COVID-19 INFORMATION

Restrictions Exemption Program – FAQ

November 9, 2021

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What’s New

General

Do current public health measures apply to the construction industry, and is the construction industry eligible for the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Workers/employees in/on a worksite for the purposes of their employment are out-of-scope for the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP). This would apply equally to a construction sites and/or office environments.
  - In both cases, the work site would fall under “Professional Service Business or Entity” within Order 44-2021 and therefore, is not subject to the thirty-three percent capacity limit, however masking and physical distancing restrictions would still apply.

- Please note that an entity may require proof of vaccination for contractors entering their sites if they have chosen to implement a vaccine requirement for employees, separate from the REP.
  - Operators should ensure they are aware of the requirements of the sites they are accessing.

- A business or entity operating exclusively outdoors is not subject to any capacity limits (excluding washrooms).

- Physical distancing requirements do not apply to work-related activities that cannot be undertaken while maintaining a 2 metre distance.

Will the Government of Alberta apply the Restrictions Exemption Program universally instead of relying on business to implement?

- The REP is an optional program, which in-scope business or organizations may choose to implement. In-scope business or organizations that do not choose to implement the REP must follow the public health restrictions outlined in Order 44-2021 amended by Order 47-2021.

- At this time, the decision to implement the REP remains up to the business or entity.
When will the current public health guidance and the Restrictions Exemption Program be removed? (Updated)

- Alberta has declared a state of public health emergency and is taking targeted action to protect the health system and stop the spread of COVID-19.
- The current situation remains critical as cases and hospitalizations continue to challenge the health system that all Albertans rely on.
- These decisions were not taken lightly and were based on the best and most up-to-date information and data.
- Health officials will continue to closely monitor the spread of COVID-19 and health system to assess whether additional action is needed to reduce transmission, or if and when restrictions can be removed.
- The Government of Alberta has indicated that Albertans should expect that proof of vaccination requirements may extend through at least the first quarter of 2022.

Outdoor Gatherings

Will there be any restrictions on public outdoor ceremonies?

- Public Outdoor ceremonies, such as Remembrance Day, must follow the restrictions for outdoor public events.
  - Events and facilities that are fully outdoors (excluding washrooms), have no capacity restrictions but must maintain 2 metres distancing between households or 2 close contact for those living alone.
- It is recommended that people wear a mask for the duration of the ceremony.

Outdoor private social gatherings are limited to a maximum of 20 people, with 2 metre physical distancing between households at all times. Does this capacity limit also include children under 12?

- Yes. Children under 12 must be counted as part of the 20-person limit for private outdoor social gatherings.
- Additionally, 2 metres physical distancing between households must be observed at all times.

Can an outdoor “guided” event where spectators, in groups of 20, are walked through different displays or performances proceed even if there are a total of 30-40 “actors” spread out throughout the different displays?

- As per the public health measures announced on September 15, 2021, please note the following:
  - Outdoor entertainment, event and recreation facilities
    - Events and facilities that are fully outdoors (excluding washrooms), have no capacity restrictions but must maintain 2 metres distancing between households or 2 close contacts for those living alone.
- For further clarity:
  - Spectators, guides, and actors would need to remain distanced from individuals outside their households at all times.
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Proof of Vaccination, Negative Test or Medical Exemption Letter Requirements

Will there be some leeway for QR code scanning while businesses wait for application intake for the REP Implementation Grant to open and for businesses to receive funding to help offset costs of implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program, such as the purchase of equipment to scan QR codes?

- AB Covid Records Verifier app is available for free download on Apple and Android devices through their respective app stores.

- As of November 15, the enhanced record with the QR code will be the only valid form of proof of vaccination at all organizations participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program.

- It is recommended that the record be scanned, however it is not required. Businesses and venues can check the record without scanning it by reviewing the downloaded or printed QR code and vaccination record. The name on the record should be confirmed with the person’s identification.

- We understand that in some situations it may not be possible to scan the QR code.

- Alberta businesses eligible for the REP Implementation Grant will be use the funding as they see fit.
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What personal information is shared with proof of vaccination documents, including new records with the QR verification code? What security is in place to assure customers that their information will be kept secure and safe?

- Operators should obtain legal advice to inform their program if collecting and maintaining a list of individuals that can enter and re-enter a facility (e.g., so that repeat clients do not need to show proof of vaccination each time).
- Personal health information should not be stored onsite.
- All operators taking part in the REP need to develop a written REP plan in the event they are audited.
- All operators are required to ensure that their patrons meet the REP proof of vaccine requirements prior to entry into their establishment.

New AB Covid Records Validator App:

- When a valid QR code is scanned, a green check mark will verify the proof of vaccination. It will also display a person's name and date of birth, which businesses are asked to check against an ID.
- The app does not store any personal health information.
- The QR code is not connected to any other health or personal information, and only displays the information on the vaccine record.
- The app has undergone privacy and security reviews by Alberta Health, and a privacy impact assessment has been submitted to OIPC for review.
- On the alberta.ca/CovidRecords the personal information requested by the system is required to provide a proof of vaccination record while balancing the protection of individual's privacy.
- Alberta has adopted the Smart Health Card standard for storing immunization information within a QR Code. This standard has also been adopted by the Canadian federal government, as well as other provinces such as British Columbia.
- The QR code contains a secure digital signature that verifies it's provided by Alberta Health and it is extremely hard to forge.
- It's the same technology used for secure transactions in the banking system and other industries.
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If a person concludes their isolation period following testing positive for COVID-19 and are not vaccinated, will it still be possible for them to show a negative test in order to enter a business that is implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program? Is there a risk that individuals who have previously had COVID-19 will still test positive even after they have recovered?

- Proof of antibodies or previous COVID infection is not one of the items that is required/approved prior to entry into a REP facility.
- Access to a REP facility/event requires that a person show: proof of vaccination, a medical exemption letter, or a negative COVID-19 test completed within the past 72 hours.
  - Please see the website for more details on what is required for each of these options.
- Getting fully immunized offers the best protection possible from the virus.
- People with previous COVID-19 infection should continue to receive a complete vaccine series at the recommended intervals.

Is there an anticipated date for when “proof of negative test” will no longer be needed as a condition of entry to a business participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Not at this time.
- The Government of Alberta has indicated that Albertans should expect that proof of vaccination requirements may extend through at least the first quarter of 2022.

How can Alberta ensure international visitors are welcome while also ensuring that the appropriate international documentation for REP is being provided?

- Visitors from abroad or other provinces will not have an Alberta QR code and can continue to use other forms of proof of vaccination. Accepted documentation for out-of-province visitors include:
  - International visitors: ArriveCan app and valid international travel identity document
  - Other provinces: recognized provincial vaccine records; you may find examples and more information about other groups that will not be required to use the Alberta QR code on alberta.ca.
- Please note that regardless of where the individual has been vaccinated, they must meet the vaccine requirements for Alberta in order to enter a space that is participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program.
  - Out-of-province visitors’ vaccine information must be inspected to ensure it meets the following requirements; more than 14 days elapsed after the second dose in a two dose series, or more than 14 days elapsed after a one dose series.
- The Canadian provinces and territories are working together to develop an interprovincial vaccination passport for interprovincial travelers that will allow for ease of scanning.
- Currently, Albertan’s QR code cannot be read by other provinces’ verifier app and the Alberta app cannot read other jurisdictions’ QR codes.
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What qualifies as a religious exemption?

- The REP does not allow for religious exemptions, only medical exemptions.
- For negative tests, guests must show a written or printed copy of the test result that indicates the individual has tested negative for COVID-19 on a Health Canada-approved rapid antigen, rapid PCR, or lab-based PCR test approved by Health Canada or the lab accreditation body of jurisdiction.
- The document must clearly outline the laboratory that completed the test if applicable (e.g., DynaLIFE), the type of test, the time of sample collection, and clearly indicate a negative result.
- A picture of a rapid test result taken off-site is not sufficient for this purpose.
- Individuals must not bring completed rapid tests or self-tests to businesses as they can pose a communicable-disease risk.
- Testing must not be sourced from the Alberta Health Services public COVID-19 testing system.
  - This system is reserved for symptomatic individuals and those in outbreak situations. If an individual has COVID-19 symptoms, they must isolate.
- Operators are permitted to offer on-site rapid testing.
  - It is recommended that operators seek expert advice including medical oversight before implementing a rapid test program.
- If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, that individual must isolate, per Order 06-2021 and Order 39-2021.

Employees and Contractors

Can employers request the vaccination status of existing employees and/or potential hires effective September 20, 2021?

- Staff are exempt from the Restrictions Exemption Program. The REP does not require staff to show their vaccination status to their employer.
- Employers are strongly encouraged to promote COVID-19 vaccination to staff, volunteers, attendees and other eligible persons as part of their public health strategy.
- Any consideration of vaccine requirements for staff is an employer decision.
- If an employer wishes to mandate vaccinations for their staff, they should consult with legal counsel.
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Do staff working with minors need to show vaccination status to remain in positions where they can interact with unvaccinated children?

- Employees, contractors, repair workers, delivery workers, volunteers, inspectors or others who are entering the business or organization for work purposes and not as patrons are exempt and are not required to be screened under the Restrictions Exemption Program.

- It is important to note that the REP or public health orders (for entities not following the REP) represent the minimum required standards. Entities, including businesses or municipalities, may enact more stringent requirements.

- Any consideration of vaccine requirements for staff is an employer decision.

- If an employer wishes to mandate vaccinations for their staff, they should consult with legal counsel.

Do industry partners such as suppliers, delivery drivers, etc. need to be vaccinated to enter businesses participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program? (Updated)

- Employees, contractors, repair workers, delivery workers, volunteers, inspectors or others who are entering the business or organization for work purposes and not as patrons are exempt and are not required to be screened under the Restrictions Exemption Program.

- It is important to note that the REP or public health orders (for entities not following the REP) represent the minimum required standards. Entities, including businesses or municipalities, may enact more stringent requirements.

- If an entity is considering enacting more stringent public health safety measures than those required under the REP or the public health orders, they are encouraged to consult with their legal counsel on the impact in their business/industry context.

Business Liability and Enforcement

How will enforcement work? (Updated)

- Operators will be audited for compliance.

  - Alberta Health Services, Alberta Gaming, Liquor, Cannabis and police services in Alberta can enforce the requirements of the Restrictions Exemption Program.

- If operators are not complying with the requirements of the Restrictions Exemption Program or current public health restrictions, then enforcement and prosecution may result in fines up to $100,000 (for a first offence).

- Individuals with concerns about an operator that is not complying with the current health measures or the Restrictions Exemption Program can report their concern by either calling 1-833-415-9179, or reporting their concern online.

- Concerns can also be reported by calling the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Contact Centre.
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If a business operator keeps a written record that they have verified a patron’s proof of vaccination (with written consent from the patron) - is this sufficient for health inspectors? *(Updated)*

- Each facility will have a different process and will have to demonstrate policies that have been put into place.
- Please see the REP guidance document for more details on requirements for written policies.
- Operators should obtain legal advice to inform their program if they wish to collect and maintain a list of individuals that can enter and re-enter a facility (e.g., so that repeat clients do not need to show proof of vaccination each time).
- Operators may implement an electronic offsite validation program (e.g. application-based or mobile-applications) to validate that the vaccination requirements have been met.
- Personal health information should not be stored on-site.

**In-Scope: Restaurants, Take-Out and Fast Food Establishments**

Why are restaurants unable to serve unvaccinated customers outside while participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Alberta has declared a state of public health emergency and is taking targeted action to protect the health system and stop the spread of COVID-19.
- The current situation remains critical as hospitalizations continue to challenge the health system that all Albertans rely on.
- The current public health measures reflect the input and advice provided by health and other professionals in developing these restrictions.
- These decisions were not taken lightly and were based on the best, most up-to-date information and data.
- Health officials will continue to closely monitor the spread of COVID-19 and health system to assess whether additional action is needed to reduce transmission.
- Operators participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program must implement this requirement across all of their settings.
- Any business/venue/event participating in the REP must apply REP requirements to the entire space. REP must be operated consistently for daily operations and throughout the facility (i.e., cannot have separate rules for different areas, or different times of day).
- The requirements of the REP are the same for all in-scope operators.
If a taproom is implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program for patrons that are seated in the facility, can the taproom still offer off-sales to unvaccinated customers so long as they are not seated/only enter the facility for the off-sale purchase?

- If participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program, quick service restaurants and retail services with in-person dining are permitted to serve attendees dining in-person and ordering take-out.
  - This includes fast food locations, tap houses, breweries and similar.
- Locations offering both dine-in and takeout are permitted to screen for proof of vaccination at the point of sale (e.g. at the counter) to permit in-person dining rather than at the point of entry.
  - Attendees intending to dine-in must be screened when they order and before they are seated.
- All patrons must be physically distanced by 2 metres, wearing masks, and following all applicable public health measures outside of the dining area when ordering take-out.
- If participating in REP to allow for in-person dining, the dining area:
  - Must have restricted points of entry to ensure only patrons who have provided the necessary documentation may access the indoor dining; and
  - Must ensure that all attendees dining-in wear a face mask when not at their table (e.g., sitting) and eating or drinking.
- Attendees who do not show proof of vaccine must only be provided take out service.
- Quick service restaurants and retail services not participating in REP are not permitted to have indoor dining and must follow all applicable public health measures.

In-Scope: Sport, fitness, recreation and performance activities

Will ski resorts that implement the Restrictions Exemption Program be able to operate at 100% lift capacity?

- Not at this time
- The public health measures under Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021 would apply (i.e., 1/3 capacity; physical distancing, mandatory masking).

Are ski warming shelters eligible for REP?

- Yes.

If the entire ski facility has decided to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program, can retail shops be excluded from the capacity limits?

- No. At this time all retail remains out of scope for the REP and must follow public health measures.
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Are rental shops at ski facilities eligible for the Restrictions Exemption Program, or are they considered retail?

- Rentals have been assessed as retail at this time and must continue to follow Order 44-2021.

If a municipality has a multi-use recreation facility that includes both in-scope and out-of-scope businesses, how can the facility implement the Restriction Exemption Program?

- If the facility wishes to implement the Restriction Exemption Program, they would require separate screening points for all areas that are in scope.
  - Any area that is in-scope would be required to follow the REP.
- Areas that are not part of the REP would be required to follow the measures outlined in Order 44-2021, including 1/3 capacity, physical distancing, and masking.

Can a fitness/martial arts studio hold an open house if it has implemented the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- If the facility has implemented REP and is screening all participants/attendees for proof of vaccination, then it can hold an open-house, skills demonstration and/or competition.

Can businesses receive consent from patrons that visit regularly to record their proof of vaccination, instead of checking their proof of vaccination every time they visit? (Updated)

- Operators should obtain legal advice to inform their program if they wish to collect and maintain a list of individuals that can enter and re-enter a facility (e.g., so that repeat clients do not need to show proof of vaccination each time).
- Operators may implement an electronic offsite validation program (e.g. application-based or mobile-applications) to validate that the vaccination requirements have been met.
- Personal health information should not be stored on-site.
Can a fitness studio have the Restrictions Exemption Program apply to adult classes without needing to request proof of vaccination for classes with children under 18? Does the whole business need to adopt the program to hold adult classes?

- Youth activities are out of scope for the Restrictions Exemption Program.
  - For the purposes of this program, a youth is someone who is under the age of 18 and youth activities are when all participants are under the age of 18 (excluding coaches/trainers/instructors).

- It is not required to screen youth participating in youth activities for proof of vaccine/negative COVID-19 test results/medical exception letter to participate in these activities.
  - However, an operator may choose to screen these individuals in alignment with a local policy if they wish.

- If one or more of the participants (other than a coach, trainer, instructor, referee or other official) is 18 years or older, the activity is no longer a youth activity, and all participants must meet the requirements of REP to continue.

- If the business does not adopt REP, per Order 44-2021, no adult may attend an indoor location of a business or entity for the purposes of participating in a group physical activity, group performance activity, group recreational activity, or a competition or similar activity.

**Accommodations and Events**

Can the entire wedding party, officiant, flower girl, parents giving away, etc. (those individuals directly participating in the ceremony) remain unmasked for the entirety of the wedding ceremony, including the procession up and down the aisle, as well as the duration of the marital vows? *(Updated)*

- No - the wedding party must remain masked while entering and exiting the ceremony site. They may remove their masks during the ceremony only.
  - The ceremony is when the marrying couple and officiant are gathered to speak the words of the ceremony. The procession is not included in the ceremony.
  - The wedding party is defined as the marrying couple, and any bridesmaids or groomsmen.

- All other participants are to remain masked, including parents, flower girls, ring bearers, and all others.

Can an indoor Christmas Fair, that does not implement REP, serve food and beverage?

- Per Order 44-2021 indoor food and beverage service is prohibited.

- Outdoor service may be offered as long as:
  - The number of persons seated at the same table is limited to a maximum of six persons for persons who are members of the same household and/or maximum of an individual who resides alone and their two close contacts; and
  - Persons remain seated or standing at a table while consuming food or beverages and not walk around the space or interact with persons seated at a different table (or standing at a different standing table).
  - Any liquor sales must end by 10:00 p.m., and all consumption must end by 11:00 p.m.
Out-of-Scope Businesses: Retail, malls, personal and wellness services

Are places of worship (churches, synagogues) excluded from the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Yes, places of worship conducting faith services are currently out of scope for REP.
- Places of worship can rent their space after hours under the REP if:
  - they are not rented for events that are related to their primary function (e.g., a retail store offering a special shopping event after hours with REP);
  - they are not limiting access to service (i.e., limiting normal hours); and
  - masking requirements are in place.
- Additionally, wedding or funeral services can proceed following the guidance for those activities in a place of worship.

In regards to places of worship: if they have a parish hall/reception space - are they eligible to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program for non-service/worship activities (such as a craft fair)?

- Places of worship can rent their space after hours under the REP if:
  - they are not rented for events that are related to their primary function (e.g., a retail store offering a special shopping event after hours with REP);
  - they are not limiting access to service (i.e., limiting normal hours); and
  - masking requirements are in place.
- If renting space,
  - Renters are required to identify a person to ensure the requirements of REP are followed.
  - The facility owner/operator is required to ensure the renters are adhering to the requirements of the REP.
- The facility owner/operator retains responsibility for their space, but may delegate screening responsibilities to the renter at their discretion.
- Order 44-2021 outlines the public health restrictions including 1/3 capacity limits, physical distancing, masking, etc.
Does the one-third retail capacity apply to salons, esthetics, barbers, etc.? *(Updated)*

- Personal and wellness services are not subject to the thirty-three percent capacity limit.
  - Personal and wellness services are considered out-of-scope operators as part of the Restrictions Exemption Program, and therefore not able to participate.

- Masking and physical distancing are required. However, a person is not required to maintain a physical distance of two metres from any other person if all persons who are less than two metres from each other are separated from every other person by a physical barrier that prevents droplet transmission.

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General

What is the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- The Restrictions Exemption Program, as outlined in Order 45-2021 and Order 46-2021, permits in-scope businesses, entities and organizers to operate without most public health restrictions that are outlined in Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021.
- Masks are still mandatory indoors under Order 45-2021 and Order 46-2021.

What are the current public health restrictions?

- Public health restrictions are outlined in Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021.
- The Restrictions Exemption Program, as outlined in Order 45-2021 and Order 46-2021, permits in-scope businesses, entities and organizers to operate without most public health restrictions. Masks are still mandatory indoors.

Do municipal bylaws supersede the provincial orders?

- Yes, only if they are more stringent than the provincial orders.
- The provincial orders are the minimum requirement. Municipalities are able to enforce more stringent options.

Do businesses need to apply to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- No, businesses do not need to apply.

Will the government be putting forward a guidance document for business owners?


Will there be sector-specific guidance for implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP)?

- The requirements of the Restrictions Exemption Program are the same for all in-scope operators. Please refer to the REP guidance document and public health orders for more information.
Can a tenant of a facility implement the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP) if the facility as a whole does not participate in REP?

- If eligible, renters can participate in REP, even if the property owner chooses not to participate.
- The renter will have to ensure there is a separate point of entry for appropriate screening.
- The rented space must be a controlled space – accessible only by those who are screened into the activity following REP.
- Property owners participating in the REP that provide rental spaces to others must ensure their renters are aware of and adhere to the REP requirements.
- If an operator of a facility chooses to implement the REP, all renters must follow REP, except for those who offer out-of-scope activities.

Will signage be available for companies that choose to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Standardized signage is available for businesses to print [here](#).

What businesses are in-scope to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program? What is the government defining as daily living, which is out-of-scope from participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program?


Is there clarification and/or direction on the extension of the rapid testing program? What qualifies as an appropriate test?

- Rapid tests provided by the Alberta Government cannot be used for the Restrictions Exemption Program; however, they can continue to be used to test employees.
- Information on what tests will be permitted as proof of a negative test can be found in the Proof of Vaccination or Negative Test Requirements section of this document.
Will there be financial support available to businesses owners who implement the Restrictions Exemption Program to hire additional staff to check proof of vaccination, purchase QR code scanners and more?

- Premier Jason Kenney announced on October 7, 2021, new supports for businesses implementing the REP including:
  - One-time payment of $2,000 to help offset costs of implementing the REP. Alberta businesses eligible for the REP Implementation Grant can use the funding as they see fit. It is anticipated that application intake for the payment will be open mid-November. More details on the program including full eligibility criteria and information on where and how to apply will be available once finalized.
  - An additional $1 million will be available for training to support the safety of workers when implementing the REP. Eligible industry associations can use the REP Training Grant to develop or procure training to help workers assess and manage challenging situations that may arise during their daily work. Workers and employers will be able to access this training through select industry associations.

How is the Government of Alberta supporting businesses using the Alberta COVID Records Verifier app? Is the Government of Alberta providing any financial support so business owners can purchase Android or Apple devices?

- Businesses experiencing any issues with the app can contact the support line: 1-888-527-1224 or email covid19record@gov.ab.ca.
- Alberta’s government will also be providing funding to help offset costs of implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program and support training for workers through the REP Implementation Grant.
- The program will offer a one-time payment of $2,000 to Alberta small and medium-sized businesses who are eligible and choose to implement the REP. Alberta businesses eligible for the REP Implementation Grant can use the funding as they see fit.
- Application intake for the payment will open mid-November.
- More details on the program, including full eligibility criteria, and information on where and how to apply, will be shared once finalized.
Proof of Vaccination, Negative Test or Medical Exemption Letter Requirements

What documentation will guests need to provide to show proof of vaccination?

- Proof of vaccination for Alberta residents includes:
  - A picture or paper record of a valid Alberta Health Services, MyHealth Records, pharmacy, First Nations, or physician immunization record prominently displaying the name, type of vaccine and date of administration, or
  - Canadian armed forces immunization record, displaying the name, type of vaccine and date of administration, or
  - Valid Government of Alberta Vaccination QR code (when available).

- Accordingly, if Albertans cannot access their vaccination records, they can use another form of proof of vaccine as described above, such as the proof of vaccine they received from AHS or the pharmacy at the time of their vaccination.

- Proof of vaccination for out of province and out of country guests includes:
  - An immunization record from another Canadian Province or Territory, displaying the name, type of vaccine and date of administration, or
  - For international travellers, the ArriveCan app code and a valid international travel identification document are acceptable.

Which previous forms of proof of vaccination can still be accepted until November 15?

- For the time being, Albertans can continue to use their original vaccine record, with or without a QR code, to show proof of vaccination. Records received via Alberta.ca/CovidRecords, as well as paper records received at the time of vaccination will continue to be accepted until November15.

- These forms of proof of vaccination will be accepted whether printed, or saved on a phone as a screenshot.

- While these forms of proof of vaccination will be accepted until November 15, 2021, the use of the vaccine record with the QR code is still recommended during this transition period.
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For inspecting vaccine status, will a second piece of identification be required to validate that the proof of vaccination presented matches the identity of the holder?

- For guests over 18 years of age, the name and the date of birth of the individual listed on the proof of immunization or testing must be matched with personal identification that has the name and date of birth on the identification.
- Proof of identity can be established using documentation issued by an institution or public body, provided it includes the name of the holder and date of birth.
- Examples of identification documents that may be used to confirm the identity of the holder of the vaccine receipt include:
  - birth certificate issued by a government of a province of Canada and including the photograph of the holder;
  - citizenshhip card;
  - driver’s licence issued by a government of a province of Canada and including the photograph of the holder;
  - provincial or territorial issued identification card, including health card;
  - certificate of Indian Status;
  - Metis Nation of Alberta Association citizenship and identification card;
  - Inuit Status card;
  - passport attesting to citizenship or other national status, issued by a government of any jurisdiction and including a photograph of the holder;
  - Permanent Resident Card.

When using the Alberta Covid Records Verifier app, should businesses ask for photo ID to help verify the patron’s identity, or are other forms of personal identification acceptable?

- Patrons 18 and older will be asked for personal identification. A photo ID is not required
- Proof of identity can be established using documentation issued by an institution or public body, provided it includes the name of the holder and date of birth.
- Examples of identification documents that may be used to confirm the identity of the holder of the vaccine receipt include:
  - Birth certificate,
  - Citizenship card,
  - Driver’s licence,
  - Provincial or Territorial Government issued identification card, including health card (Alberta or other),
  - Metis card, Treaty card, Inuit Status card, or
  - Passport, or Permanent Resident card.
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How do businesses check identification of youth 12-18 who may not have any government-issued identification?

- Individuals 18 years or older must produce valid personal identification as defined above.
- Individuals who are under the age of 18 do not need to show personal identification.

Can a customer share and present proof of vaccination on behalf of someone else?

- No, each individual is required to present their own proof of vaccine. Those over 18 must show photo identification.

What does a business do if a customer claims their proof of vaccination is wrong?

- If a person is using one of the accepted forms of proof noted above, this situation is unlikely to occur.
- If a customer indicates their proof of vaccination is incorrect, they should follow up with the pharmacy where they had their shot or with AHS.

How will small businesses be able to scan the upcoming QR code?

- Alberta’s government has developed a QR code to verify COVID-19 vaccine records. Albertans can display their QR code so that operators can scan and determine vaccine status of guests. The code can be displayed digitally, or patrons can print it out.
- Businesses and organizations can use the free AB Covid Records Verifier app to quickly and easily confirm their patrons’ vaccination status. The AB Covid Records Verifier app is available for download on Apple and Android devices through the respective app stores.
- Albertans can get their enhanced vaccine record with a QR code online at alberta.ca/CovidRecords without creating an account.

Who is exempt from needing proof of vaccination, and what documentation is required for this exemption?

- A vaccine medical exemption letter is an original, signed, written confirmation provided to a person by an authorizing health professional, which verifies there is a medical contraindication to vaccination that prevents the person from being vaccinated or verifies the person is a participant in a COVID-19 vaccine clinical trial and includes the following:
  - The name of the patron or attendee to whom the exemption applies;
  - The name, phone number, contact information, professional registration number and signature of the authorizing health professional;
  - The date on which the written confirmation was provided;
  - The length of time the exemption is valid.
Is there a standard format that is used for medical exceptions? How do I know it is valid?

- The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) have created a standardized letter that is available to physicians via a physician portal. CARNA also have a form letter that can be accessed for nurse practitioners. These are two standardized letters that exist, however it is ultimately up to physicians if they use it. Regardless a valid medical exception is the original signed letter from a physician or nurse practitioner that must include:
  - The name of the person in the written documentation that matches the identification provided.
  - The physician’s or nurse practitioner’s information is complete by including:
    - Name, phone number, contact information, professional registration number, and signature of the physician or nurse practitioner;
    - Statement that there is a medical reason for the individual’s exception from being fully vaccinated against COVID-19; and
  - The duration that the exception is valid.

What documentation will guests need to show as proof of a negative COVID-19 test?

- Guests must show a written or printed copy of the test result that indicates the individual has tested negative for COVID-19 on a Health Canada-approved rapid antigen, rapid PCR, or lab-based PCR test approved by Health Canada or the lab accreditation body of jurisdiction.

- The document must clearly outline the laboratory that completed the test if applicable (e.g., DynaLIFE), the type of test, the time of sample collection, and clearly indicate a negative result.

- A picture of a rapid test result taken off-site is not sufficient for this purpose.

- Individuals must not bring completed rapid tests or self-tests to businesses as they can pose a communicable-disease risk.

- Testing must not be sourced from the Alberta Health Services public COVID-19 testing system.
  - This system is reserved for symptomatic individuals and those in outbreak situations. If an individual has COVID-19 symptoms, they must isolate.

- Operators are permitted to offer on-site rapid testing.
  - It is recommended that operators seek expert advice including medical oversight before implementing a rapid test program.

- If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, that individual must isolate, per Order 06-2021 and Order 39-2021.
Are customers/clients always responsible to pay for their negative COVID-19 test as required by the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Testing must not be sourced from the Alberta Health Services public COVID-19 testing system.
  - This system is reserved for symptomatic individuals and those in outbreak situations. If an individual has COVID-19 symptoms, they must isolate.
- Testing must be conducted by a private provider that will provide proof of date and outcome. Alternatively, the business/operator can provide on-site rapid testing at its own cost.
- If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, that individual must isolate, per Order 06-2021 and Order 39-2021.

Are tests provided by Alberta Chambers of Commerce acceptable for proof of negative test?

- No. The rapid tests provided to the Alberta Chambers of Commerce are not considered acceptable proof of a negative test.
- Testing must be conducted by a private provider that will provide proof of date and outcome. Alternatively, the business/organization can provide on-site rapid testing at its own cost.
- If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, that individual must isolate, per Order 06-2021 and Order 39-2021.

Employees and Contractors

What can businesses legally ask/require of their employees in terms of proof of vaccination?

- Private employers and public organizations, including municipal or provincial government, can require employees to be immunized as part of their company policy or as a required precondition of employment.
- Some employers may also have occupational health and safety policies that require some immunizations as a condition of employment to protect themselves and others around them.
- It is recommended that employees speak with their employer about their specific occupational health and safety immunization policy.
- If an employer is interested in implementing a new vaccination policy, it is recommended they seek the advice of their legal council on the considerations for their specific industry and context.
- On October 7, 2021, Minister Schweitzer announced that government will be developing legislation to protect employers who implement COVID-19 vaccine mandates in their workplace. The legislation is currently being drafted and final details are being determined.
If an operator is participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP), do volunteers/coaches need to be screened for proof of vaccination, or are they considered the same as employees, who are exempt from the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- If the volunteer/coach is volunteering/coaching for an entity that is renting space within a larger facility:
  - Employees, contractors, repair workers, delivery workers, volunteers, inspectors or others who are entering the business/entity/event for work purposes and not as patrons are not required to be screened.
  - Coaches, instructors, trainers, referees etc. for youth activities, who are 18 years or older, are subject to the public health measures or REP requirements in the facility.
- If the volunteer/coach is volunteering/coaching for an entity that owns/leases it's own space that has it's own "storefront" and is not inside a larger multi-use venue or similar:
  - Employees, contractors, repair workers, delivery workers, volunteers, inspectors or others who are entering the business/entity/event for work purposes and not as patrons are not required to be screened.
- The guidelines and orders outline the minimum requirement for participation in the REP; however, it is important to note that entities/facilities may implement a program that is more restrictive than outlined in the guidance.
- Municipalities may have more stringent requirements than those outlined in the provincial orders.

**Business Liability and Enforcement**

Will there be an initial grace period on enforcement of the Restrictions Exemption Program as businesses take steps to implement new operational policies for the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Enforcement is secondary to education and support.
- Alberta’s government recognizes that most businesses want to comply, and will assist with education and guidance as required.

How can businesses avoid fraud, and would they be liable if unknowingly they let someone into their business with fraudulent proof of vaccination?

- Operators should obtain legal advice about the impact of this program in their business/industry context.
- Operators should obtain legal advice to inform their program if they wish to collect and maintain a list of individuals that can enter and re-enter a facility (e.g., so that repeat clients do not need to show proof of vaccination each time).
- Personal health information should not be stored onsite.
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Will the Government of Alberta be putting forward a toolkit for businesses so they can verify proof of vaccine documents from other provinces and territories?

- The Government of Alberta has put together a document that shows samples of proof of vaccination documents developed by other provinces and territories.
- The samples show in the document are not comprehensive list of accepted records. Pharmacy immunization records and physician immunization records are considered acceptable proof of vaccination.

Does Order 45-2021 provide businesses with cover from all liability and protect them from being taken to small claims court?

- Operators should obtain legal advice about the impact of this program in their business/industry context.
- Alberta’s government will introduce legislation to protect businesses that require vaccinations for employees or implement the Restriction Exemption Program from legal challenges.

In terms of monitoring and implementing the proof of vaccination program, what fines or supports are in place to help businesses deal with non-compliant customers? Is there funding to support monitoring of the vaccination exemption program process?

- In any instance of unruly, threatening, or violent behaviour, the police should be immediately contacted.
  - Government will introduce legislation to protect businesses that require vaccinations for employees or implement the REP from legal challenges.
  - Fines for contravening public health orders, including the mistreatment of workers doing the difficult work of ensuring public health orders are being followed, will be doubled from $2,000 to $4,000.
- Alberta’s government will soon offer a one-time payment of $2,000 to Alberta small- and medium-sized businesses that are eligible for and choose to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program, requiring proof of vaccination, a negative test result or medical exemption.
  - Businesses eligible for the REP Implementation Grant will be eligible to use the funding as they see fit.
  - More details on the program, including full eligibility criteria, and information on where and how to apply, will be shared once finalised.
- Additional funding will also be available for training to support the safety of workers when implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program. Eligible industry associations across Alberta can use the REP Training Grant to develop or procure training to help workers assess and manage challenging situations that may arise during their daily work. Workers and employers will be able to access this training through select industry associations.
Are business operators and their staff expected to remove non-compliant customers who refuse to wear a mask in a store?

- On October 7, 2021, the Government of Alberta announced that it will bring in new supports for businesses implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- One of the announced supports is the REP Training Grant, which will be available for training to support the safety of workers when implementing the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- Eligible industry associations across Alberta will be able to use the REP Training Grant to develop or procure training to help workers assess and manage challenging situations that may arise during their daily work.
- Workers and employers will be able to access this training through select industry associations.
- More information on the REP Training Grant will be shared when finalized.
- As announced on October 7, 2021, the Government of Alberta will also be doubling fines for contravening public health orders, including the mistreatment of workers doing the difficult work ensuring public health orders are being followed, from $2,000 to $4,000.
- In relation to masking, a retail store should:
  - post signage of the requirement to wear a mask,
  - remind a non-mask wearing customer of their requirement to wear a mask as soon as possible once entering the store,
  - where available, offer a free disposable mask, or curbside/online service as an alternative,
  - have a policy within their store about how to deal with those not wearing a mask, and
  - contact local enforcement if necessary.
- If a store’s policy for handling confrontational situations is to de-escalate the situation and complete the sale, then that store will not be charged for doing so.

**In-Scope Businesses: General**

How will indoor/outdoor spaces be treated?

- Should a business choose to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program, the entire facility (indoor and outdoor) is subject to the rules of the Restrictions Exemption Program.
  - It is not permitted to have the program operate some days and not others, for certain times during a business day and not others, or in some areas and not others.
  - Specifically, once the program is implemented, it must be operated consistently for daily operations and throughout the facility.
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Can businesses participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program on some days and not others; for certain times during a business day and not others; in some areas and not others?

- It is not permitted to have the program operate some days and not others, for certain times during a business day and not others, or in some areas and not others.
- Once the program is implemented, it must be operated consistently for daily operations and throughout the facility.

Do children 12 and up need to show vaccination status?

- Yes. Children 12 years of age and older are required to show proof of vaccination, a negative test, or an original vaccine medical exception letter when entering a location that has implemented the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- Individuals who are under the age of 18 do not need to show personal identification.

In-Scope Businesses: Restaurants, takeout and fast food establishments

If my restaurant implements the Restrictions Exemption Program, does that mean that we can go back to business as usual and continue serving alcohol past 10 p.m. starting Monday, September 20?

- Yes. The Restrictions Exemption Program intends to allow businesses to operate without further restrictions if all patrons are vaccinated, provide proof of a negative test, or an original (non-copied) medical exemption letter.
- Masking continues to apply.

Can my restaurant implement the Restrictions Exemption Program for indoor dining, but make the patio available to unvaccinated patrons? Can I set up differing times/days?

- Should a business choose to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program, the entire facility (indoor and outdoor) is subject to the rules of the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- In other words, a restaurant cannot choose to apply the Restrictions Exemption Program indoors and allow unvaccinated individuals to use the patio; the program applies to the whole facility.
- Should a restaurant choose to allow unvaccinated people, they must meet all public health guidelines including outdoor dining only with a maximum of six individuals per table (one household or two close contacts for those living alone) and liquor sales and consumption restrictions (10 p.m. sales and 11 p.m. consumption).

It is not permitted to have the program operate some days and not others, for certain times during a business day and not others, or in some areas and not others. Specifically, restaurants that have implemented the Restrictions Exemption Program must apply the program to the entire area of food service, both inside and outside. As such, the unvaccinated individuals cannot enter the restaurant to pick up a take out order, but instead must do curbside pick-up and not enter the facility.

- Yes, this is correct.
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Can staff check proof of vaccination status at the table, or does proof of vaccination need to be checked at the establishment’s entrance?

- Generally, businesses must screen all attendees at the point of entry. Counter sale or quick service restaurants eligible to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program are permitted to conduct screening at the counter instead of at the point of entry.

Do restrictions apply to takeout/fast food establishments or are they defined as out of scope?

- Takeout is still permitted at restaurants that have not implemented the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- In-person dining is only permitted if the Restrictions Exemption Program has been implemented, requiring proof of vaccination, proof of a negative test from patrons or an original medical exemption letter upon entry.

If a fast food restaurant chooses not to participate in the program, and is therefore required to close the dining room, can customers still line up in the restaurant to order their food and take it away?

- Under this scenario, dine in for both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals would not be allowed.
- Customers would be allowed to enter the facility to order. Once the customer receives their order, they would need to leave the restaurant immediately regardless of vaccination status.

Are quick-counter grab-and-go service restaurants, food courts, cafeterias, takeout and delivery, and drive-thru exempt from the new restrictions and Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Food courts must participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program in order to keep the seating area open. If food courts block off all entry points to the seating area in order to screen individuals for proof of vaccination, the food court seating area would be allowed to stay open. If the food court is not participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program, the seating area must remain closed.
- Food courts, grab-and-go restaurants and cafeterias do not need to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program to permit takeout. Food courts, grab-and-go restaurants and cafeterias must implement the Restrictions Exemption Program if they decide to permit eat-in service.
- Additional information about REP is outlined in Order 45-2021 and Order 46-2021.

Do delivery drivers picking up food (eg Uber Eats) at a restaurant participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program have to show proof of vaccine or negative test to enter the facility? Do they have to use curbside pick-up?

- If a facility is participating in REP, individuals entering the facility for the sole purposes of delivery, pick-up and take out are not required to show their proof of vaccination so long as the items are collected at the point of screening.
- Food delivery drivers must be vaccinated to enter a restaurant participating in the REP.
- Drivers for third-party delivery platforms and people coming in to order and leave cannot come into a dining establishment if they are not vaccinated or show proof of negative COVID-19 test.
What are the requirements for food courts?

- Food courts may be eligible for participation in REP.
- In order to be eligible, the food court must:
  - Remove public access to the seating area and be able to screen all individuals prior to entry.
  - Screening must be done at the point of entry.
- If the food court is going to participate in REP, the area must be closed off so that public access is restricted to those individuals who have screened in, creating a controlled space.
- Additional information about REP is outlined in Order 45-2021 and Order 46-2021.

Why are bars and restaurants included in the latest public health measures?

- Alberta has declared a state of public health emergency and is taking targeted action to protect the health system and stop the spread of COVID-19.
- The current situation remains critical as new cases and hospitalizations continue to rise rapidly, which is challenging the health system that all Albertans rely on.
- These decisions were not taken lightly and were based on the best, most up-to-date information and data.
- Health officials will continue to monitor closely the spread of COVID-19 and health system to assess whether additional action is needed to reduce transmission.
- At this time, we know that:
  - Delta is more rampant among the younger population
  - Data shows that transmission is happening during social gatherings
  - A higher rate of vaccination among the younger population is needed.
- Public health measures outlined in CMOH Order 44-2021 and CMOH Order 47-2021 apply to a range of businesses and sectors.
- The Restrictions Exemption Program permits in-scope businesses, entities and organizers to operate without most public health restrictions as outlined in Order 45-2021 and Order 46-2021.
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Restrictions Exemption Program – FAQ

November 9, 2021

In-Scope: Sport, fitness, recreation and performance activities

How are adult (over 18) sport, fitness and performance activities being treated?

- Fitness facilities are in-scope to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- If a fitness facility implements the Restrictions Exemption Program, it is allowed to operate without further restrictions if all patrons are vaccinated, provide proof of a negative test or an original (non-copied) medical exemption letter upon entry.
- The following public health restrictions apply unless the facility or program implements the Restrictions Exemption Program:
  - Indoor group classes and activities are not permitted.
  - Indoor competitions are paused except where vaccine exemptions have been granted.
  - Indoor one-on-one training and solo activities are allowed with three-metre physical distancing.
  - Outdoor activities can continue with no restrictions.

If a class has students that are both over 18 and under 18, does the Restriction Exemption Program have to be implemented?

- Group classes including those both over and under 18 can choose to implement the Restriction Exemption Program (REP). If the REP is implemented, all persons eligible for a vaccine would need to show proof of vaccination.
- Alternatively, the program may operate under the restrictions associated with Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021 if the venue does not implement the REP program.
- School groups accessing facilities otherwise under REP (for the purposes of K-12 curriculum) are not required to be screened as part of REP.

Are masking and physical distancing required in all dance and performing arts studios, except when the participant is engaged in the activity?

- Masking is always required regardless of whether the Restrictions Exemption Program has been implemented or not. However, physical distancing requirements will depend on the age of the participants.
- Please visit alberta.ca/covid-19-public-health-actions.aspx and refer to the section on sport, fitness, recreation and performance activities.
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If the business (for example a theatre or music venue), is participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP) what are the masking and/or distancing requirements for performers while performing?

- Physical distancing restrictions do not apply to businesses/venues/events participating in REP.
- Masking of all persons is still required. Masks may be removed by performers only while taking part in the performance activity and must be replaced immediately once they are no longer performing.
- If a performance does not require a mask to be removed (eg. playing an instrument such as drums), it is recommended the performer remain masked during the performance.

Will indoor college and university sports be able to continue, assuming all participants are vaccinated?

- Most Alberta colleges and universities have already implemented mandatory vaccinations for players and spectators.
- All sports for those over 18 must implement the Restrictions Exemption Program to continue.

What is permitted under the new restrictions for classes that involve a parent and a child participating in the class together? Are they considered spectators?

- Parent-child classes where parents are needed to support the child’s activity can proceed under the restrictions for children’s activities. Parents must be masked and physically distanced from those outside their household.
  - Parents who are participating in a youth activity in a facility participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP) will be required to be vaccinated, show proof of a negative test or provide an original medical exemption letter.
  - Children would not need to maintain physical distancing during the youth activity. Please see the website for additional information: alberta.ca/covid-19-public-health-actions.aspx
- If the parent is not needed to support the child, the restrictions for adults over 18 would apply and no indoor group classes or activities are permitted.
- Youth under the age of 18 participating in youth activities at a facility participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program, are not required to be screened as part of REP.
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Restrictions Exemption Program – FAQ

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Can pools remain open under the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Indoor pools, if not participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP), are limited to 1/3 capacity and the following conditions apply:
  - Adults: No group swim activities. Solo or 1:1 only. Three-metres distancing except between members of the same household or a person who lives alone and their two close contacts.
- Youth participating in youth activities in a facility that is participating in REP are not required to be screened as part of the REP.
  - Parents who are required to support youth in their activities (e.g. parent and tot groups) would be required to follow REP requirements in order to attend.
  - Youth are subject to physical distancing at all other times when not engaged in the physical activity (e.g. locker rooms, common areas etc.).
  - If youth wish to access other amenities beyond youth-specific sports, recreation or performance activities in a facility participating in REP, for these purposes they will be required to be screened per the REP, as applicable (12+ years of age).
  - Coaches, instructors, trainers, referees etc. for youth activities, who are 18 years or older, are subject to the public health measures or REP requirements in the facility.
  - School groups accessing facilities otherwise under REP (for the purposes of K-12 curriculum) are not required to be screened as part of REP.

Can ski areas operate outdoor services (e.g. skiing) with no restrictions as per the order, and be able to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program for its indoor services only?

- Yes, this is correct.

Are day lodges at ski areas eligible for the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Ski lodge dining services could implement the Restrictions Exemption Program assuming there is a separate entrance for screening and the space is controlled and only accessible by those who are screened into the space.
- Retail services and customer service are not eligible for REP.

Some ski areas operate in summer as well as winter and have day lodges that include quick service take away and single item purchases like a snack or beverage. They do not operate as restaurants. Can quick food service outlets at day lodges participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Yes, they can participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- Please see guidance for quick service food establishments in the in scope businesses: restaurants, take out and fast food establishments section of this document.
Rental shops and customer service counters are common to most ski areas and exist within multi-purpose day lodges or in separate buildings. Are rental shop spaces and customer service counters considered retail spaces and subject to the public health restrictions for out-of-scope businesses?

- These spaces are considered retail and are not eligible for the Restrictions Exemption Program. The following restrictions apply:
  - An operator of a business or entity must limit the number of members of the public that may attend the location where the business or entity is operating to the greater of:
    - thirty-three percent of the total operational occupant load as determined in accordance with the Alberta Fire Code and the fire authority having jurisdiction; or
    - five persons.
  - Attendees must be with household members only, or two close contacts if they live alone
- This is a requirement in Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021
- All retail businesses in Alberta are being treated the same (whether required to be accessed for daily living or discretionary) and the Restrictions Exemption Program is not available to any retail.
- Indoor masking and physical distancing between households are required in all retail locations.

Public washrooms are often located in public spaces within day lodges and are not specific to retail or restaurant space or patrons. Is proof of vaccination required for people accessing indoor washrooms?

- Yes, if the day lodge is participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program.
- If they are not participating in the program, they would need to operate how they did in April, e.g., the washrooms might be accessible while picking up food, or if in a retail space, following the one-third capacity, masking and physical distancing requirements.
COVID-19 INFORMATION

Restrictions Exemption Program – FAQ

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Accommodations and Events

Can a hotel implement the Restrictions Exemption Program selectively for different amenities on their property, or must they implement the program consistently across the board? (E.g. if the hotel has a restaurant and meeting rooms, do they need to implement the program for both, or can they implement the program for one but not the other?)

- Hotels are not able to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program for accommodations/dwelling units; however, hotels can implement the program for fitness rooms, pools, game rooms, movie rooms, restaurants and other similar amenities, conference/meeting spaces/halls and rented space.
- Once the program is implemented, it must be operated consistently for daily operations and throughout the facility.
  - It is not permitted to have the program operate some days and not others, for certain times during a business day and not others, or in some areas and not others.
  - Specifically, restaurants that have implemented the program must apply the program to the entire area of food service, both inside and outside.
- Operators participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program that provides rental spaces to others must ensure their renters are aware of and adhere to the program requirements.
  - Operators that rent facilities to other groups (for private events) are responsible to ensure that the renting group is aware of the need to adhere to public health orders unless the rental group implements the Restrictions Exemption Program.
  - If the rental group implements the Restrictions Exemption Program, it must strictly adhere to the requirements of the program. Operators remain responsible for the adherence to public health restrictions in their facilities.

In regards to cabins rented for corporate meetings, if the cabin has multiple guest rooms, each with its own washroom and separate exterior entrance, as well as a common area where the company will be conducting its meetings and taking its meals, can the REP be implemented?

- When used for the purpose of renting for a corporate meeting or similar, the REP could be applied to the cabin spaces, provided:
  - Spaces that are being used for REP activities must be closed to the public/controlled to be accessed only by individuals who have screened in.
  - Masking remains mandatory in REP spaces, unless an individual is seated or standing at a table to eat or drink.
  - In this case, the rooms have an external and internal entrance. To implement the REP in the communal space, the common area would have to be controlled with point of entry screening.
  - As the cabins have external entrances, the access to the accommodations would not be hindered by REP requirements for the communal space.
  - If the communal space was not able to be restricted to access only by those screened in, the cabins would have to be treated as either accommodations or REP rental space, but not both.
Can long-term stay hotels qualify for the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Accommodation providers are not able to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program.

Can hotel pools remain open under the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Hotels can participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program to control access to their amenities, including the pool.
- Indoor pools, if not participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program, are limited to 1/3 capacity and the following conditions apply:
  - Adults: No group swim activities. Solo or 1:1 only. Three metres distancing except between members of the same household or a person who lives alone and their two close contacts.

Can events and meeting spaces continue to operate as usual if the business has the Restrictions Exemption Program in place?

- Yes, however, they must follow masking restrictions.

Can an event operator renting space inside a hotel for an event implement the Restrictions Exemption Program for attendees and have the event proceed without restrictions?

- The Restrictions Exemption Program permits in-scope businesses, entities and organizers to operate without most public health restrictions as outlined in Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021. Masks are still mandatory indoors except for some exceptions as outlined in Part 3B. (3.4) of Order 44-2021.
- Operators participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program that provide rental spaces to others must ensure their renters are aware of and adhere to the program requirements.
- Operators that rent facilities to other groups (for private events) are responsible to ensure that the renting group is aware of the need to adhere to public health orders unless the rental group implements the Restrictions Exemption Program.
  - If the rental group implements the Restrictions Exemption Program, they must strictly adhere to the requirements.
  - Operators remain responsible for the adherence to public health restrictions in their facilities.

Can venues participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program? Who is responsible for checking proof of vaccination? If a couple, rents a hall for a wedding and hires a catering company, who would be responsible for handling the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Private social events held in public facilities can participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program where the facility maintains responsibility for adherence to these requirements.
For trade shows that are participating in the Restrictions Exemption Program, are trade show exhibitors/vendors that are selling a product/service or engaging with patrons considered employees and therefore exempt from providing proof of vaccination/negative test?

- Given the social-adjacent nature of trade shows, it is strongly recommended that all eligible exhibitors/vendors be vaccinated.
- Vendors at trade shows are considered employees and therefore not subject to screening requirements under the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP).
- While vendors would not be required to show proof of vaccination under REP, the facilities implementing REP may outline stricter requirements than what is currently required for REP.
- The orders set out the minimum standard to which entities must comply but operators may implement a program that is more restrictive than outlined in the guidance.
- Municipalities may have more stringent requirements than those outlined in the provincial orders.

What are the rules for municipal election forums in regards to (a) capacity, (b) masking, and (c) ability to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program?

- Conferences, meeting spaces, halls, and rented spaces are eligible to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program with the exception of using the facility for the following purposes:
  - mutual support meetings
  - places of worship – for faith services
  - jury selection
  - election purposes and related activities
- In the case of the facility being used for any of the above purposes, the public health measures under Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021 would apply (i.e., 1/3 capacity; physical distancing, mandatory masking).

What is defined as a “wedding party”?

- The wedding party is the marrying couple, and any bridesmaids or groomsmen.

At a wedding reception, can the bride and groom and their families perform their first dances (planned and rehearsed) for their watching guests without masks, so long as all other attendees are six feet or more away and comply with other masking requirements?

- Masking requirements do not apply to a person marrying another person during a wedding ceremony and the individuals in their wedding party.
- The wedding party is the marrying couple and any bridesmaids or groomsmen.
Is masking required during wedding reception activities, such as cake cutting, speeches, etc, where those participating in the ceremony are distanced from the other patrons/attendees?

- There are no exemptions from the requirement for masking during an indoor wedding reception, other than when seated at a table while consuming food or drink.

Can the wedding party enter a wedding reception without masks, so long as all other attendees are six feet or more away and comply with other masking requirements?

- Masking is required at all times during an indoor wedding reception except while seated or standing at a table to consume food or drink. Individuals are not able to travel about the space while consuming food or drink.
- The wedding party is the marrying couple and any bridesmaids or groomsmen.

Can the entire wedding party, officiant, flower girl, parents giving away, etc. (those individuals directly participating in the ceremony) remain unmasked for the entirety of the wedding ceremony, including the procession up and down the aisle, as well as the duration of the marital vows?

- The wedding party must remain masked while entering the exiting the ceremony site. They may remove their masks during the ceremony only.
- The wedding party is the marrying couple, and any bridesmaids or groomsmen.

Does masking have to occur during other reception activities, such as cake cutting and speeches, even if the wedding party is consuming beverages?

- A patron or attendee, including members of the bridal party, does not have to wear a mask if:
  - They are seated at a table while consuming food or drink; or
  - They are standing at a standing table while consuming food or drink, as long as the person remains at the standing table at all times while consuming the food or drink.
- Individuals must wear a mask at all other times.

Can wedding guests who are standing and consuming a drink remain unmasked?

- A patron or attendee does not have to wear a mask if:
  - They are seated at a table while consuming food or drink; or
  - They are standing at a standing table while consuming food or drink, as long as the person remains at the standing table at all times while consuming the food or drink.
- Individuals must wear a mask at all other times.
COVID-19 INFORMATION

Restrictions Exemption Program – FAQ

November 9, 2021

Out-of-Scope Businesses: Retail, malls, personal and wellness services

What are the restrictions on retail and malls?

- Retail and shopping malls are not eligible for the Restrictions Exemption Program as public access is necessary for daily living. The following restrictions apply:
  - An operator of a business or entity must limit the number of members of the public that may attend the location where the business or entity is operating to the greater of:
    - thirty-three percent of the total operational occupant load as determined in accordance with the Alberta Fire Code and the fire authority having jurisdiction; or
    - five persons.
  - Attendees must be with household members only, or two close contacts if they live alone.
- This is a requirement in Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021 and malls will need to implement measures to meet the requirement.
- All retail businesses in Alberta are being treated the same (whether required to be accessed for daily living or discretionary) and the Restrictions Exemption Program is not available to any retail.
- Indoor masking and physical between households are required in all retail locations.

Why is retail excluded from the Restrictions Exemption Program (REP)?

- Retail and shopping malls are not eligible for the Restrictions Exemption Program as public access is necessary for daily living.
- Alberta has declared a state of public health emergency and is taking targeted action to protect the health system and stop the spread of COVID-19.
- The current situation remains critical as new cases and hospitalizations continue to rise rapidly, which is challenging the health system that all Albertans rely on.
- These decisions were not taken lightly and were based on the best, most up-to-date information and data.
- Health officials will continue to closely monitor the spread of COVID-19 and health system to assess whether additional action is needed to reduce transmission.

Does ‘daily living’ include medical and health professionals such as dentists, optometrists, chiro, physio, etc.?

- Health and wellness services are considered out-of-scope to participate in the Restrictions Exemption Program, as they are required for daily living.
If my business is deemed out-of-scope can I still implement a Proof of Vaccination program?

- Businesses that are out-of-scope are not able to implement the Restrictions Exemption Program as set out under Order 45-2021 and Order 46-2021.

- Businesses are permitted to set their own standards, which can be above and beyond provincial guidance as part of a business decision.

- This could include, for example, having fewer patrons than the maximum noted in the order, or in having proof of vaccine program for requiring patrons entering a store to be vaccinated – even if not part of the Restrictions Exemption Program.

- However, implementing restrictions such as proof of vaccination would be voluntary, and the business must continue to follow all public health requirements of Order 44-2021 and Order 47-2021 (e.g. the 1/3 capacity, masking and physical distancing).

- Go to alberta.ca/covid19 for the most up-to-date information on restrictions to contain COVID-19.