



# MANITOBA REOPENING PHASE 3

## JUNE 21ST

Dear people, As of June 21, 2020, the province of MB has further loosened some restrictions around COVID-19. After consulting with Manitoba Health, the Hutterian Safety Council COVID-19 Taskforce can now provide further updated information on our communal dining rooms, places of worship, and updates regarding inter-provincial travel.

### Communal Dining Room Update

HSC can now verify that dining halls on Hutterite communities can begin operating at full capacity as long as the guidelines outlined below are followed.

- The number of people seated in the communal dining room is not limited when there is at least a two-metre separation between persons sitting at different tables.
- The flow of traffic into or out of the dining spaces should flow in a single direction to limit interactions between persons.
- Sanitizer stations should be established at each entrance and signs posted encouraging people to practice good hand hygiene.
- Manitoba Health **strongly recommends a 6-foot physical distancing between people waiting in line** to be served
- The Public Health Orders in Manitoba **prohibit buffet-style food service**. Manitoba Health allows each individual's plate to be dished out by a team of servers. **Only the servers should handle the dishing utensils and other common containers.**
- HSC recommends that sanitizer be available at each table group.
- Although it's allowable to sit reasonably close together, it's recommended that people outside of immediate or extended family members physically distance themselves.
- Singing: Choir singing is currently still strongly recommended against by Manitoba Health because of the proximity of choral members to each other and due to a higher risk of transmission through singing as compared to speaking.
- Care must be taken when exiting the dining hall to stagger the groups leaving so that intermingling is reduced.

### Inter-Community Travel

Health Manitoba and HSC offers the following updates for inter-community travel:

- Visiting immediate family members within Manitoba is fine (brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, grandparents, etc.), but safe practices should remain in place, such as regular hand-washing, disinfecting of often-touched surfaces, and so on. Be cautious when visiting with members outside your immediate family and avoid close contact such as handshaking and hugging.
- Outdoor spaces have a lower risk associated with them, so it's recommended that people spend time out of doors whenever possible.
- Non-essential travel remains not recommended by Public Health Officers. If you do visit, exercise caution.

*\* Please keep in mind that the risk of virus transmission is not over. In fact, as the outbreaks in South Dakota and in Saskatchewan have indicated, once the virus enters a colony, it can spread quickly and extensively, especially where proper protocols are not in place. In the words of Jackie Treen, a manager of Public Health in Saskatchewan, the results were "very, very sick people" in some of these communities.*

*Let's keep the safety protocols in mind and be mindful of the vulnerable among us.*

## Travel Outside of MB

- Anyone entering Manitoba from designated western Canadian jurisdictions (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the Yukon, Northwest and Nunavut territories) or Northwestern Ontario (defined as west of Terrace Bay) is not required to self-isolate for 14 days if they are asymptomatic and have no known exposure to COVID-19.
- Travellers from all other Canadian jurisdictions will need to continue to self-isolate for 14 days after arriving in Manitoba.
- Anyone entering Canada from the USA or other countries must continue to follow federal requirements of 14 days of self-isolation at the time of entry.

*\*\* The Hutterian Safety Council recommends strong caution when travelling to or returning from Hutterite communities in South Dakota, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. There have been many serious outbreaks of COVID-19 on multiple colonies there and diligent caution should be undertaken to try to ensure the virus stays out of Manitoba.*

## Worship Spaces Reopening

HSC consulted with Manitoba Health on how to practically apply Phase Three guidelines to our setting, and we arrived at the following:

- The maximum allowable number of persons in a space is 30% of the site's occupancy. For example, if a church has a capacity of 200 people, 30% of 200 or 60 people are allowed to attend.
- If a space has a capacity of 300 people, 30% of 300 or 90 people are permitted to attend. In this case, two groups of 45 could gather in the churches as long as the two groups are segregated. This can easily be accomplished in our churches because women and men already sit apart from each other. (The aisle can be understood as a sufficient barrier.)
- Spacing between the two groups (which can be no larger than 50 per side) should be at least 6 feet. In community churches where the center aisle is less than 6' wide (space between men and women sections) restrict the seating immediately next to the aisle to create an effective space of 6' between the groups.
- People seated within each group should be seated **physically separated from each other by 6 feet** unless they are family members.
- Where possible the groups of up to 50 people (x2) should use separate entrances in order to limit contact between groups. In cases where community churches have a single entrance, the groups should stagger their entrance so that all of one group enter followed by the 2nd group. Minimize mingling of the groups as much as possible. Because of our traditional and orderly way of exiting the building, no further requirements need to be in place.
- Good hygiene (e.g. frequent hand washing) continues to be the single most effective practice individuals can engage in to minimize the risk of transmitting the virus. Hand sanitizer should be used by all congregants as they enter the building.
- Congregational singing in church is deemed safe if physical distancing between congregants is maintained. At this time, Manitoba Health recommends keeping congregation singing time under 10 minutes. Manitoba Health strongly recommends against choral singing.

As all of Manitoba enters Phase 3 of the opening strategy, Health Manitoba warns us of the risk of a additional waves of COVID-19. If we are cautious, we can avoid a serious second wave.

All the Best and Stay Safe,  
Hutterian Safety Council  
COVID-19 Taskforce

Any questions or concerns please contact HSC directly at: [hbcovid19@hbsafe.farm](mailto:hbcovid19@hbsafe.farm)

