



MEMORANDUM

MEMO TO: ALL PARISHES

MEMO FROM: MR. JIM LONG, CHANCELLOR (TEMPORAL AFFAIRS)

DATE: MONDAY AUGUST 31ST, 2020

RE: USE OF PARISH HALLS

INTRODUCTION

This memo applies to all parish halls of the Diocese of Hamilton, including rooms connected to and ancillary to the hall. In concert with the provincial guidelines and local health officials, parish halls will reopen to the public in those regions that moved to Phase Three and where the protocols can be followed. Local health officials may require further restrictions that are not found within these guidelines and these must be followed as so designated.

This memo does not apply to offices and worship spaces, which are covered by separate memo.

- Parish halls must remain closed in those areas of the Diocese which are still in Phase Two.
- This protocol will be reviewed regularly to determine when expanded parish hall uses can be permitted.

RULES

1. 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.
2. 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”.

3. The maximum number of persons permitted to gather in a parish hall is fifty (50) persons, **provided** physical distancing of two metres (six feet) is maintained at all times. As a result of the physical distancing requirements, most parish halls will not be able to permit 50 persons to gather. The capacity for each parish hall will be different and will depend on the size of the hall, meeting/event setup and number of entrances/exits. In addition, the setup of the parish hall must permit enough room for attendees to enter, exit and move about, while maintaining physical distancing requirements, before, during and after the gathering.
4. Hand sanitizer must be available at all entrances.
5. Staff, participants and visitors must complete and pass the COVID-19 self-assessment, as found at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/> 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. Having passed the self-assessment, the visitor must record this in the “visitor log”. This record is also important for contact tracing.
6. The “visitor log” must be located at the main 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.
7. Signage with the self-assessment screening questions (see 3 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.
8. For meetings, it is recommended that chairs be set up in a circle or square rather than in rows. Minimize the use of furnishings; if you don't need tables, do not use them. Any furnishings used must be sanitized before and after the meeting or event.
9. Church and parish hall washrooms are to be used for emergencies only. No more than one person/family (living at the same address) at a time should use a washroom. Notices to this effect must be posted outside the washroom. Hand-washing signs should be placed in the washroom. Washrooms must be cleaned after every meeting or event. In the event that a washroom is soiled due to some accident, it must be closed, pending thorough cleaning with disinfectant.
10. Water fountains or coolers must remain out of service during the duration of the pandemic.
11. Prior to and after each meeting or event all door handles and any other “touch points” must be disinfected.
12. 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.

13. If Parishes wish to offer food service at an event, they must follow the Province of Ontario's "Restaurant and food service health and safety guidelines during COVID-19". The guidelines include the following:
 - NO buffet-style food service is allowed.
 - Individuals must be seated when eating and drinking.
 - Physical distancing of 2 metres between individuals from different households or social circles must be observed.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting equipment and high-touch surfaces must occur.
14. Both parish and authorized representative of the user group (e.g. CWL, AA, Canadian Blood Services) must sign and abide by the standard Diocese of Hamilton "*Facility Usage Agreement*" which is attached to this memo.

PERMITTED USES

1. The following uses of the parish hall are permitted:
 - Meetings of parish staff.
 - Meetings of parish committees (e.g. Parish Pastoral Council).
 - Meetings of parish ministry groups (e.g. Bible study, RCIA).
 - Meetings of other parish groups (e.g. CWL, K of C, SSVP).
 - Other groups that were using the parish hall prior to the pandemic (e.g. AA and day camps).
 - Blood donor clinics.
 - Some parishes offered exercise classes prior to the pandemic. If so, such classes are permitted if your area is in Phase Three of reopening, but with the added measure that the physical distance requirement is increased to a minimum of three metres (10 feet).
2. Private events (e.g. wedding receptions, showers, funeral luncheons) are not permitted.
3. No new activities are permitted to start in the parish hall at this time.
4. Both parish and authorized representative of the user group (e.g. CWL, AA, Canadian Blood Services) must sign and abide by the standard Diocese of Hamilton "*Facility Usage Agreement*".

SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR PARISHES THAT PROVIDE MEALS TO THE POOR AND DISADVANTAGED

1. Parishes may offer take-out meals for the poor and disadvantaged, with the following additional rules:

- Meals must be “take out” only. Those providing the means may place them on a table for the recipient to pick up to help maintain physical distancing where possible.
 - Those coming for the meals are not permitted to enter the building.
 - Those persons preparing, distributing or otherwise involved in the process must wear a mask and practice physical distancing.
 - The kitchen must be cleaned and disinfected before and after use.
 - Parishes can also consider providing a mask with each meal they distribute.
2. The SSVP may offer services on a “take out” basis to their clients.

Sincerely

Jim Long
Chancellor (Temporal Affairs)
The Diocese of Hamilton