

General Tourism ■

Market Readiness Guidelines



General Tourism Market Readiness Guidelines

These guidelines are here to assist Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) tourism operators to receive visitors from all over the world.

We have broken them down into three types.

**The Tourism
Assurance Plan (TAP)**

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**General Market
Readiness Guidelines**

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**Export / Travel Trade
Readiness Guidelines**

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The Tourism Assurance Plan (TAP)

TAP ensures that tourism operators meet a set of minimum standards to elevate the overall quality of tourism services and attractions offered throughout our province.

These minimum standards must be met in order to participate in provincial marketing programs with NL Tourism, and activities with Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador (HNL) and regional Destination Management Organizations (DMOs).

For more information on the Tourism Assurance Plan, visit: <https://hnl.ca/resources/tourism-assurance-plan>

TAP Minimum Standards

- 1** The ability to get messages from customers by phone, email, and online (website, Facebook business page); accept credit or debit card payment (eTransfers acceptable); and respond to inquiries daily.
- 2** Maintain valid licences, permits, and all other regulatory requirements to operate.
- 3** Maintain current and sufficient levels of liability insurance. Proof of insurance to be provided upon request.
- 4** Deliver actual experiences or services being promoted and/or offered to the public.
- 5** Remain in good standing with TAP's complaints protocol.



General Market Readiness Guidelines

Communicating with Travellers

Travellers have expectations and successful tourism operators strive to exceed these expectations.

Phone & Email

- Use a professional greeting.
- Receive and respond to messages within 24 hours or less.
- Have a professional email address (example: businessname@businessname.com).
- Provide an out-of-office message with details like specified return dates, and alternate ways of getting in touch.
- Have a separate dedicated business line.
- Provide customer service in a friendly, professional manner.

Website & Listing on NewfoundlandLabrador.com

- Use 'Descriptions' section wisely: describe the experience customers will enjoy.
- Have a professional business URL for site.
- Be mobile-friendly and responsive.
- Include social media and external links like Facebook, TripAdvisor, etc.
- Actively engage and update with current, relevant content.
- Provide content in other areas of NewfoundlandLabrador.com, including other experiences, programming, and offerings.
- Provide online booking and instructions (if applicable).
- Provide eCommerce (if applicable).
- Use high-resolution videos and photos.

Basic information that should be included.

Business name and location,
email address, phone number,
mailing address.

Accurate map coordinates
for your location.

Dates and hours of operation.

Business overview of
products and/or services.

Rates and cancellation policy,
if applicable.

Online Presence and Social Media

Follow and engage with NL Tourism's social channels. Use hashtags #ExploreNL and #IcebergsNL and mention @NLtweets and @IcebergTweets. 'Like' the page 'Newfoundland & Labrador Tourism' on Facebook, and chat with users as they plan their vacation.

Facebook, TripAdvisor & Other Social Media Tools

- Have a dedicated business page / account, with business name in the address.
- Active and friendly engagement in conversations.
- Always respond professionally to comments.
- Use high-quality videos and photos.
- Provide regular updates with current, relevant content.
- Encourage previous guests to leave comments and ratings.
- Provide basic information (see above).

General Business Operations

- Provide a published pricing policy.
- Provide a clear billing, payment, and cancellation policy.
- Have a marketing strategy and materials like a website, social media, brochure, or rack card.
- During operating season, maintain a 24-hour (or less) response time for inquiries, reservation, and booking requests.
- Be prepared to accept reservations by phone, online, and/or email, and provide same-day confirmation of booking arrangements.
- Have friendly frontline staff trained in customer service.
- Have high-resolution images and video footage for promotional and training purposes.
- Make products available that are reflective of market demands.
- Provide support for international media and travel trade familiarization tours.
- Offer currency exchange rates consistent with industry norms.
- When targeting groups, make sure you can accommodate – e.g., tour bus access and parking, washroom facilities, maximum group sizes, group pricing, and frontline staff trained to deal with larger groups that can speak the language of the guests.

Your site should be regularly maintained, including beautification, landscaping, and on-site maintenance, and include

Clear welcome and directional signage.

Clean washrooms.

Friendly and welcoming staff.

Opportunities for photos / selfies.

Access to free wi-fi.

On-site and well-lit parking areas.

Cleanliness is paramount.

Comfortable, clean furniture.



Export / Trade Travel Market Readiness Guidelines

Basic Expectations of Travel Trade

Are you ready to partner with national and international travel companies so they can include your tourism experience in their sales packages?

Provincial operators can work with the NL Tourism Travel Trade Team to market experiences with national and international tour wholesalers and distributors.

Tourism services, attractions, and experiences must meet the TAP minimum standards and Market Readiness standards that follow.

Tourism Operators Understand:

- Travel Trade distribution channels.
- Inventory availability for international tour wholesalers and distributors.
- Established commissions and/or rates.
- Roles played by tour operators, travel wholesalers, and retail travel agents.
- Rack or retail pricing, agent commissions, and wholesale net rates.
- Laws and regulations that can affect or impact clients in each market.

Tourism Operators Provide:

- Reliable booking systems and billing accuracy.
- Booking, cancellation policies, allocations, and yield management.
- Year-round availability and support.
- 24-hour response times with detailed information.
- High-level of service and consistent product experience.
- Billing arrangements with the tour operator, wholesale agency, or receptive tour operator.
 - » Standard payment for invoicing operators is within 30 days.
 - » It's not feasible for an international operator to provide separate deposits and/or payment for each booking.

Additionally, Tourism Operators Must:

- Be in operation for at least one year with a history of providing professional services.
- Have a proven track record using export-ready pricing structures.
- Be willing to provide contracted wholesale rates and thus offer commissionable product.
 - » 10%-25% off the retail price for tour packages, day activities and transportation, and accommodation products.
 - » Contracted wholesale rates and conditions must be honoured and sellers must refrain from raising prices and changing conditions before the expiry of the agreement.
- Participate in co-op marketing and sales plan programs.

Have Questions?

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