

BC Ferries Sport Experience Program

Applications must be submitted at least 10 business days (between and including Monday to Friday, not including weekends and public holidays) before the first day of travel.

Funding is available for travel from April 1st, 2025 through March 31st, 2026.

BACKGROUND:

BC Ferries and viaSport British Columbia recognize that travel is often a barrier to amateur sport teams and organizations as they seek competitive opportunities for their athletes.

To assist in removing this barrier, the BC Ferries Sport Experience Program has been developed to provide travel support to not-for-profit sport organizations. Eligible applicants may apply for up to two one-way passenger vouchers per eligible traveller. Through this exciting program, BC Ferries and viaSport British Columbia assist with ferry travel costs for athletes, coaches, and team managers.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Applications may be submitted individually or on behalf of a group by:

- Athletes aged 18 years and younger or someone representing the athlete (e.g. parent, guardian, coach) **When multiple athletes from one club or organization are applying for travel to the same event, only one application should be submitted**
- Not-for-profit Provincial or National Sport Organizations
- Not-for-profit Local Sport Organizations, clubs and associations that:
 - Are a member in good standing with an appropriate Provincial Sport Organization OR are working in partnership with an appropriate provincial organization; and
 - Demonstrate inclusive and equitable practices that maximize sport, recreation, physical activity, and leadership opportunities in the community
- Coaches or officials traveling to a recognized certification or professional development opportunity

TRAVEL ELIGIBILITY

Vouchers may be used by athletes aged 18 years and younger that are traveling to compete in International Events, National Championships, Western Canadian Championships, Provincial Championships, or Selection Camps in British Columbia (does not include pre-season, tournaments, regular season league or event play).

Eligible events are defined as:

International Event: An elite-level event such as a World Cup where you have qualified to represent Canada.

National Championship: An event sanctioned by the relevant NSO where you have qualified to represent B.C. The winner of said event would be crowned National Champions.

Western Championship: An event sanctioned by the relevant PSO/NSO where you have qualified to represent B.C. The winner of said event would be crowned Western Canadian Champions.

Provincial Championship: An event sanctioned by the relevant PSO where you have qualified to represent your city or region. The winner of said event would be crowned Provincial Champions.

Selection Camp: A camp or event after which an athlete is chosen by the relevant PSO or NSO to represent Team BC or Team Canada.

- In the event of uncertainty, viaSport will contact the relevant PSO or NSO to determine event eligibility.
- Coaches and managers traveling with athletes are eligible to be included in applications, but **the priority of the program is to fund travel for athletes**. Additional parent chaperones are not eligible to receive funding.
- Please note that teams traveling to BC Secondary School Senior Provincial Championships are not eligible for funding from this program. These teams may be eligible for coverage from the Sport on the Move grant program, and should speak with their school's principal and/or athletic director for more information.

APPLICATION CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT:

Applications will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Submitted by an eligible applicant (as outlined above) using the online form
- Submitted a minimum of **10 business days** (*between and including Monday to Friday, not including weekends and public holidays*) before the first date of travel. Exceptions will **not** be made for late applications
- The following holiday dates are **not** included when calculating 10 business days: Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, BC Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Family Day

Due to overwhelming demand, we are unable to fulfill all applications and requests. Priority will be given to: 1) Athletes aged 18 years and younger traveling to (in descending order): International Events, National Championships, Western Canadian Championships, Provincial Championships, Selection Camps 2) First time users of the program.

The goal of the program is to support as many athletes as possible. Based on priorities and demand, certain applications may only be approved for partial funding (i.e. a request for a round trip may be approved for a one-way trip).

APPLICATION SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION:

Applications are collected on a rolling intake basis and ordered by travel date. Applications are then prioritized based on the outlined criteria above, and funding is allocated based on funds available.

It is viaSport's policy to notify every grant applicant of the status of their application. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by email between two and 8 business days before the first day of travel outlined in the application.

If successful, vouchers will be emailed in PDF format to the email address provided in the application. In order to be valid for travel, **the vouchers must be printed out and presented to the BC Ferries agent at the ticket booth at time of check-in. Vouchers presented on electronic devices will not be accepted. Vouchers are valid for only the routes/dates shown. Unauthorized use of the voucher will result in the inability for BC Ferries to apply the applicable subsidy to your travel fares.**

CONDITIONS:

Applicants agree to and acknowledge the following conditions:

- A maximum of two one-way passenger vouchers per eligible traveller will be considered and partial funding may be awarded based on demand.
- All information provided in the application is true and complete.
- Vouchers are only valid for the event, route, and dates specified on the application. Once the application is submitted, changes cannot be accommodated.
- Vouchers are only valid if printed (vouchers will not be accepted at the terminal by showing a smart phone or computer screen).
- Applications received within the 10 business day deadline will not be considered.

If successful, applicants will be asked to complete a survey to report on the outcomes of the event and trip. The survey will be distributed to successful applicants via email after travel has concluded.

HOW TO APPLY:

Deadline: Applications will be accepted if submitted a minimum of 10 business days before the first day of travel. You may submit an application here:

https://viasportgrants.smapply.io/prog/bc_ferries_sport_experience_program/

Application Steps:

- Complete the online application form on the viaSport website (see **Important Online Application Note** below)
- An automatically-generated email will be sent to the email address provided in the application to confirm that you have successfully submitted an application (*make sure to check your junk/spam folder*)
- Two to 8 business days before the first day of travel, you will receive another email to notify you of the status of your application
- If successful, the email will contain PDF vouchers – you **MUST** print out the vouchers before traveling

CONTACT AND OTHER GRANTS:

If you wish to discuss your request and its eligibility prior to applying, please contact:

Grants at viaSport BC

Phone: 778-655-1756

Email: grants@viasport.ca

If you wish to learn more about how we are transforming and scaling the impact of sport in our province, upcoming grant opportunities, and the latest sport and physical activity news in BC:

- Sign up for our [monthly newsletter](#)
- Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#)
- Visit viaSport.ca

IMPORTANT UPDATE FOR VOUCHER HOLDERS – HORSESHOE BAY TERMINAL

Starting October 15, 2025, BC Ferries requires reservations for all travel from Vancouver (Horseshoe Bay) to Nanaimo (Departure Bay) due to terminal construction.

If you're using a voucher or gift certificate, please:

- Call BC Ferries at 1-888-223-3779 to book and pay in advance;
- Provide your voucher number during the call;
- A credit card is required to hold the booking (no-show fees apply);
- Bring your voucher to the terminal with you just in case.

Travel from Nanaimo (Departure Bay) to Vancouver (Horseshoe Bay) remains unchanged — you can still book online with a voucher.

More info: www.bcferries.com/hsb-travel