

Coming September 16: New Vision Care Benefits Plan for First Nations in BC



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

On September 16, 2019, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) will launch a new vision benefits plan for First Nations clients in British Columbia. The new plan is designed to improve the claiming experience for clients and vision care Providers and is based on extensive engagement with First Nations communities.

The new plan will be administered by Pacific Blue Cross. Features of this plan:

- Eye exams will be reimbursed up to \$100 every two calendar years.
- Standard prescription eyewear will be reimbursed up to \$275 every two calendar years (or up to \$415 for high-index).
- Pre-approvals only required for exceptional client needs beyond these amounts.

Vision care Providers in BC will be able to submit pay-direct claims on behalf of FNHA clients through the Pacific Blue Cross website at pac.bluecross.ca/provider.

The FNHA is the only province-wide health authority of its kind in Canada. Its vision is to support the health and well-being of approximately 144,000 First Nations people in BC. Currently, benefits for vision care is processed at the FNHA, while dental as well as medical supplies and equipment are administered through the Indigenous Services Canada Non-Insured Health Benefits program. Under the guidance of FNHA, all of these benefits will be administered by Pacific Blue Cross as of September 16.

Joe Gallagher, CEO of the FNHA, said partnering with Pacific Blue Cross will allow the FNHA to draw on the experience of a health benefits Provider that has a successful track record of working with both health care Providers and clients. “We are confident Pacific Blue Cross will be an excellent partner. The organization has a comprehensive and effective health claims infrastructure and it has demonstrated a collaborative approach as well as a strong commitment to [Cultural Safety and Humility](#).”

The FNHA and Pacific Blue Cross will share more detailed information with vision care Providers in BC prior to launch, with support from the Opticians Association of Canada. For more information on the First Nations Health Benefits Plan, visit fnha.ca.