



# Diocese de Hearst-Moosonee Diocese

Bureau du Chancelier – Office of the Chancellor  
CP / Box 1330 • Hearst, ON • PoL 1No | 76, 7e Rue / 76 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
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Date: March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

To: Parishes, priests and deacons

From: Sebastien Groleau, Chancellor

Re: Update as of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

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The following changes are taking effect today, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. For those of you who had been following the guidelines in the WorshipSafe (June 2020), note that these new guidelines override the previous ones.

- All capacity limits, including physical distancing requirements, are removed from churches and parish rooms. Parishes may begin to remove floor markings and other signage as restrictions are lifted. Parishes may wish to continue with distancing at Holy Communion as a best practice for a period of time.
- Indoor mask use is still required for those over the age of two (limited medical exemptions apply).
- Parishioners should be encouraged to continue self-screening for Covid-19 symptoms and stay home if they have any symptoms.
- The use of hand sanitizer upon entry and exit of the church remains a best practice and is encouraged. It is still recommended that health and hygiene signage remain posted in parishes at this time.
- Holy Communion on the tongue can resume, but those receiving Holy Communion on the tongue should ideally be at the end of the Communion line.
- The Greeting of Peace is maintained using a simple bow or wave.
- Holy water fonts can be refilled. Prayer books, hymnals, magazines, bulletins and votive candles can return to the church, if they have not already.
- Altar servers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion can return to pre-pandemic duties.
- Choirs and cantors still must be masked or three metres/ten feet from anyone else.
- Baptisms can return to pre-pandemic practices.
- Confessionals and confession rooms can reopen, provided that both parties are masked.
- Churches should always be clean and tidy. Pews and other high touch surfaces are to be cleaned and disinfected when there is one hour or less between Masses.
- Parish offices can resume operations in the manner that best suits the local conditions of that church, while respecting all normal applicable regulations, laws and diocesan policies.
- Meetings in parish halls may resume for those who may wish to do so – mask use is required.
- Reporting of Covid cases to the Diocese is no longer requested, but the Chancellor and other staff are still available to answer Covid-related questions.
- Parishes are encouraged to review updated procedures with volunteers and others who may be assisting with the celebration of the sacraments



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- Parishes are encouraged to make an announcement at the beginning of Mass over the first several weeks of March 2022 noting the lifting of restrictions and reminders regarding updated procedures that may have changed.

Please note that the pandemic is not over. We need to remain cautious. At any given time, should the need be felt by local health authorities, some measures can be implemented or re-implemented. For our Diocese, it means that guidelines could differ according to which parishes are covered by which health unit.

If you have any questions, please contact the Chancery.

Thank you for your continued cooperation during this difficult time.

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### **Information for symptomatic or positive persons or high-risk contacts:**

Porcupine Health Unit Novel Coronavirus ([porcupinehu.on.ca](http://porcupinehu.on.ca))

Sudbury & District Public Health Sudbury & Districts - Home ([phsd.ca](http://phsd.ca))

Thunder Bay Health Unit Thunder Bay District Health Unit ([tbdhu.com](http://tbdhu.com))

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