

Second phase of restoring safe services plan to begin June 1

Based on feedback from Manitobans and current public health data, the Manitoba government has finalized the draft Phase Two plan and will implement measures effective June 1 to continue safely restoring services and opening additional businesses while ensuring physical distancing, Premier Brian Pallister announced May 27.

"I want to thank Manitobans for their input, and as a result of these discussions and advice from public health experts, we are in a position to move forward with phase two of our plan to safely restore our services," said Pallister. "I also want to thank Manitobans for continuing to respect physical distancing guidelines and ask everyone to keep taking steps to protect themselves and others as we continue to ease restrictions."

As of June 1, limited access to educational facilities, where physical distancing can be maintained, will be allowed for additional tutorial days, such as one-on-one learning, assessment and specific programming. Manitoba Education will continue planning and consulting with school divisions and other education stakeholders, the premier noted.

The plan for Phase Two was revised from the original draft document, released May 21, based on input from the public and businesses, as well as additional input from public health officials.

Changes include:

- detailed guidance for post-secondary educational institutions and vocational colleges;
- removing occupancy limits for therapeutic and health-care services;
- detailed guidance for senior's clubs;
- additional details on requirements for the safe operation of splash pads;
- updated guidance for community centres;
- the reopening of arts and cultural activities, such as dance, art and theatre;
- clarifications on the opening of bars, beverage rooms, brew pubs, micro-brewers and distilleries

to allow sites that do not serve food to open, as well as updated guidance from public health that all patrons must be seated at tables and stand-up service is not allowed; and

- detailed public health guidelines for film productions.

A number of measures initially outlined in the draft plan for Phase Two can resume effective

June 1 including:

- increasing child-care centre occupancy to up to 24 children plus staffing;
- increasing day camp group sizes to 24;
- resuming sports, arts and cultural activities for children and adults;
- lifting occupancy limits at outdoor recreation facilities and golf courses outdoors, as long as physical distancing can be maintained and allowing limited access to indoor spaces;
- allowing direct travel to northern parks, campgrounds, cabins, lodges and resorts while ensuring physical distancing;
- allowing public/private swimming pools, spas, fitness clubs, gyms and community/service centres to reopen with some limitations;
- allowing religious or other organizations to hold outdoor services or events without limitation on numbers if people stay in their vehicles;
- reopening manicurists and pedicurists, tattoo parlours, estheticians, cosmetologists, electrologists and tanning parlours at 50 per cent capacity;
- allowing restaurants to reopen indoor spaces at 50 per cent capacity and continue to offer patio services at that capacity level; and
- allowing bars, beverage rooms, micro-brewers and similar businesses to operate patio service at 50 per cent of site capacity and to reopen indoor spaces at 50 per cent capacity.

No changes will be made to the requirements for reopening museums, galleries and libraries, and parks, campgrounds, yurts and vacation cabins.

Detailed information on the plan for Phase Two of service restoration

and steps people can take to reduce their risk and workplace guidance for businesses can be found at: www.manitoba.ca/restoringsafeservices.

Other changes that came into effect on May 22 included increasing gathering sizes to 25 people indoors and 50 people outdoors, and allowing professional sports teams to resume practicing.

"Case numbers and positive test rates continue to be low and other key factors are also positive," said Dr. Brent Roussin, Manitoba's chief provincial public health officer. "These additional steps to safely restore services will help ease the impacts on Manitobans and ensure the health system continues to be able to respond if case numbers increase slightly."

What's not changing

Mass gatherings such as concerts, festivals and major sporting events will not be considered before September 2020, Roussin noted. He also noted that it is key for people to stay home if they are sick to further reduce the risk of spreading the virus.

Roussin continued to encourage businesses to take steps to help staff, patrons and visitors stay safe including:

- ensuring people are able to reasonably maintain two metres of distance;
- only conducting necessary and brief exchanges within two metres of others;
- applying enhanced cleaning protocols, especially in common areas like washrooms;
- maintaining physical distancing and food-handling protocols in workplace areas including lunch and common areas;
- staying home when feeling sick; and
- following personal risk reduction measures.

Manitoba businesses can submit questions about how the plan applies to them by visiting <https://engagemb.ca>.

A comprehensive list of Manitoba government COVID-19 measures can be found at:

<https://manitoba.ca/bg/2020/04/covid19.html>.