

Diocese of London
COVID-19 Protocol for the Reopening of Parish Halls to the Public
Effective 22 September 2021(includes new Proof of Vaccination
Requirement)

A. Introduction

1. This protocol applies to all parish halls of the Diocese of London, including rooms connected to and ancillary to the hall. In concert with the provincial guidelines and local health officials, parish halls *may* reopen to the public where the protocols can be followed. Local health officials may require further restrictions that are not found herein, and these must be followed as so designated.
2. *The rules for halls vary according to the Ontario Roadmap to Reopen. The Roadmap contains Steps, which dictate the level and type of opening. Please refer to section B. Rules, below.*
3. For the Ontario rules, our parish halls are classified as “meeting and event spaces, such as banquet halls and conference/convention centres”.
4. This protocol does not apply to offices and worship spaces, which are covered by separate protocols.
5. This protocol will be reviewed regularly to ensure it complies with Ontario directives.

B. Rules

1. Prior to opening, each parish hall must prepare a Safety Plan as required by the Province of Ontario. The following link provides information and a template for preparing a Safety Plan:
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/develop-your-covid-19-workplace-safety-plan>
2. All regulations with respect to physical distancing and all precautions with respect to personal sanitation and cleaning of the parish hall are in effect. Physical distancing requires the established norm of two metres (six feet) until further notice.
3. Wherever possible one door should be used as an entrance and a different door should be used as an exit. Doors should be labelled “Entrance” and “Exit”. Signage for this purpose is available at <https://dol.ca/signage-and-covid-resources>.

4. As of September 22, 2021, those entering the parish hall including rooms connected to and ancillary to the hall, must be fully vaccinated (two doses plus 14 days) and provide proof of vaccination along with photo ID (driver's license, health card, passport). Entry is not permitted, without compliance.
5. Persons who cannot receive the vaccine due to medical exemptions will be permitted entry with a doctor's note until recognized medical exemptions can be integrated as part of a digital vaccine certificate. Children who are under the age of 12 will also be exempted from these requirements.
6. For the period between September 22 and October 12, 2021, persons attending wedding or funeral receptions at a parish hall including rooms connected to and ancillary to the hall will be able to provide a negative rapid antigen COVID-19 test from no more than 48 hours before the event as an alternative to proof of vaccination.
7. In Ontario Step 3, which began 16 July 2021 the parish hall *may* reopen for meetings and events to a maximum of 50% capacity, subject to the requirement that physical distancing (minimum 2 metres or 6 feet) is maintained. The physical distancing requirement limits attendance and may mean that an occupancy level below 50% is required. Care must be taken in seating and table set-up to ensure physical distancing, including for additional space between tables to allow movement of persons.
8. Hand sanitizer must be available at all entrances, exits and in the kitchen.
9. Staff, participants and visitors must complete and pass the COVID-19 self-assessment, as found at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/screening/worker/> before entering a parish hall or meeting room. Those who have travelled outside of Canada within the previous 14 days; or have signs or symptoms of the coronavirus; or have cared for, or otherwise been in contact with individuals diagnosed with the virus, shall not enter any parish hall.
10. Having passed the self-assessment, the visitor must record this in the "staff and visitor log" (<https://dol.ca/signage-and-covid-resources>). This record is also important for contact tracing. The log must be kept by the parish. The "staff and visitor log" must be located at the entrance to the parish hall. All staff and visitors must complete the required information in the log. Hand sanitizer must be placed at, or near, the staff and visitor log.
11. Signage with the self-assessment screening questions (see B3 above) must be

posted at the main entrance to the parish hall, in proximity to the “staff and visitor log”. Reminders of distancing norms must also be posted throughout the building as constant reminders for vigilance (Parish hall signage and log sheets are available at <https://dol.ca/signage-and-covid-resources>).

12. Door handles and other touch points must be disinfected frequently if the hall is in use.
13. Washrooms must be cleaned and disinfected frequently if the hall is in use.
14. Water fountains or coolers must remain out of service during the duration of the pandemic.
15. Masks must be worn at all times, except when seated at a table eating or drinking.
16. The local parish must determine who will be responsible for cleaning and sanitizing. In some cases, the user group may be responsible but the parish must make sure it is done and done properly.
17. Both parish and authorized representative of the user group (e.g. hall renter, SSVF, AA, Knights of Columbus, CWL, Canadian Blood Services) must sign and abide by the standard Diocese of London “Facility Usage Agreement”. Refer to www.dol.ca; bottom of the home page at “Policies, Procedures and Guidelines”; “Risk Management”; “Facility Usage Agreement”. *An agreement is not required for funeral luncheons, which are considered a pastoral outreach of the parish. Alcohol service is not permitted for funeral luncheons.*
18. Special Occasion Permits are required to be obtained for any events in which alcohol will be served. Someone certified in Smart Serve must tend the bar.
19. Although the Province is permitting buffet and family service, this is not permitted in our parish halls, at least for now. **Only plated service is available at this time for dine-in events along with beverage service.** Take out food service is also permitted. We will consider buffet and family service in the coming months. All food preparation must comply with the guidelines issued by the local health unit in which the parish is located and with the following guideline provided by Ontario Workplace Safety & Prevention Services:
<https://www.wsps.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/covid-19-restaurant-workers-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf>. In addition, the following rules are mandated for all parish hall food preparation and service:
 - a. Those persons preparing, serving, distributing or otherwise involved in the

process must wear a mask and practice physical distancing.

- b. The kitchen must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- c. Duties should be divided amongst the persons cooking, cleaning, etc. to prevent having multiple persons touching the same utensils, pots, etc. and maintain physical distancing. Where this is not possible, the items touched and people's hands should be cleaned and disinfected as each new person handles these items.