

Bulletin #2020-32

Addendum

MUNICIPAL RELATIONS

**Important Notice to
Elected Officials and Chief Administrative Officers in
Northern Manitoba**

EFFECTIVE: OCTOBER 26, 2020

COVID-19 – Municipal Governance – FAQs – Update

Northern Health Region and Churchill: Restrictions under the Pandemic Response System

Effective October 26, 2020, Manitoba's public health officials elevated the #RestartMB Response System level for the Northern Health Region and Churchill to **Orange: Restricted**. Targeted public health orders are now in place in the region to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The public health order prohibiting travel to northern Manitoba and remote communities remains in place.

The Northern Health Region and Churchill COVID-19 Prevention Orders can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/restartmb/prs/northern/index.html>.

Mask Requirement

Individuals are required to wear masks in all indoor public spaces. This includes motor vehicles used for public transportation, bus shelters and enclosed pedestrian tunnels and walkways. Masks must be worn in a manner that covers the nose, mouth and chin without gapping. Face shields are not an alternative to mask use.

People who enter an indoor public place operated by the municipality need to be reminded to wear a mask as soon as possible after they enter, if they are not wearing a mask. Posters or written reminders are not generally sufficient for this purpose, which may require additional staff presence for some facilities. Mask wearing applies to all individuals, including staff, when they are in publicly accessible portions of an indoor public place.

Staff are not required by the order to wear masks in areas that are not open to the public, or if a non-permeable barrier (e.g. plexiglass) separates them from the public. However, municipalities should still consider requiring the use of masks in common staff-only areas where people may gather, such as lunchrooms or boardrooms, in addition to other practices already recommended by public health.

Municipalities are also encouraged to have any municipal staff wear masks if they are interacting with the public outdoors or are working together in close quarters.

Specific Exceptions to the Mask Requirement:

People who do not have to wear masks include:

- children under five years of age
- individuals with medical condition(s) preventing them from safely wearing a mask
- individuals who are unable to put on or take off a mask without assistance

People are permitted to temporarily remove their mask while in an indoor public space if they are:

- receiving a service that requires removal of their mask

- actively engaging in an athletic or fitness activity, including water-based activities or acting as a lifeguard
- consuming food or drink
- an emergency or medical purpose
- establishing their identity

People may remove their masks in indoor public locations if they are seated more than two metres / six feet apart. However, people must put their masks back on when they leave their seat.

Gathering Sizes Restricted to 5 People

Effective October 26th, gatherings are restricted to 5 people, whether indoors or outdoors, unless certain strict exceptions are met. Gatherings include weddings, funerals, banquets and receptions, as well as informal gatherings.

More than 5 people are allowed to attend a business or facility that is permitted to be open under public health orders, provided the operator of the business or facility has implemented all the applicable public distancing measures set out in public health orders. Information on maximum occupancy limits of public facilities and businesses is available here: <http://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/restartmb/prs/northern/index.html>.

Council Meetings and Public Hearings

More than 5 people are permitted to be in attendance at council meetings or public hearings. However, care should be taken to ensure that attendees may be seated more than two metres / six feet apart. Everyone, including members of the public, staff and council members, will need to wear masks if they are in an indoor area accessible to the public. People may remove their masks while they are seated, provided seating is more than two metres / six feet apart.

Municipalities should also consider alternative formats to provide public access to council deliberations without requiring physical attendance. Some examples may include, but are not limited to, livestreaming or teleconferences, and further information is included in the FAQs for all municipalities. Any method employed should provide a comparable level of access to the public as physical attendance.

By-Elections

By-elections may continue. However, care should be taken to follow the by-election guidelines previously provided to municipalities, and to ensure that the mask requirement is adhered to by election officials, scrutineers and members of the public.

Contract Tracing Requirements

Contract tracing requirements are now in place for some public spaces. Operators of restaurants and licensed premises, personal service businesses, theatres, museums, galleries, libraries, concert halls and fitness facilities must ensure that contact information is recorded for members of the public attending these premises and maintain those records for 21 days to support contract tracing.

Travel Restrictions

The public health order prohibiting travel to northern Manitoba and remote communities can be viewed at the following link:

https://manitoba.ca/asset_library/en/proactive/2020_2021/orders_soe_northern_09092020.pdf.

Travel is prohibited to areas north of the 53rd parallel and to remote communities that are not connected to the provincial highway system by a year-round all-weather road.

Travel restrictions do not apply to travellers who are not displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- People who live in or a person permanently moving to northern Manitoba or a remote community
- People who work for the federal or provincial governments, a Crown corporation, other government agencies or a child and family services agency
- Health providers travelling to provide health care services or people travelling for emergency medical purposes
- Educational professionals, including teachers or professors, and students travelling to work at/attend schools or post-secondary institutions
- People who own, operate or work for a business and are travelling to deliver goods, provide services or operate the business
- People who travel for trials/judicial proceedings
- People who travel for parenting arrangements

In addition to public health orders, all travellers are asked to respect any restrictions that First Nation communities have in place, as these communities are working with the advice of public health officials to ensure the health and safety of their residents.

Under public health orders, people can travel to and from a cottage, cabin, provincial park, campground or hunting/fishing lodge in northern Manitoba if they have no symptoms of COVID-19. They must limit the use of local services while travelling to and staying at their final destination. They must travel there as directly as possible.

People can also travel to Churchill and the surrounding area if they have no symptoms of COVID-19 and limit the use of local services while they are travelling there. They must travel there as directly as possible. This means they may fly directly to Churchill, or drive or fly to another northern city and then be transported to Churchill by train.

Visitors to Manitoba who must self-isolate for 14 days must not travel to northern Manitoba or a remote community until they are done self-isolating.

People travelling to northern Manitoba on a public vehicle (such as a bus, train or plane) must wear a mask that covers their mouth, nose and chin.