



# Recommendations for Nunavik churches

## Prevention of COVID-19

### Background

The guidelines can always change, based on the evolution of the situation in the region.

*Nunavimmiut* have been vocal in their request for churches to be open in some form or another. For the majority of the population, church is part of the weekly routine. Tensions are running high in households, and some deem access to church necessary for mental health.

**For safe church activities, the following recommendations should be applied:**

### Preparation of the place of worship

- Post a notice at the entrance of the church stating the maximum authorized capacity, that use of a mask is mandatory to enter the place of worship and the sanitary rules.
- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60% or higher) should be available at the entrance of the church and at the exit. People must be informed it is mandatory to disinfect their hands before going inside the church and when exiting the church.
- If possible, establish one-way traffic to avoid contact between people. Use arrows on the floor to guide people.
- Place boxes of disposable tissue within easy reach and put open or closed bins with foot-activated lids.
- Remove all shared booklets or bibles. Bring your own bible and don't share it with anybody else. Do not leave any used booklets.

### Access to the premises

- The elders' bus can be used to pick up the elders for church services. Refer to recommendations on the elders' bus:  
[Public and Elders' Bus Service Guidelines](#)
- There should be a member of the church at the entrance of the church to greet people, ask them to follow the arrows on the floor and make sure that the church does not become



overcrowded. Also, a member of the church must ensure respect for social distancing and handwashing, advise against the use of gloves and ensure the wearing of a mask at all times.

- If possible, leave the doors open at the start and end of worship ceremonies.
- Respect one-way traffic to avoid contact between people. Follow the arrows on the floor.
- Infected people, people suspected of COVID-19 infection, people who have been in contact with an infected person or people with symptoms should not be permitted inside the church. These people should call the COVID-19 Health Line at **1-888-662-7482** to get tested.
- **For places of worship, the maximum allowed, depending of the size of the church, is 250 people.**

## Rules inside / during the celebration

- People attending church and who do not live in the same household should remain two metres apart at all times. Seats should be marked accordingly. This means there might be a limited amount of people allowed in the church at the same time, depending on the size of the church.
- The mask is mandatory at all times inside closed public spaces such as churches. While recommended for children aged two to nine years, the mask is mandatory for children 10 years of age and over.
- During the service, there should be no physical contact of any sort. This includes handshakes, hugging, communion, etc.
- Do not share things that may come in contact with other people's hands or saliva.
- Cash donations can be dropped off at the exit of the church. Provide a basket at the exit and invite people to drop off their offerings.
- It is preferable not to sing; whispering is better.
- A single singer can sing at a distance of more than two metres from the audience. Wearing a mask is not necessary if a distance of more than two metres is respected.
- If communion or the Eucharist is offered, it must be done without any contact between people. For any ritual, there must be no sharing of objects or even physical contact at any time among the participants. Single-use objects must be used and physical distance respected. For the staff of the place of worship and participants, wash your hands before and after the ritual and wear a mask and eye protection if the distance of two metres cannot be respected.

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- A minister of religion or a person acting as a volunteer in such a place may remove their face covering when maintaining a minimum distance of two metres from any other person.
  - Keep the duration of the gathering to the minimum necessary by reducing the ceremonies to the essential.
  - Sneeze and cough into your elbow or in a tissue that you must throw away immediately.

## Disinfection / ventilation of the premises

- Churches should be disinfected before each service. Refer to:  
[Cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces for the prevention of COVID-19 in residential or community settings](#)  
[\(FRENCH ONLY\) COVID-19 : Nettoyage et désinfection de surfaces](#)
- Doors should be kept open between each pantry to promote ventilation.

## For elders who cannot attend church

Elders who cannot attend church can be visited by members of the church. Church members should follow the following recommendations:

- Church members with symptoms should not make home visits: fever, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, head or body ache or fatigue, loss of sense of smell or taste. These people should call the info health line to get tested.
- Church members should call ahead of time before visiting a home, in order to ask if any household members are showing any symptoms. If so, the household should not be visited.
- Church members should keep a distance of two metres from members of the household when visiting. Visits held outdoors should be encouraged; a distance of two metres should also be kept outside.
- Members of the church should wash their hands before and after the visit and should wear a mask during the visit.
- Church members should avoid any physical contact with members of the household (handshakes, hugging, etc.).

## Celebration of wedding

Churches are open to other activities such as weddings or funerals. People must respect the same rules as for church services.



## Funeral celebration

Churches are open to other activities such as weddings or funerals. People must respect the same rules as for church services.

## Manipulation of bodies

Refer to:

[COVID-19: Tending to Bodies and Preventive and Protective Measures for Nunavik Health Professionals](#)

## Repatriation of a body

Refer to:

[COVID-19: Tending to Bodies and Preventive and Protective Measures for Nunavik Health Professionals](#)