

Places of Worship in the Orange Alert Level

In an Orange alert level, faith venues can continue to operate under a COVID-19 operational plan that adheres to all Public Health infection and control measures, including the recording of attendees, the refusal of parishioners with COVID-19 symptoms and those who are in self-isolation.

Are masks and physical distancing required in places of worship?

Yes. People attending places of worship must stay two metres apart from those outside of their household and everyone is required to wear a mask at all times.

Is singing permitted in the Orange Alert Level?

No, singing is not permitted in places of worship during the Orange alert level. Singing is a high-risk activity during a pandemic. The chance of expelling drops of liquid that could contain COVID-19 increases during singing, shouting, cheering or playing wind instruments. Having a group of people singing increases the number of these small droplets.

Do officiants and performers have to wear a mask?

Performers or officiants who are performing activities that require vocalization like talking or singing at a faith gathering, wedding, funeral, social event, etc. are exempt from wearing a mask but they should stay at least four metres away from others during their performance.

How many people are permitted to attend a faith gathering?

Faith venues are permitted to have up to 50 participants, or as determined by the size of the venue (whichever is smaller). Indoor or outdoor personal gatherings such as weddings or funerals may have up to 25 people and must have an operational plan in place.

How should places of worship communicate changes to their members?

Recognizing that conditions may change rapidly during a pandemic, places of worship should consider how they will communicate these changes to their members. An option could be to post signage outlining the requirements regarding two metres physical distancing, continuous mask wearing, and not singing during services. Alternatively, they may want to provide additional options for those unable to wear a mask, including sharing services online.

Can officiants distribute communion to people at a faith gathering?

For services which involve communion, pre-packaged units may be considered, or using tongs to place communion in the parishioner's hand (no contact). Before services, encourage parishioners to bring their own hand sanitizer. Eucharistic ministers must wash hands and always maintain physical distancing of at least 2 metres or use barriers. While maintaining greater than 2 metres from others and after washing hands, parishioners may collect communion and return to their seats. Masks can be removed to receive communion **only** when

2 metres of physical distancing, in all directions, is maintained. Masks must be reaffixed immediately after taking communion followed by cleaning of hands with parishioner's own hand sanitizer.

Who is unable to wear a face mask?

Some people are not able to wear masks for various reasons. It's important to remember that these reasons may not always be visible to others. New Brunswickers should always treat each other with kindness, respect and understanding.

Examples of people who may be unable to wear a mask in a place of worship include:

- Children under the age of two;
- People with a medical condition, including a mental health disorder, that affects their ability to wear a mask.

Note: between the ages of two and five, children may be able to wear a mask if supervised. This will depend on their ability to tolerate it as well as put it on and take it off.

It is recommended that people unable to wear a mask avoid, as much as possible, crowded places, including faith gatherings, weddings, and funerals.

How will the requirements for different phases of recovery be enforced?

New Brunswickers understand that physical distancing and masks work to prevent the spread of disease. We will rely on New Brunswickers to make good decisions to protect themselves and others from COVID-19.

Where is more information available on New Brunswick's mask guidelines?

More information on mask guidelines is available on GNB's Coronavirus [website](#).