

Public Health Orders and Churches

The full current Manitoba public health orders, effective June 26, 2021, are available here: https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/proactive/20212022/orders-soe-06252021.pdf. The orders most directly relevant to churches are numbers 2, 23, and 31. The guidance around these orders from public health is available here: <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/prs/index.html#guidance>. The following is the guidance most directly relevant to churches.

General Gatherings

Indoor gatherings on private property are not permitted.

Indoor gatherings in public spaces are limited to 5 people.

Outdoor gatherings on private property are permitted up to 10 visitors in addition to those who reside there. Visitors may briefly enter the home for essential reasons.

Outdoor gatherings in public spaces are permitted up to 25 people.

Specific Gatherings

Drive-in events are restricted to household members only, and people may leave their vehicle while observing public health measures.

Funerals can have up to 10 people indoors or 25 people outdoors, in addition to the officiant, under clear COVID-19 protection protocols.

Weddings can have up to 10 people indoors or 25 people outdoors in addition to the officiant and a photographer or videographer.

Food banks and other charities or groups that provide or distribute food or hampers to persons in need may operate if measures are implemented to ensure that staff, volunteers and members of the public are reasonably able to maintain a separation of at least two metres from others while at their premises.

Self-help groups for persons dealing with addictions or other behaviours can hold meetings at 25 per cent capacity of the premise where meetings take place or 25 persons, whichever is lower.

Day camps [and thus Sunday school classes] are open to a maximum of 20 participants in groups.

Worship Services

Places of worship can open for worship services to 25% of capacity to a limit of 25 people indoors or 50 people outdoors. For indoor services, all persons attending must wear a mask. For both indoor and outdoors services, measures must be taken to ensure that people attending the service can maintain a separation of at least two metres from people of other households.

Baptisms or similar religious ceremonies can be held under general gathering guidelines (above).

Masks

A person who enters or remains in an indoor public place must wear a mask in a manner that covers their mouth, nose and chin without gapping.

The operator of an indoor public place must ensure that every person who is not wearing a mask while in the indoor public place is given a reminder to do so as soon as possible following entry.

Masks are not required if people are seated at least two metres from others, or if there is a non-permeable physical barrier, such as a plexiglass barrier. However, people need to wear a mask at all times while moving to or from their seated position within the indoor public place.

In addition, employees, contractors or operators of an indoor public place do not need to wear a mask while they are in an area where members of the public do not normally have access, or if they are behind a non-permeable physical barrier, including a plexiglass barrier.

People who do not have to wear masks include:

- a child who is under five years of age;
- a person with a medical condition that is unrelated to COVID-19, including breathing or cognitive difficulties or a disability, which prevents them from safely wearing a mask; and
- a person who is unable to put on or remove a mask without the assistance of another person.