



## TWO -TIER SYSTEM FOR MINERAL EXPLORATION IN NL



Prepared by:

Exploration Approvals Section  
Mineral Lands Division  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Section 41(1) of the **Mineral Regulations** (the Regulations) requires those carrying out mineral exploration work on a mineral licence or mining lease to submit a plan of work prior to beginning the work. For planned exploration work using mechanical equipment that has the potential to impact the environment (i.e. ground disturbance, water quality impairments, disruption to wildlife), Section 41(2) of the Regulations requires an exploration approval be issued.

The current process to carry out mineral exploration described below consists of having separate forms for planned exploration work that will require either a Letter of Acceptance or Exploration Approval, depending on the scope of the work planned. The term for both types is two years.

## **LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE**

Exploration work under this section generally involves grassroots-style prospecting work and has negligible to minimal impact on the environment.

The process for this type of work includes submission of the completed [application](#) to the Mineral Lands Division ([Prospecting@gov.nl.ca](mailto:Prospecting@gov.nl.ca)) in accordance with Section 41(1) of the Regulations. This process involves a limited referral, including to the Provincial Archaeological Office of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation; and for work in Labrador, the Department of Indigenous Affairs and Reconciliation (IAR). IAR provides direction on the requirements to carry out Indigenous consultation.

Upon successful completion of this process, Mineral Lands Division will issue a Letter of Acceptance, which includes general conditions/statements that the planned work is subject to.

In addition, all work planned for Labrador Inuit Lands (LIL) requires a Work Plan Approval issued by the Nunatsiavut Government under the **Mineral Exploration Standards Regulations** under the **Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement**. Since the LIL Work Plan can only be issued for one calendar year, it will need to be reapplied for if the planned work extends beyond one year so that it corresponds to the two-year term of the Letter of Acceptance.

## **EXPLORATION APPROVAL**

Exploration work under this section typically employs mechanical equipment that can have a minimum to high level of ground disturbance or impact on the environment.

The process for Exploration Approval includes submission of an [application](#) to the Mineral Lands Division ([exploration\\_approval@gov.nl.ca](mailto:exploration_approval@gov.nl.ca)) in accordance with Section 41(2) of the Regulations.

Applications for Exploration Approval are referred to all applicable agencies, including those for the Letter of Acceptance and multiple other government departments, including municipal governments. For work in Labrador, the IAR is referred to provide direction on the requirements to carry out Indigenous consultation.

Upon successful completion of this process, Mineral Lands Division will issue an Exploration Approval, which includes general conditions/statements that the planned work is subject to.

In addition, all work planned for Labrador Inuit Lands (LIL) requires a Work Plan Approval issued by the Nunatsiavut Government under the **Mineral Exploration Standards Regulations** under the **Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement**. Since the LIL Work Plan can only be issued for one calendar year, it will need to be reapplied for if the planned work extends beyond one year so that it corresponds to the two-year term of the Exploration Approval.

## GENERAL

In addition to the above, exploration work may be subject to other municipal, provincial, and federal regulatory requirements:

### Municipal

- E.g., Development permit under a municipality's development regulations

### Provincial

- E.g., Commercial cutting permit, operating permit, permit to alter a body of water (fording or culvert), Protected Public Water Supply Area Permit, Wellhead Protected Permit, Highway Right of Way Permit, Paleontological Permit, Lease to Occupy Crown Lands, Core Disposal Permit, etc.

### Federal

- E.g., Compliance to **Species at Risk Act**, Communications/Radio Station Licence, Authorization of Explosives, Nuclear Substances and Radiation Devices Licence, Federal Storage Tank Systems for Petroleum Products, etc.

Note: This list is not all inclusive or indicative of any and all required permits for every mineral exploration program permitted in the province.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of Industry, Energy and Technology

Mineral Lands Division

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Natural Resources Building

50 Elizabeth Avenue

P.O. Box 8700 St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Email: [exploration\\_approval@gov.nl.ca](mailto:exploration_approval@gov.nl.ca)

OR

Email: [Prospecting@gov.nl.ca](mailto:Prospecting@gov.nl.ca)

Web page: [Forms and Applications - Mines - Industry, Energy and Technology \(gov.nl.ca\)](http://Forms and Applications - Mines - Industry, Energy and Technology (gov.nl.ca))

This brochure is prepared for reference only. The [Mineral Act, RSN 1990, Chapter M-12](#) and the [Mineral Regulations](#) should be consulted for the purposes of interpreting and applying the law.