

September 23, 2020

Dear pastors and church leaders,

On Sunday, September 20, the government updated the alert level to orange/level 3 for Montreal, Capitale Nationale and Chaudière-Appalaches, meaning that these regions have to follow stricter rules in terms of private or public gatherings. Public gatherings including worship places have also been limited to a number of 50 people on the entire territory and to 25 in the regions classified as orange level. Only concert halls, theatres and cinemas are exempted from this rule and they can continue to receive up to 250 people across the province. (see note at the end)

The Quebec Conference has promoted and established safety protocols following public health recommendations. All our establishments are constantly encouraged to do everything possible to protect the health of our employees, volunteers, members, and attendants.

We are committed to continued protection of those involved in our gatherings and ask all Seventh-day Adventist churches in Quebec to follow these guidelines, which have been detailed in previous releases and are summarized below:

1. The gatherings will be limited as per the most recent alert codes and regulations.

[Click here for the alert map for the entire Québec province.](#)

2. All our establishments must visibly display in access areas and other places information about the safety protocols that are in place.

- a) Wearing a mask is mandatory unless silently seated.
- b) Washing hands with water and soap or sanitizer is mandatory for all attendants
- c) Recommended physical distancing shall be respected at all times and in all places including restrooms, hallways, etc.
- d) The maximum number of people as per the most recent government regulations per region must be respected at all times.
- e) Venues shall be properly cleaned before each gathering.
- f) A record of the names of those attending each church service shall be kept.
- g) People that experience symptoms and people who have been physically close with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 must self-isolate and use the government self-assessment tool to evaluate if they need to be tested. ([CLICK HERE for the self-assessment tool](#))
- h) Pastors and Leaders will closely follow the alert level for the region where the church is situated and update the members.

3. Funerals, Baptismal ceremonies and weddings may still occur following the most recent regulations and the recommendations from the previous document.



4. Votes of transfer and nominating committee meetings will take place respecting the current regulations or by video/teleconference. Wherever these are difficult to achieve, we recommend that the church postpone the activity until conditions will allow.

5. Pastors have been urged to focus specially on those families and members who are especially affected or vulnerable when providing pastoral care so as to help them go through this situation.

The Quebec Conference takes situations of non-compliance that are reported very seriously. When such a situation is reported, the pastor, as the leader of the congregation, will be promptly asked to provide explanations and urgently implement any necessary adjustments to solve the situation and avoid its re-occurrence. Non-compliance with the most recent regulations is an irresponsible behaviour putting the well-being and life of attendants at risk, besides other negative consequences like fines, local or general closure of gatherings, and negative publicity. Christians have a spiritual duty to be especially vigilant and demonstrate a sense of responsibility and compliance with civil authorities as long as their conscience and religious liberties are respected.

The Bible gives us a realistic picture of our world, not diminishing the problems that humanity is facing, but putting them into a perspective of hope and triumph of good over evil, of healing over sickness, of life over death. As never before, this is a time for the Seventh-day Adventist members in Quebec to be faithful to their mission to bring the Christ-centered Seventh-day Adventist message of hope and wholeness to the population of Quebec and to the entire world.

May God bless each and every one of our members!

On behalf of the Quebec Conference Pandemic Safety Protocol Committee,

Lucian Stefanescu

Pandemic Safety Protocol Committee Members: Kwasi Ansah-Adu, Lucian Stefanescu, Abiola Arthur, Ngoy Kyala, Orlando Patterson, Herold Norelus, Vilma Reynolds, Marianne Lemay

NOTE: Just as other religious organizations, we are concerned that the government imposed a stricter rule on churches than on places like concert halls, theatres and cinemas and we are in the process of addressing this issue properly.

