



COVID-19: Holiday Guidelines



Alert levels and associated measures are determined by the Government of New Brunswick under the advice and guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

AT ALL LEVELS

BE KIND TO OTHERS AND PROTECT MENTAL HEALTH:

- Colder weather, shorter days and social demands can lead to increased depression and stress throughout the holiday season.
- Remember that a small gesture of kindness can go a long way, especially to disrupt stress throughout the holidays. It can also help lower your own levels of depression or anxiety.
- Please refer to the information on [mental health and coping during COVID-19](#) for tips and resources. This also provides phone numbers for supports you can reach out to, including [Kids Help Phone](#), [CHIMO Helpline](#) and [Hope for Wellness Helpline](#).

HOLIDAY TRAVEL:

- New Brunswickers are strongly advised to avoid all non-essential trips this holiday season, especially outside of your region, or into areas where COVID-19 cases are present and rising.
- Anyone who is travelling from another province or country must self-isolate for 14 days when arriving in New Brunswick.

Self-isolation means avoiding contact with other people in the home, including your family, to help prevent the spread of disease. For more details on how to self-isolate, visit GNB.ca/coronavirus.

- If you must travel during the 2020 holiday season, follow current Public Health advice, which can be found on the [Travel Information](#) page. Here are some precautions you can take, no matter your mode of transportation:
 - Download the [COVID19 Alert App](#)
 - Wear a [community face mask](#)
 - Avoid layovers if travelling by plane
 - Travel with members of your immediate household
 - Avoid long car trips with multiple stops along the way
 - If commuting by bus, avoid commuting during peak hours
 - Follow physical distancing as much as possible
- This year is not the year to be hosting guests from outside of New Brunswick, as there are many areas of the country with high rates of COVID-19.
- Consider connecting with your family and friends who live outside of the province virtually instead of in person.

- Other restrictions may apply depending on the zone and alert level where you live. Please refer to [NB's recovery plan](#) for additional details.

A NOTE FROM THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

We are not asking that New Brunswickers skip the holiday season this year, but we are asking for extraordinary precaution.

Please follow local public health measures, keep your contacts low and consistent.

Your sacrifices can and will save lives. This year, going the extra mile will mean not moving at all in order to get across the finish line successfully.

Dr. Jennifer Russell

AT ALL LEVELS CONTINUED

HOSTING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON:

- If you're hosting family meals or celebrations this season, know that it's okay to protect yourself and those in your household by minimizing the people gathered around your table or in your home.
- Let your loved ones know ahead of time if you don't feel comfortable gathering.
- Should you want to proceed with hosting a celebration, follow public health measures to limit the spread of COVID-19.

REMEMBER TO THINK ABOUT THE RISK:

- It's important to think about the risks associated with different situations, settings, holiday and religious celebrations. Take additional public health measures in:
 - closed spaces with poor ventilation
 - crowded places where many people are gathered
 - close contact settings and close-range conversations with those outside your immediate household
 - and consider vulnerable individuals like the elderly or those with underlying health concerns

YELLOW LEVEL

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND PARTIES:

- Even if your community is presently in the yellow level of recovery, please keep your number of contacts low and consistent.
- Informal indoor gatherings of up to 20 people are permitted to accommodate close friends and family members.
- Informal outdoor gatherings are permitted with physical distancing in place and a maximum of 50 people or fewer.
- Community face masks must be worn in indoor public spaces.

HOLIDAY MEALS WITH CLOSE FRIENDS AND FAMILY:

- New Brunswickers should minimize the number of people around the table this holiday season.
- Clean and disinfect high surface areas before and after you have visitors.
- Ensure guests and family members wash their hands before preparing or enjoying food.
- Thoroughly wash and sanitize any reusable glassware or dishes or provide disposable dishes and utensils.

- Launder cloth items such as table cloths at the hottest setting of the washing machine possible for that item.
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces before and after the meal/event. This may include light switches, doorknobs, toilets, taps, hand rails, counter tops, toys, touch screen/keyboards, chairs and tables.

MUSICAL EVENTS, CHOIRS, CAROLING, FAITH GATHERINGS:

- People attending faith gatherings, churches and places of worship will be required to wear a mask throughout the entire mass/ceremony.
- Attendees must also adhere to physical distancing guidelines.
- In instances where the audience is seated and every person continuously wears a mask, physical distancing of 1 metre is acceptable.
- The audience must maintain a distance of 4 metres or more from the performers or officiants.



YELLOW LEVEL CONTINUED

HIGHER-RISK INDIVIDUALS:

If someone is not able to come to a gathering because they are higher risk, you may be able to include them in other ways, for example:

- Follow [Public Health measures](#) to prepare a meal in advance and deliver it to them from a distance. Call to let them know you're coming, leave it outside their door, then step back for them to take it inside.
- To further decrease risk, you can leave packaged ingredients for them to prepare. Make sure to wash or sanitize your hands before handling it.
- Do not leave food for anyone unless they are there to take it inside to eat immediately or store properly.
- You may also be able to order a meal to be delivered to them by a business.
- Plan a time during the gathering for the group to chat virtually with people who can't attend.



ORANGE LEVEL

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES, PARTIES AND MEALS:

- In orange or red zones where a one-household bubble is required, the bubble can be extended to a caregiver or an immediate family member who requires mental, social and/or emotional support.

For anyone living alone who needs mental health or other care support, a caregiver can be a formal or informal caregiver, such as a close friend or neighbour. This single household along with the caregiver or immediate family member needing support is permitted to go to restaurants and other venues such as church together.

- Use technology such as Zoom, Skype or Facetime for virtual visits with friends and family who aren't in your bubble.
- Faith venues can operate under a [COVID-19 operational plan](#) with a maximum of 50 participants with two-meter physical distancing and masking enforced.
- Other indoor gatherings and celebrations including funerals, celebrations of life, marriage ceremonies, receptions and social gatherings of more than 25 people are not allowed.
- Community face masks are mandatory in public spaces, both indoors and outdoors.
- You can attend or organize outdoor events with a maximum of 10 people. [Public Health measures](#) must be followed.

RED LEVEL

- In orange or red zones where a one-household bubble is required, the bubble can be extended to a caregiver or an immediate family member who requires mental, social and/or emotional support.

For anyone living alone who needs mental health or other care support, a caregiver can be a formal or informal caregiver, such as a close friend or neighbour.

- Use technology such as Zoom, Skype or Facetime for virtual visits with friends and family who aren't in your bubble.
- Community meals and gatherings, celebrations, workplace parties, and parades are not permitted.
- Community face masks are mandatory in public spaces, both indoors and outdoors.
- Outdoor gatherings with five people or less are permitted with physical distancing.
- Public spaces are closed. Only outdoor (drive-in) religious services are permitted.
- Community meals are not permitted. All food and beverage will be reduced to drive-thru, take-out and delivery.
- Non-food businesses and public services, including retail, can operate under a [COVID-19 Operational Plan](#) (see Yellow level for more information).



COVID-19: Public Health Measures and COVID-19 Operational Plan



Retail businesses, restaurants, holiday events and volunteer organizations are required to implement public health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to protect their staff, volunteers and patrons.

All businesses and volunteer organizations must have a [COVID-19 Operational Plan](#) that outlines how they will ensure physical distancing, masking, cleaning and disinfecting, hand and respiratory hygiene, and screening for symptoms of COVID-19.

This includes the following holiday services and events:

- Holiday volunteer operations
- Gift wrapping booths
- Gift donation booths
- Food donation and distribution initiatives
- Santa visits
- Parades
- Ride share programs

Resources for businesses, organizations and service providers can be found on the [GNB website](#).

GENERAL HOLIDAY GUIDANCE FOR RETAILERS AND EVENT ORGANIZERS

- Masks are mandatory in all indoor public spaces.
- The number of patrons entering your facility must allow for physical distancing of 2 metres.
- Expect and enforce longer lineups outside your stores.
- Keep traffic flow minimal amongst patrons by using curb-side pickup, expanded hours, and online shopping.
- Staff should stay home if they are ill, have been told they need to self-isolate, and/or currently have COVID-19.
- Anyone with symptoms, can register for a test online by clicking 'Get tested' on the [GNB Coronavirus disease website](#) or can call Tele-Care 811 to get an appointment for a test.

A NOTE FROM THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH, DR. JENNIFER RUSSELL:

"As a business owner, event organizer or volunteer, the COVID-19 pandemic has added an additional layer of responsibility to the role you play in your community and the province at large. With the Holiday season upon us, this responsibility is only increasing with the stress of the season. Enforcing masking, physical distancing and having your COVID-19 operational plan ready are some of the ways you can help to combat the spread of COVID-19 in New Brunswick this Holiday season.

Thank you for helping us keep New Brunswick safe!"

PARADES:

- Adequate distancing between each parade float and participant group must be ensured.
- There may be up to 50 people per float/participant group with 2 metres physical distancing.
- A record of participants must be kept.
- Masks are required if distancing of 2 metres cannot be ensured indoors and outdoors for participants on floats or in the parade.
- Parade spectators should maintain 2 metre distance from others outside of their household bubble and wear a mask if this not possible. Masks are required at all times in indoor parades.
- Consider organizing an outdoor stationary parade. Parade floats would remain in one place while observers drive or walk by.
- Consider a parade in which observers are seated and parade floats enter and circle around an arena, then leave and allow the next float to enter.

GIFT WRAPPING BOOTHS:

- Shoppers can leave their gifts and payment on a table at a distance from the people working at the booth.
- Sanitize hands before wrapping each gift.
- After gift is wrapped, it should be put on a table where the person can pick it up from a distance from the person wrapping and other shoppers.

- Those at higher risk, such as older adults or people with underlying health conditions, should not be working at a gift-wrapping booth this Holiday season.

FOOD/GIFT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS:

- Food programs are encouraged to continue efforts to offer emergency food to households.
- When delivering food baskets or other gifts to a household, ensure hands are washed or sanitized before handling goods.
- Avoid or limit contact with person receiving the goods by leaving it at the entrance to the home.
- Donors may wish to consider giving charitable donations instead of food items.
- Those at higher risk, such as older adults or people with underlying health conditions, should not be delivering food baskets or other gifts to a households.

SANTA VISITS:

- Santa should talk to the child from a distance.
- Children are not permitted to sit on Santa's lap.
- Santa should wear a community face mask.

BUSINESSES SHOULD BE ABLE TO CHECK THAT THE FOLLOWING MEASURES ARE IN PLACE:

- COVID-19 Operational Plan
- Physical distancing measures
- Masking
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Keeping count of patrons entering or exiting facility to ensure physical distancing
- Symptom screening at door / entrance
- Record keeping for participants attending seated venues is required to facilitate contact tracing (name, phone number, date, time)



CURRENT PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT LEVELS YELLOW/ORANGE/RED

- Alert levels and associated measures are determined by the Government of New Brunswick under the advice and guidance of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.
- Different regions of the province may be at different alert levels at a given time.
- Other restrictions may apply depending on the zone and alert level where you live. Please refer to [NB's recovery plan](#) for additional details.

YELLOW LEVEL

- Parades are permitted.
- Gift wrapping booths are permitted.
- Santa visits are permitted.
- Food programs are encouraged to continue efforts to offer emergency food to households.
- Passive screening of staff and patrons.
- Non-food businesses and public services, including retail, can operate under a COVID-19 Operational Plan.

HOLIDAY MEALS/EVENTS:

- Dining rooms may open with 2 metres physical distancing or physical barriers between tables and masks must be worn when not seated.

- Venues providing meals and events must keep a list of attendees and ensuring distancing and mask requirements are followed by staff/volunteers and guests.
- Public entertainment venues occupancy limit is set as per the size of the venue and the ability to ensure 1 metre physical distancing when seated with continuous mask use and record keeping. Distancing of 2 metres is required if food and beverage is served.
- Masks are required at all times indoors except when seated at a table while eating or drinking.

MUSICAL EVENTS, CHOIRS, CAROLING, FAITH-BASED CELEBRATIONS:

- In person services permitted.
- Distancing of 1 metre with continuous masking and NO singing allowed OR distancing of 2 metres with continuous masking and singing allowed.
- Singing is a high-risk activity as the chance of expelling drops of liquid that could contain COVID-19 increases.



ORANGE LEVEL

- Community face masks are mandatory in public spaces, both indoors and outdoors.
- Parades are not permitted.
- Santa visits are not permitted.
- Gift wrapping is not permitted.
- Food programs are encouraged to continue efforts to offer emergency food to households.
- Community meals and gatherings, celebrations, workplace parties, and parades are not permitted.
- Restaurant dining is restricted to single household bubble.
- In person faith services permitted with up to 50 participants, maximum of 25 people for weddings, funerals.
- Non-food businesses and public services, including retail, can operate under a COVID-19 Operational Plan.

RED LEVEL

- Community face masks are mandatory in public spaces, both indoors and outdoors.
- Parades are not permitted.
- Santa visits are not permitted.
- Gift wrapping booths are not permitted.
- Food programs are encouraged to continue efforts to offer emergency food to households.
- Community meals and gatherings, celebrations, workplace parties, and parades are not permitted.
- All food and beverage will be reduced to drive-thru, take-out and delivery.
- Non-food businesses and public services, including retail, can operate under a COVID-19 Operational Plan.
- Outdoor (drive-in) religious services are permitted. Another alternative would be to record and broadcast religious services online or on television.

