



Hutterite Community Events Guidelines (Manitoba)

INTRODUCTION

This document is for use by Hutterian communities to aid in planning events, such as weddings, in the province of Manitoba during the Worldwide COVID Pandemic.

At this time, it is strongly recommended that any community event be reorganized to abide by Public Health Orders; **if an event can't be rearranged to comply with the Public Health Orders, they must be postponed until it is safe to reschedule.**

These guidelines can help determine if an event is safe to continue.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that the total number of people attending each event does NOT exceed the allowable limits for a given gathering type which differs between worship spaces & dining halls (*see #14*).
2. Reduce the size of the gathering. If possible, limit the number of communities invited to no more than the bride's home community. **As the situation in Manitoba worsens and more communities get infected, postpone all events to a safer date.**
3. All participants including guests must be free of any illness. Remind invitees not to attend if they are feeling unwell (*fever, cough, flu symptoms*).
4. Shorten the length of celebratory gatherings to a single day. Decrease the time spent in gatherings.
5. Instruct people to remain in their same cohort (colony group, friend group, family group) throughout the event. The cohorts are to attend the worship service, meals, celebratory gatherings, and also any non-formal events together as a group. Organize seating as much as possible to accommodate groups and cohorts.
 - a. During meals and worship services, instruct people to remain in their designated cohort group (colony, family, friends). Be prepared to stay with your cohort group during the entire event. When organizing the venue, ensure that adequate spacing exists between cohort groups.
6. Inform local communities that attendance is by invitation only and ensure this provision is enforced.
7. Whenever possible, use outdoor spaces to mitigate risk because outdoors activities have a lower risk overall.
8. Mitigate the risk posed by informal gatherings that tend to take place after the formal schedule. Examples of mitigation include moving young people gatherings from homes to larger-spaced venues and/or outdoors where physical distancing is possible.
9. Provide hand sanitizers in multiple accessible locations, particularly in high traffic areas. Assign a dedicated team to spray or apply hand sanitizer to each guest as they enter gathering spaces.
10. Add hand sanitizers to each table group during meals.
11. Replace cloth hand towels with paper towels in washrooms. Ensure soap is available.
12. Create a sanitization team to increase the cleaning and sanitizing of high-touch surfaces and washrooms during the time of the events. To facilitate regular cleaning create a list of high touch surfaces, add a sanitization schedule and assign team members to tasks. Cleaning high touch surfaces once an hour is recommended.
13. Take advantage of the public address system to periodically remind people of the importance of maintaining physical distancing including physical distancing messaging.

WORSHIP SERVICES

14. The total number of people participating in the services cannot exceed 30% of the seating space in the church. For example, if a church has a capacity of 200 people, 30% of 200 or 60 people are allowed to attend.
 - a. Where church capacity is greater than 50 people, congregants need to be separated into groups of 50 or less.
 - b. The groups of 50 people should be separated by 6 feet. The space between groups can serve as an aisle.
 - c. People seated within each group should be seated physically separated from each other by 6 feet **unless they are immediate family members.**
 - d. Where possible the groups of up to 50 people should use separate entrances in order to limit contact between groups. In cases where community churches have a single entrance, the groups should stagger their entrance so that all of one group enters followed by the 2nd group. Minimize mingling between groups as much as possible.
15. If more space is needed, use a larger building so that members can keep separated by 6 feet
16. Use one entrance and a different exit to ensure one-way traffic flow.
17. Attendees who are medically vulnerable or who are ill should not attend. Alternate means to participate should be used, for example, via technology.

MEALTIMES AND CELEBRATION GATHERINGS

18. Buffet-style meals are prohibited by Manitoba Public Health Orders as they cause people to gather and to share dishing utensils which increase the risk of virus transmission.
19. Have people enter in one door and exit out another. Place sanitizer at entries and exits. Place signage to instruct people to use. Consider assigning staff to monitor and ensure use.
20. Whenever queuing, guests should stay 6 feet apart. Markers on the floor or sidewalk outdoors help people remember to maintain spacing.
21. Use disposable cutlery whenever possible.
22. Set up rows of tables:
 - a. Seating should be organized by family or colony cohort (group) on each table;
 - b. Each row of tables should be physically distanced from other tables by at least 6 feet;
 - c. Each table group should have hand sanitizer available.
23. Reduce the number of communal meals. Consider encouraging people to eat at home or have the kitchen create “bag lunches”—packages of sandwiches to take home.
24. Serving activities have significant inherent virus transmission risk. With this in mind, develop measures for servers to reduce the risk of virus transmission to and amongst guests, including the following:
 - a. Ensure that servers understand how to properly wash or sanitize their hands and to do so after each interaction with guests (after each delivery into the dining area) as well as whenever changing tasks;
 - b. Assign servers to specific tables and restrict them from serving other tables;
 - c. Remove one chair per group of 6 guests for use by the server as a designated labeled space for the server to deliver meals and beverages;
 - d. Ensure servers maintain physical distancing from each other and from kitchen staff. Define kitchen area server traffic lanes to help with this. Lines and arrows on the kitchen floor are helpful;
 - e. Food items such as salads, fruit, potato chips, desserts and all other commonly-served snacks should be served as individual portions and NOT recollected as leftovers for subsequent use;
 - f. When delivering food only the servers should handle the dishing utensils and other common containers;
 - g. Pre-pour beverages like coffee prior to serving them;
 - h. Servers should avoid touching cups and glasses for refills;
 - i. Servers should wear masks when serving food if they can not maintain physical distance from the guests.
25. If you consider serving food using a buffet-style queue, take care to stagger groups to avoid mingling, ensure that **only** servers touch serving utensils to dish out **all** food items.
26. Manitoba Health strongly recommends against choral singing. If singing, ensure singers are physically spaced from each other by 6 feet and 10' from the audience.

Any questions or concerns please contact HSC directly at: hbcovid19@hbsafe.farm

