

July 20, 2021

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Seniors Active Living Centre operators

**FROM:** Jacqueline Cureton  
Assistant Deputy Minister

**SUBJECT:** Guidance about Reopening In-Person Seniors Active Living Centre Programs

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This memo provides general advice to operators of Seniors Active Living Centre (SALC) programs about safely resuming in-person SALC program activities. This document is being provided for information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. It is current as of July 9, 2021 and will be updated as public health guidance changes to respond to COVID-related requirements.

[The Roadmap to Reopen](#) is a three-step plan to safely and cautiously reopen the province and gradually lift public health measures. As announced in a press release on July 9, 2021, Ontario will enter Step Three of the Roadmap to Reopen on July 16, 2021. At this time, as each SALC program is different, the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility (MSAA) is encouraging SALC operators to consider their ability to reopen in-person programming based on the Roadmap to Reopen and the facility in which the SALC program is located.

If the operator determines their facility may reopen in Step Three, programming should be developed to stay within the permitted activities set out in Step Three such as:

- Indoor gatherings, games, and recreation (e.g., cardplaying, bingo, yoga, educational events, presentations, and karaoke with restrictions) must not exceed 25 people (face coverings are required);
- Outdoor gatherings and organized public events must not exceed 100 people (includes outdoor karaoke);
- Indoor dining (e.g., indoor cafés, buffets) permitted with no limits on the number of people per table with physical distancing and other restrictions still in effect; and
- Concert venues, cinemas, performing arts, live music events and attractions at 75% capacity outdoors and 50% capacity indoors.

Face coverings in indoor public settings and physical distancing requirements remain in place throughout Step Three. To keep current on permitted activities and restrictions at each step, please see [the Roadmap to Reopen](#).

SALC operators should follow any guidance provided by their local public health unit, in addition to the following best practices to prevent COVID-19 transmission:

- **Active screening.** Participants should be actively screened for COVID-19 before being permitted to enter the facility. View [sample screening questions for participants/customers](#).
  - SALC operators should keep records of each participant's name, contact information, date and time of visit for at least 30 days for contact tracing purposes.
- **Physical distancing.** For everyone's safety, staff, volunteers and participants should avoid physical contact and stay at least two metres (six feet) apart from others at all times. Markers on the floor and chair placement can support distancing.
- **Face coverings.** Staff and volunteers should always wear masks or face coverings unless they are eating or cannot wear a mask or face covering for medical reasons. Participants should wear a mask or face covering, if tolerated.
- **Hand hygiene.** SALC operators should ensure hand hygiene stations are readily available throughout the facility to promote frequent hand hygiene. Staff, volunteers and participants should perform hand hygiene before entering the facility and often throughout the day and after eating, touching surfaces or one's face, by hand washing or using hand sanitizer.
- **Conduct environmental cleaning between uses.** Staff should clean any equipment, furniture or materials after their use by participants and before their next use.

MSAA also recommends that the following measures be put in place:

- **Assign a public health measures lead.** SALC programs should have a point person to organize and delegate public health measures and tasks to prevent COVID-19 transmission.
- **Online payment options.** Online or credit/debit card "tap" payments of program fees could be encouraged instead of cash payment.
- **Virtual programs.** Offering virtual/remote programs that complement in-person programming is a great way to help seniors stay connected, especially those who continue to be isolated or may not yet feel comfortable returning to in-person programming.

Additionally, the Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) continues to remind those 70 years of age and older that they are at higher risk of severe illness if they get COVID-19. As such, those over 70 should discuss their participation in recreational programs with their health care provider to understand their personal risk and act accordingly.

The public health measures lead at a SALC program should review the following public health documents:

- [How to Wash Your Hands and How to Use Hand Sanitizer](#)
- [Non-medical Masks and Face Coverings](#)
- [Physical Distancing](#)
- [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#)
- [COVID-19 Worker and Employee Active Screening Questions](#)
- [Huddle resource](#) – Guidance document for congregate care settings that provides helpful infection prevention and control information and could be adapted for a SALC program setting.

SALC staff and volunteers may also find the following documents helpful:

- [COVID-19 Multilingual Resources](#) - Fact sheets and posters that can be printed or referenced as helpful reminders (available in 22 languages).
- [Prevention and Management of COVID-19](#) – Videos, posters and fact sheets on topics including using personal protective equipment, hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfection.
- Local public health units or municipalities may have specific COVID-19 resources tailored to seniors or provide mental health resources, such as this example from the City of Toronto:
  - [COVID-19 information for seniors](#) – Reference sheet for seniors

Sincerely,

***Original signed by***

Jacqueline Cureton  
Assistant Deputy Minister