



The Grand Lodge of Alberta  
ANCIENT, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

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**November 2, 2020**

**Grand Master's Message – Covid-19 Update**

**Brethren,**

As we enter November we are still at the mercy of Covid-19 and the necessary protections that we must follow to ensure member safety while assembling for masonic purposes. One week ago I prepared a message for the Alberta Freemason that included the latest details released by Dr. Hinshaw concerning assembly within Alberta – as of this afternoon those restrictions have not changed.

While Covid-19 never went away, it is again impacting our communities and Alberta Health is tightening conditions on small assemblies and social gatherings in order to try and control the spread of this infection. Like with most jurisdictions across Canada we are seeing the need to try and strike a balance on social gathering and the need to keep our economy open – as always there are those that will deny that Covid-19 is real or a threat to them, others are living in fear and that fear is having a pronounced effect on the wellbeing of many. Both of our major cities (Edmonton and Calgary) have now implemented mandatory restrictions on **social gathering** for the next 30 days where 15 is the maximum that can attend for social functions. **Structured events** have the option to continue but with less severe restrictions that have been placed on social gatherings – once again an extract from AHS & Dr. Hinshaw's order of October 26 is copied below:

*“This limit applies to gatherings where people are mixing and mingling, such as dinner parties, birthday parties, social events, and wedding and funeral receptions.*

*It also applies to special event celebrations like retirement events, baby showers, and other social gatherings.*

*This limit does not change the measures currently in place for events that are structured such as ordinary dining in restaurants, theatres, worship services, or wedding and funeral ceremonies.*

*However, it would apply to gatherings that may occur before or after these events, such as wedding receptions or a social event at a restaurant or another site.”*

While we have done well within our lodge meetings to follow protocols, our nature is to mingle before and after each meeting – this is where we must be more vigilant. While I can sanction and approve operations for Lodge meetings, I as Grand Master cannot approve or dictate private functions that may

be held by Lodges within the Jurisdiction. These private functions are deemed social and fall under the restrictions and guidelines imposed by Alberta Health. I can only suggest that prudence be your guide and that you all look to the safety of the community at large. WE have made it through the first eight months of this pandemic and we have no idea of how bad the second wave will be or if there will be a third or fourth wave – all I know is we must continue to be patient, work together and be proactive in our approach. It is better to be seen as leaders in our communities with respect to how we meet and implement safe practices for assembly than be targeted for inappropriate conduct. Let us to continue on the path we have established until a different path is proscribed.

Brethren, I wish you all safe passage as we navigate this new world. My hope is that we cross paths in the near future and have the ability to offer a hand in friendship and grasp it firmly and have no fear from doing this cherished act.

Fraternally,

Reg Karbonik, Grand Master