

Bulletin #2021-33

MUNICIPAL RELATIONS

Important Notice to All Elected Officials and Chief Administrative Officers

COVID-19 UPDATE FOR MUNICIPALITIES

Municipal Relations advises that changes to the COVID-19 public health orders took effect at **12:00am** on **Saturday June 12, 2021** and will continue to be in effect until **12:01am** on **Saturday June 26, 2021**, subject to review and possible extension. The current public health orders may be viewed by visiting:
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/prs/index.html>.

A **RED: Critical** level remains in place for all of Manitoba. Information about the pandemic response system, including the state of emergency, vaccines, supports and other relevant provincial and federal resources, please visit:
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/index.html>.

Additional information related to temporary suspension orders, and general guidance about the impact of COVID-19 on municipal operations has been provided in previous bulletins to municipalities. These bulletins may be viewed on the COVID-19 Bulletin page in Manitoba Municipalities Online (MMO) at:
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/mr/mfas/bulletins.html>.

Current restrictions that may impact municipal operations include:

- **Indoor gatherings should be limited.**

Current orders do not prohibit municipalities from holding indoor gatherings that are required for continued operations and delivery of services. However, municipalities should try to avoid or defer in-person gatherings, unless operationally or legally required.

Municipal council meetings may be held using an electronic communication facility, subject to the requirements set out by *The Municipal Act*. Municipalities may also hold public hearings using an electronic communication facility, which must allow the public to participate at a level equivalent to physically attending the public hearing, as required by *The Municipal Act* and *The Planning Act*.

If the use of an electronic communication facility is not possible and a hearing or meeting cannot be deferred, municipalities should ensure that appropriate public health measures are in place during any in-person gathering.

- **Outdoor gatherings are permitted, up to a maximum of five persons.**

Up to five persons may gather in an outdoor public place as long as they maintain a reasonable distance from other groups. Municipalities should take reasonable steps to inform users of these spaces of the restrictions under the current public health orders.

- **Gyms and fitness centres must be closed.**

Municipal gyms and fitness centres must remain closed for the duration of the current public health orders. In addition, in the spirit of the public health orders, municipal employees should not be permitted to use these facilities.

- **Museums, galleries and libraries must be closed.**

Municipal museums, galleries and libraries must remain closed to the public for the duration of the current public health orders. However, libraries may continue to offer online and curbside pick-up services to the public.

Exception: Municipalities are permitted to temporarily re-purpose library facilities as cooling centres for vulnerable persons who may not otherwise have means to cool their body temperatures during periods of extreme heat. Operation of these facilities must be for the sole purpose of providing this type of service, and the facility may not offer any other in-person services to attendees.

- **Community centres may open; only those activities permitted under the public health orders may take place on the premises.**

Municipalities that operate a community centre may only hold events that are permitted by the current public health orders. All events should be conducted in a manner that does not contravene the public health orders.

Exception: Municipalities are permitted to temporarily re-purpose community centres as cooling centres during periods of extreme heat.

- **Community, cultural and religious gatherings are not permitted; Municipalities must not rent a facility for these types of gatherings.**

Community, cultural or religious gatherings may not operate for the duration of the current public health orders. Self-help groups are no longer permitted to meet in-person.

Exception: Weddings and funerals are permitted to operate with up to a maximum of 10 persons, plus the photographer/officiants, as long as other public health measures are in-place.

- **Indoor sporting and recreational facilities must be closed; outdoor sporting and recreational facilities – including splash pads and pools – may open, but sporting and recreational activities in a group of more than five persons are not permitted.**

Indoor sporting and recreational facilities must remain closed for the duration of the current public health orders.

Municipalities should take reasonable steps to inform users of outdoor sporting and recreational facilities that a maximum of five persons may engage in group sporting or recreational activities, and that all users of the facility must follow all relevant public health guidelines.

Exception: Municipalities are permitted to temporarily re-purpose indoor recreation facilities and splash pads and pools to be used as cooling centres during periods of extreme heat.

- **Day camps are not permitted to operate.**

Municipal-operated day camps are not permitted to operate for the duration of the current public health orders.

- **All workplaces must ensure that employees work from home, where possible.**

Whenever possible, municipalities must ensure that their employees work from home, unless the employee's duties require them to be physically present in the workplace.

- **Employers must immediately advise public health if two or more persons working at the same location contract COVID-19.**

If two or more employees working at the same location contract COVID-19, notification must be provided by email to mgi@gov.mb.ca, or by phone at 204-945-3744 or 1-866-626-4862.

If you have additional questions, please contact a Municipal Services Officer, email mrmaas@gov.mb.ca or phone 204-945-2572.