



COVID-19 Safety & Opening Plan

North Lonsdale United Church

V1.0 JULY 23, 2020



As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to provincial guidelines, North Lonsdale United has been temporarily closed since March 17, 2020, with the sole exception of programs deemed to be essential services. Closure of the church building has impacted regular Sunday worship services and a variety of congregational activities, as well as the programs of local community groups and small businesses that use the facility on a donation or rental basis.

As circumstances have improved in British Columbia, NLUC is now looking at a gradual re-opening of the facility to support congregational and community / small business programs, within the provisions of [BC's Restart Plan](#).

This **Safety & Opening Plan** outlines the essential elements of NLUC's opening strategy and the protocols that user groups will be expected to follow as they undertake their programs and activities in the church building. This strategy references guidelines and recommendations provided by the following organizations: [Worksafe BC](#), [The United Church of Canada](#), and the [Pacific Mountain Region Council](#) of the United Church of Canada, as well as our [Insurer](#).

This Plan is a "living document" and may be updated from time to time as warranted by changing circumstances.

1. SCOPE AND TARGET AUDIENCE

The Safety & Opening plan covers all uses of the church building with the exception of Worship Services, which pose a number of unique circumstances that will be addressed separately from the main opening strategy. While many elements of the Plan are relevant to Worship Services, it is primarily intended for the awareness and reference of small and medium-sized user groups including community organizations, small businesses and gatherings involving congregants.

2. GOALS AND TIMING

The goal of the Plan is to make the church building available to support the congregation and the local community in a way that is both timely and safe. The ongoing safety of building users and those whom they may come in contact with outside of the church is of *paramount importance* in the opening strategy. Timely and successful reopening will require:

- Close consultation / collaboration between church representatives and user groups regarding the size of the group and the nature of the activity, so that appropriate venues can be assigned and scheduled and protocols fine-tuned as warranted; and
- Conscientious and 'hands-on' observance of safety protocols by all users.

The plan envisions an incremental opening, commencing for the most part in September, with the possibility of limited use by selected small groups beginning in August. Once initiated, the opening will be completed as expeditiously as practicable, mindful of the underlying need for caution and ongoing monitoring and responsiveness to the larger provincial strategy.

3. KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN PLANNING AND BUILDING USE

Basic Protocols for Groups and Individuals

The Plan is predicated on the assumption that all users of the building will adhere to the following basic protocols, which have been well publicized and are already widely adhered to within the province.

1. **SELF-DISTANCING:** Maintain an optimal distance of 2m (sometimes cited as 6 feet) from other individuals.
2. **COUGHING:** Cough or sneeze into the elbow area or otherwise ‘cover-up’.
3. **HAND WASHING:** Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap or approved disinfectant.
4. **FACE TOUCHING:** Avoid touching the face area.
5. **STAYING HOME:** Stay home / don’t attend an activity if feeling unwell or have a fever.
6. **FACE MASKS:** Wear a mask for the protection of others and / or if it is not possible to maintain a distance of 2m.

Higher Risk Activities

Certain activities are considered to pose a potentially higher risk of virus transmission. These include singing / choral group activities, and high-energy activities (e.g. running / fitness). Groups involved in these activities should consider enhanced measures such as, for example, increased self-distancing and / or more rigorous use of masks. It may be prudent to modify traditional norms in activities such as martial arts and dance, in order to respect self-distancing protocols.

Higher Risk Groups

Public Health Authorities have identified higher risk groups as Seniors and those with certain pre-existing health conditions. If your group includes members in these categories, it may be prudent and in their best interest to opt for (continued) remote meetings as a group, or to bring specific individuals into your group meeting via telephone or videoconferencing (e.g. Zoom).

Assignment and Limitation of Venue

Under the provisions of the Plan, venues for certain groups may need to be reassigned / rescheduled based primarily on group size and nature of the activity. This is a reflection of self-distancing requirements (which limit the number of participants in a given space), size limits on group gatherings¹, and the burden of increased cleaning / janitorial requirements which can be mitigated by optimizing use of space.

An additional consideration is that users should, to the extent practicable, limit their activities to their assigned venue and the nearby washroom(s), in order to minimize the potential for contaminating other surface areas in the building.

Screening and Contact Tracing

Participants should be **Screened** for health status upon entry (**Appendix A**) and attendance should be tracked by the group representative to facilitate follow-up by community health representatives in the event of an outbreak. An “**Attendance Roster**” capturing participants’ name, contact information and screening status should be retained by the group representative on a ‘per meeting’ basis and available for reference by community health authorities, as needed, for an appropriate period-of-time. An electronic copy of the Roster should be provided to the church office (sample roster included in **Appendix B**).

¹ Currently set by the Province at an *outside* maximum of 50 individuals in a given venue.

Cleaning and Disinfecting of Surfaces

Cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces is important to mitigate the risk of virus transmission. NLUC will ensure that this is done on a regular basis by the contracted janitorial service. Additionally, NLUC will expect all user groups to clean and disinfect the prominent surfaces (door handles, rails, tabletops, etc.) that they use / anticipate using in their assigned venue (including washroom) *before* and *after* use.

A small temporary surcharge may be levied on renter / donor groups to help offset the additional janitorial and cleaning / disinfecting costs associated with COVID-19.

4. NLUC'S EXPECTATIONS OF ALL USER GROUPS

Under the provisions of the Plan, all groups (congregational, renters / donors) using the church premises, will be expected to adhere to the following protocols in the interests of mutual and community safety. It is recommended that each group designate one (or more) individuals to help ensure that safety protocols are respected and to foster compliance by all participants.

AT THE BEGINNING OF AN EVENT

1. Clean / disinfect hands on entering the building.
2. Ensure that the main surfaces (door handles, etc.) are cleaned and disinfected using the materials / wipes provided by NLUC.
3. Screen participants using the brief screening questionnaire supplied by NLUC (**Appendix A**).

DURING THE EVENT

4. Foster compliance with basic protocols (self distancing, hand washing, suppress coughing, etc.).
5. To the extent possible, other than washroom use, stay within the assigned venue, and avoid random touching of surfaces (other than door handles, tabletops, and like surfaces).
6. Where convenient and if the weather is suitable, leave outside doors and windows open to improve air circulation.

BEFORE AND AS LEAVING AN EVENT

7. Ensure that the **Attendance Roster** (contact information + screening status) has been completed (sample Roster is included in **Appendix B**).
8. Ensure that windows are closed and locked and that the main surfaces (door handles, etc.) in your venue are cleaned and disinfected.
9. Clean / disinfect hands on exiting the building and ensure that the outside door is closed and locked.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

No food / sharing of food is allowed in the church building at this time. If members of your group require beverages, please have them bring their own.

RECORD KEEPING

Please provide a copy of your **Attendance Roster** to the church office electronically on a 'per meeting' basis and maintain a copy for your own records.

Q&A

An NLUC representative will be available on-site at your initial group meeting to address any questions that may arise.

5. SUPPORTS PROVIDED BY NLUC

NLUC will ensure that the following supports are in place and readily accessible:

1. Signage regarding basic protocols (self-distancing, handwashing, etc.).
2. Cleaning and disinfecting materials for user groups (at all entrances to the building, in washrooms, in group venue areas).
3. Standard screening questionnaire template for use by user groups (**Appendix A**).
4. Attendance Roster Template (**Appendix B**).
5. Group Profile and Plan Template (for Renter / Donor groups) (**Appendix C**).

6. ROLE OF THE CHURCH OFFICE

The Church Office will be the initial and primary point of contact for all groups (congregational, renters / donors). The church office is open weekdays from Tuesday to Friday from 9 am to 3 pm. Contact the office by emailing office@nluc.org or phone **604-985-4911** and speak to Magdalene (Tuesday, Wednesday) or Valerie (Thursday, Friday). You can also contact the office directly from the church website at NLUC.org (“Contact”).

7. GETTING STARTED

We’re looking forward to collaborating with you to re-open the church in a gradual manner and within the constraints and safety protocols that are warranted in these times. Please remember that safety is paramount and in everyone’s best interest, and the protocols we are adopting reflect that.

For Renter / Donor Groups

If you represent a Renter or Donor group that wishes to use or re-initiate use of the building, please start by contacting the church office. Office personnel will put you in touch with a member of the Property Team who will review building use protocols and collaborate with you to get things started.

Key steps for restarting are:

1. You will need to submit a **Safety Plan (Appendix C)**, in writing, documenting the measures you will adopt to help mitigate risks associated with COVID-19. At minimum, the plan must conform to the protocols outlined in this guide but may also include provisions that are more rigorous as relevant or appropriate to your group. The amount of detail that is appropriate will vary by group; for example, plans for small groups conducting weekly meetings (sedentary, conversational) can be expected to be very straightforward, while those involved in fitness, children and youth programs, or meal preparation and distribution activities will need to be more rigorous.
2. You will need to sign a **Lease Agreement**, which cites the terms and conditions of use, and accept responsibility for compliance with the protocols outlined in the Safety and Opening Plan.

For Congregational Groups

If you represent a Congregational group that wishes to use or reinitiate use of the building for small group activities (meetings, etc.), please start by contacting the Minister, Rev. Jaylynn Byassee, either directly (jaylynn@nluc.org) or via the Church Office (office@nluc.org) and she or Office Administration staff will review Plan protocols and collaborate with you to identify a workable venue and schedule. Your group will need to designate a Lead person who will be responsible for ensuring that the group adheres to the protocols for building use.

APPENDIX A: SAMPLE SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Strive for a single point of entry to your venue and ask each participant upon entry if they are experiencing symptoms or risk factors related to COVID-19 referencing the list below.

If an individual answers 'Yes' to one or more questions, ask him / her to leave the venue / premises immediately and to contact public health for guidance.

Record the screening status (Pass/Fail) 'per individual' on the Attendance Roster.

		Yes	No
Do you have any of the following possible symptoms related to COVID-19?	Fever or chills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Cough or worsening chronic cough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Difficulty breathing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Flu like symptoms (headache, sore throat, runny nose)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Unusual muscle or body aches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Atypical headache	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	New loss of taste or smell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Nausea or vomiting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Diarrhea	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you travelled outside of Canada in the last 14 days?		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you been in contact with someone who is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you been advised by your physician or Public Health professional to be in self-isolation (currently or within the last 14 days)?		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



APPENDIX B: SAMPLE ATTENDANCE ROSTER

GROUP NAME _____

MEETING DATE _____

Last Name	First Name	Phone	e-Mail	Screen (Pass/Fail)
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20.				



APPENDIX C: GROUP PROFILE & OPENING PLAN TEMPLATE

GROUP PROFILE

GROUP NAME					
Contact (Lead) Name				Phone	
				E-mail	
Days Requested (e.g. Mon, Wed)				Times (From/To)	
No. of Participants		Adults		Youth	
		Children		Maximum	
Activity	Category	e.g. fitness, Tai Chi			
	Description				
Regular Venue / Locale		e.g. Duncan Hall			
Furnishings that will be used, if any (e.g. chairs)					
Other areas / resources used (washroom[s] assumed)					
Comments / Clarifications					



GROUP OPENING PLAN

Please provide details of your plan that differ / are enhanced from the protocols cited by NLUC to mitigate the risk of exposure or transfer of the COVID-19 virus. This is particularly relevant for fitness groups and high energy activities (e.g. Cubs, Brownies), and for organizations involved in food preparation and distribution.

The purpose of this exercise, in part, is to stimulate thinking around risk mitigation. Consider factors such as social distancing, use of masks, and changes in the way you would normally conduct activities. Ask yourself questions such as:

1. How will we enforce self-distancing on arrival and departure and during class?
2. How will we go about screening (using the template provided)?
3. In what situations should people wash their hands (other than on entry and exit)?
4. When is it prudent for people to wear masks? Always? In which specific circumstances?
5. Do we need to make any changes in norms to maintain social distancing (more pertinent in activities such as dance and martial arts)?

Use the space below (expandable) or append details as warranted for your particular activity and group size / demographic and provide your **Group Profile** (previous page) and **Plan** to the church office for follow-up.