respond to emergencies.
- Selected communities will be involved in every step of the project, providing guidance and input, and working collaboratively with the Red Cross to create action plans which are flexible, adaptable, and tailored to their specific needs.
- The Red Cross Community Assistance Team has a comprehensive understanding of emergency management concepts and processes coupled with diverse backgrounds in operations, planning and strategic engagement. In addition, Red Cross Community Advisors in British Columbia have experience working at the local, regional, and provincial levels of emergency management.

Is this project replacing already existing programs being offered by community partners?

- The Community Assistance Team is designed to complement existing assessment processes and disaster planning in British Columbia. The Community Assistance Team will not duplicate existing programs being offered by other organizations and will connect communities with organizations as necessary.

Selection Process

How do interested communities express their interest in participating in the Community Assistance Team pilot project?

- Communities interested in participating in the Community Assistance Team pilot project can submit their Expression of Interest form between **March 13, 2023** and **April 14, 2023**. Interested communities can obtain an Expression of Interest form [here](#), or by emailing communityassistance@redcross.ca or going online at www.redcross.ca/CAT.

What kind of questions will a community be asked during the initial selection process?

- The community selection process has been designed to be as straightforward as possible.
- The Expression of Interest form, includes a series of 14 questions such as:
 - Identifying common emergencies faced by the community;
 - Identifying which neighborhoods are most at-risk;
 - Identifying whether there are assigned personnel to support emergency management planning and response;
 - Providing information about the community's existing emergency management program and the Emergency Operations Centre (if there is one); and
 - Identifying priority areas related to emergency management preparedness.

What options are available should a community experience technical issues or otherwise require additional support while submitting their Expression of Interest?

- If a community requires assistance completing their Expression of Interest, they can email us at communityassistance@redcross.ca. Our team members are ready to help as needed. Note that this email is monitored during business hours, Monday to Friday.

What happens once a community submits an Expression of Interest in the Community Assistance Team pilot project?

- When an Expression of Interest submission is received, a Community Advisor with the Community Assistance Team in BC will follow up directly with the community. This will provide an opportunity to assess the community's needs in greater detail and help determine if it meets the criteria to be selected to participate in the pilot project.
- It is also an opportunity for the community to share best practices from previous emergency responses and some of the challenges they face.

If selected for the pilot project, what will be expected of the community over the course of the project?

- If selected to participate in the Community Assistance Team pilot project, the community will need to identify staff and/or community members to act as focal points and work with the Red Cross Community Assistance Team through the project.
- Projects can be short-term, mid-term or long-term, and will last from one month to one year.

What will happen over the course of the Community Assistance Team pilot project? What can select communities expect from the Canadian Red Cross Community Assistance Team?

- The Community Assistance Team will start by collaborating with the community to identify their needs and priorities.

- Through this collaboration, a community project will be identified, and a plan developed. This plan will outline project deliverables, roles and responsibilities, a timeline for completion and next steps.
- The Community Assistance Team will work with community members throughout the project with an emphasis on strengthening capacity.
- When the project is complete, the Community Assistance Team will submit a final report including recommendations.

Will the Red Cross communicate directly with each community that submits an Expression of Interest to inform them whether they have been selected or not?

- Yes, each community will be notified as to whether they have been selected to participate in the Community Assistance Team pilot project.

How can interested communities get more information about the Community Assistance Team?

- Communities interested in learning more about the Community Assistance Team can email communityassistance@redcross.ca or visit our [website](#). Please note, this email is monitored during business hours, Monday to Friday.

If a community is not selected to participate in the pilot project in June, will they need to submit another Expression of Interest to be considered for participation in the fall of 2023?

- No, a community that submits an Expression of Interest by **April 14, 2023** will not need to submit a second form. Their original submission will be used by the Red Cross team when selecting a community to participate in the project in the fall of 2023.

What criteria must communities meet to be considered for the Community Assistance Team pilot project?

- Communities will be selected based on several considerations which may include but are not limited to:
 - Communities that have experienced repeated emergencies;
 - Communities that have the capacity to work with the Community Assistance Team to complete the project; and
 - Community vulnerabilities, hazards and risks.

How will communities be selected?

- All Expressions of Interest that are received by April 14, 2023 will be reviewed.
- Communities that meet the selection criteria will be contacted for further information. Criteria may include but is not limited to:
 - Communities that have experienced repeated emergencies;
 - Communities that have the capacity to work with the Community Assistance Team to complete the project; and
 - Community vulnerabilities, hazards and risks.
- Communities which are shortlisted will then be reviewed by the Red Cross Community Assistance Selection Committee. Two to three communities will be selected to participate in the project in 2023. The first selected community will be announced in June.
- Expressions of Interest received by April 14, 2023 will also be used when selecting community participants in the fall of 2023. Communities will not need to submit a second Expression of Interest.
- All communities that submit an Expression of Interest will be notified about the selection process.