

Respiratory Illness Safety Procedure

Date created: June 5, 2024

Revision date: June 5, 2024

Purpose

Due to the significant negative health consequences posed by respiratory illnesses to the young, elderly, immune-compromised and those with a chronic lung disease, Grace United Church strives to reduce risk to vulnerable people by maintaining a clean and safe environment, and by adhering to or exceeding prevailing Public Health guidelines.

Background

This procedure was initiated as an update to the Covid-19 Safety Plan, developed by Grace in 2021 in response to a requirement by the Ontario government near the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The plan was periodically amended by Council based on input from Lambton Public Health and by recommendations from the ad hoc Re-Opening Committee, whose members represented various standing committees.

This Procedure includes a list of measures being taken by the church to reduce the health risk to staff, members & adherents, user groups, and visitors/tradespeople inside the church building.

Definition: A Respiratory Illness in this document refers to an affliction that may be caused by a viral, bacterial or fungal infection that affects the respiratory system (nose, throat, lungs, etc.). These illnesses can be spread through the respiratory particles that an infected person releases into the air when breathing, speaking, singing, coughing, etc. They may also be spread through contact with contaminated surfaces.

Implementation

It is the responsibility of each Standing Committee to implement these procedures, as applicable to their respective areas of responsibility within the church organizational structure. See further details in this procedure and listed in the Appendices, below.

Safety Measures:

The following General Practices are in place:

Self-Screening

Signs are posted at each entrance to remind individuals that they should self-screen before deciding to participate in an activity at Grace United Church and before entering the building. A self-assessment tool is provided by the Government of Ontario (see References): This assessment tool indicates when a person should stay home to prevent transmission to others.

Physical Distancing

Masking and physical distancing precautions are exercised at the discretion of each individual or user group with consideration given to both one's own personal health and one's potential impact on the health of others with whom they may come in contact.

Event organizers may elect to have masks available for attendees.
Ventilate rooms, where possible, and as outside conditions permit.

Personal Responsibility

As always, any higher-risk person, or guardian of such an individual, must take responsibility for taking precautions, including but not limited to matters of personal hygiene. Grace cannot guarantee a completely safe facility with respect to potential exposure to a respiratory illness.

In addition to the above General Practices:

- For Worship, see Appendix 1
- For Property, see Appendix 2
- For Communications, see Appendix 3
- For Christian Development, see Appendix 4
- For Staff & Council, see Appendix 5

Review / Amendments

This procedure will be reviewed at least annually by the Communications Committee, with input from each other Committee assessing their area of responsibility.

Authority and Approvals

Council has the final authority to approve any proposed amendment to this Procedure.

References:

Protection from COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/exposed>
COVID-19 Workplace Recommendations: <https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/resource/covid-19/workplace-recommendations/>
Government of Ontario, Self-assessment: <https://www.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Worship

This section is blank.

Appendix 2 – Property

Routine cleaning practises by the Custodian will include:

- Hand sanitizer bottles are provided at Main Entrances, and in Rm.1, Friendship Rm, and Narthex - Refill sanitizer bottles, as needed.
- Standard Cleaning Protocol to be performed by the Custodian:
- Entrances (Cathcart, Kitchen, Narthex) - Sanitize door area daily.
- Hallway by Ministers' Offices & Copy Room - Sanitize all touch points daily.
- Sunday Morning Worship - Sanitize all touch points in the sanctuary, narthex, and Rm 1 to be completed on Monday.
- Return pew cushions or back supports left in the sanctuary to the storage location.
- User Group Rooms – Clean after the group leaves (or the following morning)

- Clean & sanitize the washrooms daily.
- Boiler room touch points - Sanitize daily.

Kitchen

- Clean after use by the Inn Team (once per month).:

Tradespeople

This section is blank.

Appendix 3 – Communications

The Office Administrator will:

- Monitor monthly local Public Health and Ontario Ministry of Health regulations and public announcements.
- Maintain signage at building entrances as a reminder for people to self-screen.

Visitors:

This section is blank.

User Groups:

This section is blank.

Appendix 4 – Christian Development

Sunday Christian Development Programming

This section is blank.

Nursery

Nursery attendants will:

- prepare the nursery space by wiping down all high-touch surfaces.
- follow regular and proper hand hygiene practices.
- facilitate regular and proper hand hygiene practices of the children, especially after coughing and sneezing.
- employ a ‘one-kid-per-toy’ protocol, removing used toys from circulation. Used toys will collect in the sink to be out of reach and will be disinfected before use by another child.
- designate one table for food/snack-only use and not allow for sharing of food/drink between children.
- disinfect all used toys and high-touch surfaces once all children and parents have left.

Parents/Guardians will:

- be informed immediately if their child displays flu-like symptoms.

Programs outside of Sunday morning

This section is blank.

Appendix 5 – Staff & Council

- the piano will be kept locked to keep keys clean.

Church Group meetings

This section is blank.