

COVID-19: New Temporary Measures

Recently, Alberta Premier Jason Kenney announced the Province was declaring a state of public health emergency, effective September 16, 2021. On September 20th the "Restrictions Exemption Program" (REP), essentially a vaccine mandate, took effect. What does it all mean for the Canmore Seniors Association?

The CSA COVID Committee's interpretation of the announcement is that all CSA sports and recreation activities may continue, using the current requirements of every participant being doubly vaccinated for at least 14 days, masks being worn for all indoor activities, and hygiene measures being followed. These requirements, ***together with an additional condition of all participants providing proof of vaccination to the activity leader***, qualify our activities as part of the Restrictions Exemption Plan. We have analyzed this complex AHS requirement in a number of scenarios:

1. Member Activities

Activity leaders will review the proof of vaccination document and may, at their discretion, determine that the participant need not show proof of vaccination a second time or subsequent times for that activity. There does not appear to be a need to maintain a permanent record. Indoor Social Gatherings are still limited to a single household plus one other, to a maximum of 10 participants. This effectively rules out indoor social gathering.

2. Rentals Generally

The rental situation is more complex. the CSA is an "Operator" under the policy, and eligible to participate in the REP. As an Operator, the CSA must advise the "public/clients" [our Renters] that the CSA is participating in the REP, and state what is required to enter CSA premises. the Operator must ensure that Renters are "aware of and adhere to" REP requirements. If Renters implement the REP themselves (as they may do), then they must adhere to all public health orders. Nonetheless, the Operator remains responsible for adherence to the Public Health restrictions.

From a liability point of view, the CSA cannot merely pass on the responsibility to the renter as the CSA is the hosting facility. Considering this, the CSA will be required to inform the renter of the government's requirements and will be responsible for ensuring these requirements are met by collecting and maintaining proof of vaccination from all the event's participants.

3. Repeat or Trusted Renters.

For repeat or trusted Renters (like the Line Dancing or the Valley Winds Music Association) we can reasonably rely on the organizations to ensure that the proper procedure for vaccination proof, etc. is followed. Each group should keep a record of those participants who have had their vaccination credentials confirmed. This group would include the Banff YMCA who have rented space for a working group on October 29.

4. Other renters.

These include wedding parties and similar events. It must be stressed to each group that they are required, under provincial health policy, to follow all REP requirements. If the Renter implements the REP on its own, the CSA is still charged with the responsibility of ensuring the REP is properly followed. This will require the hiring of Security personnel to collect the information and, if necessary, turn away non-compliant guests. The cost of these additional personnel will be passed on to the renter. The specific requirement will be that everyone participating is doubly vaccinated, for at least 14 days, or that they provide proof of a negative COVID test that was performed within the preceding 72 hours. The requirement for a negative COVID test would also apply to unvaccinated children under 12.

5. Retail Renters.

An example of this classification is the Artisan's Fair in late November. Our understanding, from AHS, is that retail renters do not qualify for the REP. This means that the number of attendees allowed is limited to one third of the fire code capacity. While this does not require proof of vaccination, it does require outside Security to ensure that capacity number is not exceeded.