

There has been a great deal of conversation surrounding the new Restriction Exemption Program (REP) and the Health Order announced on Sept 15th. These new restrictions and protocols have been revised and clarified over the past week. I have been fielding a lot of questions regarding these two documents and I would like to go, some of the questions I am getting.

You can read both of the documents for yourself here if you'd like.

New Health Order: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/cmoh-order-44-2021>

Restriction Exemption Program: <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7cd02856-6cc3-4a3d-a47b-38205b224151/resource/b998bc19-5d6a-4f9d-874e-a17c0fc43333/download/covid-19-information-requirements-restrictions-exemption-program-2021-09-24.pdf>

Important

- Restriction Exemption Program (REP) is a program set up to allow indoor activity to go forward as long as all participants are vaccinated or show proof of negative covid tests.
- If a business is not part of the REP they are not allowed to engage in any indoor activity unless they fall under stated exceptions (school, health services, solo sporting activities, child groups activities, volunteer work etc.)
- Worship Services are considered Out-of-Scope. This means the worship service is not allowed to turn anyone away based on their vaccination status.

MYTH: Churches are exempt from restrictions.

FALSE: Every indoor space (and some outdoor) are under a mask mandate. Period. There are exceptions to the rule but they are quite limited and very specific.

MYTH: Churches are not allowed to join REP.

FALSE: Worship Services are "out-of-scope" from the program. However, all other activity which take place in a church building are subject to the same rules as all other businesses. Only Worship Services are out-of-scope. Therefore, all other activities must choose whether they will participate in REP or not.

Out of Scope means that we are not allowed to turn anyone away from worship because of their vaccination status. Worship is not under the REP, but we do suggest that you be fully vaccinated to attend. Being out of scope means we are under the full extent of the restrictions within a worship setting.

- Masked at all times (except while receiving communion).
- Physical distancing of 2m between cohorts
- Must be symptom free
- Maximum attendance of one third our fire code (75 people).

MYTH: We can continue as normal without declaring participation in the REP, just follow regular restrictions.

FALSE: If Church of the Cross chooses not to participate in the REP the only activity that could take place in the building is work activities and volunteer activities. All other indoor activities fall under social gathering (i.e. Men's Breakfast etc.), or recreation group (Quilting Group etc.).

MYTH: If we declare REP then we are not bound by restrictions.

FALSE: Declaring that we are participating in the REP allows indoor activities to take place. You still must be masked. Under the program physical distancing rules are relaxed in an REP setting. That being said the church has decided to keep physical distancing in place at all times for everyone's safety.

Please take the time to read the full Restriction Exemption Program Policy for Church of the Cross. I have tried to make it as simple and concise as possible. It is located on our website and attached here.