

PHYSICIAN Q&A: Updated Employment Support & Income Assistance (ESIA) Medical Assessment Form and Process

1. Why is the Employment Support and Income Assistance (ESIA) Medical Assessment Form being updated at this time?

Government-wide measures are being implemented to reduce the administrative burden currently placed on physicians in Nova Scotia. These measures will support Nova Scotia's continued delivery of a patient-focused health care system.

The Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness (the Office) has partnered with Doctors Nova Scotia and the Department of Community Services (DCS) to reduce unnecessary administrative burden on physicians with an updated ESIA Medical Assessment Form.

The ESIA Medical Assessment Form was identified by physicians as time consuming and difficult to complete, and they sought clarity on requirements for several form sections.

2. How can I find the ESIA Medical Form?

You can now find the ESIA Medical Form on both EMR systems by searching 'Medical Assessment, Employment Support and Income Assistance - Nova Scotia Community Services'

Please note the form cannot be found using 'medical form 302' or 'form 302'. In the Accuro Forms library, there is an older form that will come up if you enter '302' but it is not the current form. The easiest way to search for the current form is using the word 'Employment'.

To access in Accuro: There is a Publish/Download feature in the Forms Editor. If you click on Tools>Publish/Download, it opens the Accuro Forms library. You then search for 'Employment', select the form, and download it. Once it is downloaded, it is available for you any time you want to use it. It becomes part of the list of Standard Forms in your instance of the EMR.

To access in Med Access: In a visit, you can opt to add a new task and select form as the task type. This will display the list of favorite forms. If the form is not in the list, you put 'Employment' in the search box at the top of the page. The search results will return the form and you can then select and complete the form.

3. How can I access the form if I don't have the EMR system?

If you do not have access to the EMR system in your clinic you can also access the form via the Digital Health Toolkit- <http://nsproviderdigitalhealthtoolkit.ca/>

On the Digital Health Toolkit landing page, the form can be found under “Related Documents” on the right-hand side of the page. At the end of the FAQ, you will find information on how to configure your browser to open a fillable PDF, using Microsoft Edge and/or Google Chrome web browsers.

4. What are the improvements to the ESIA Medical Assessment Form?

Through feedback received from health care professionals and ESIA staff, several issues were identified. Outlined below are those issues and how the updated and improved form addresses them.

Issue Identified	Improvements Made
The form is too long.	The number of sections to be completed has been streamlined from 8 pages to 6. Health care professions will complete the form in its entirety or relevant sections to the client/patient’s situation. There is a 10-15% reduction in completion time for the 2022 version of the form, and a 30% reduction in completion time compared to the older (pre-2022) form.
The form is an administrative burden.	The form is now in the EMR system. Client/patient and physician tombstone information will populate automatically. Once completed the fillable form can be sent by fax-to-email to DCS.
Physicians were not needed to fill out the form for every instance.	The form may be completed by either the physician OR a Physician Assistant (PA), Nurse Practitioner (NP), Nurse and, where relevant and appropriate, Registered Dietician, Occupational Therapist and other designated medical professionals.
The Health Information Protection Act (HIPA) governs the sharing of medical information.	Health care professionals will confirm they have informed the patient that medical information will be provided to DCS to be used in the determination of medical or health-related assistance.
Physicians are uncertain which section(s) to complete for each client.	The client/patient will bring a letter to the physician which specifies the need for form ESIA – 302 Medical Assessment to be completed. The form should be completed in its entirety and include any supporting documentation. A direct

Issue Identified	Improvements Made
	contact name and number for the caseworker will be on the letter.
Physicians are uncertain how the form is used and how it impacts a client's basic assistance.	The medical form is used to determine additional supports a client may need. The information provided does not impact a client's basic assistance entitlement.
There is too much back-and-forth between ESIA staff and physicians to clarify information.	Clarification will be discussed with the client/patient. Whenever possible, the caseworker will review existing medical documentation contained within a casefile to substantiate the medical information need. Other treating professionals, such as pharmacists, social workers or other health professionals may also be consulted when special need requests or employment participation abilities are unclear.

5. Is there any change to when the ESIA Medical Assessment Form is required?

Yes and No. There are no policy changes related to the new medical assessment form. As current policy states, medical documentation is only required when there is no existing documentation on file to support eligibility for enhanced rate, employment participation, or specific medical-related special needs. Health care professionals can specify whether the medical condition prevents participation temporarily (and to what date), or indefinitely. We have eliminated the need to have the form updated periodically for clients who are impacted indefinitely.

6. How do I submit a completed form?

Forms can be sent to the Department of Community Services via fax to 902-424-0502.

If you have immediate and urgent questions about the form or the sections therein, please contact the caseworker identified on the client letter.

7. How does the client/patient receive a copy of the form?

Clients may make a request to their caseworker, same as any other document on their file.

8. Are there any changes to the billing process and payment amount?

Billing can now take place in one place versus the health care professional going to another platform. There is no change to the fee structure of completing forms for ESIA at this time.

How to configure Google Chrome browser to open fillable .PDF documents

The following document will walk through configuring your Google Chrome browser to properly display fillable (dynamic) .PDF documents.

Process:

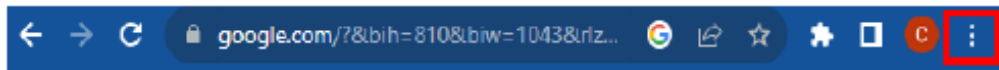
1. Open the Chrome browser.



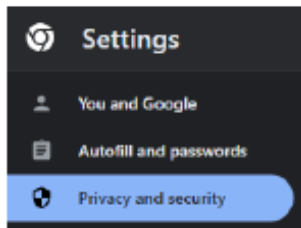
2. Make sure your browser window is maximized (full size) by clicking the maximize box in the top right-hand corner of the Chrome browser window.



3. Click the ellipses (3 Dots) in the top right-hand corner and scroll down to 'Settings'



4. Select 'Privacy and Security' under Settings on the left-hand side.



5. Under 'Privacy and Security' select 'Site Settings'
6. Scroll down to 'Additional Content Settings' and then select 'PDF documents'.



7. Change the setting to 'Download PDF's' and change the setting to 'Download PDF's'.



How to configure Microsoft Edge browser to open fillable .PDF

The following document will walk you through configuring your Microsoft Edge browser to properly display fillable (dynamic) .PDF documents.

Process:

1. Open the Edge browser.



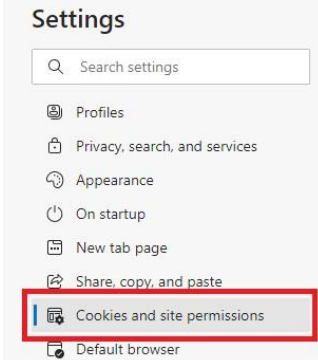
2. Make sure your browser window is maximized (full size) by clicking the maximize box in the top right-hand corner of the Edge browser window.



3. Click the three dots in the top right-hand corner and scrolled down to “Settings”.

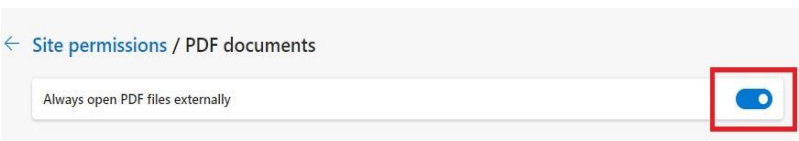


4. Select “Cookies and site permissions” under Settings on the left-hand side.



5. Scroll and select “PDF documents”.

6. Turn on “Always open PDF files externally” by selecting the button to the right (see below).



7. Completely close your Edge browser.

8. Reopen the form link.