



The Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon must ensure a gradual re-opening of Lodges and reinforce protocols of the Provincial Government and the Provincial Health Officer phased approach to our “new” normal. This will be directed by the Grand Master through the Grand Secretary. What is cited here is the First Phase. As the future is uncertain, this plan will be constantly reviewed for revision and update. Any changes will be consistent with changes made by Provincial/Federal health authorities.

The primary consideration for developing this plan is the Health & Safety of the Brethren in this jurisdiction. This plan is developed with respect to the guidance and direction provided by our Provincial Health authorities, WorkSafe BC Regulations and Provincial/Federal Government. Current Provincial Health guideline is that gatherings be limited to no more than 50 people.

Should we wish to conduct Masonic business during a pandemic there is a requirement for the implementation of control measures to reduce the risk of illness spread between Brethren and their families. Consideration should be given to all aspects of our interactions to ensure this risk is always reduced or eliminated.

Besides common sense and practicality, there are differing levels of effectiveness based on the types of control measures that are implemented. While the most effective control is to not have the meeting, the next consideration must be the elimination of the hazard. The three methods that are generally used from a mitigation perspective are engineering controls, administrative controls, and PPE (outlined in figure 1). PPE is the absolute minimum standard that **must** be adhered to.

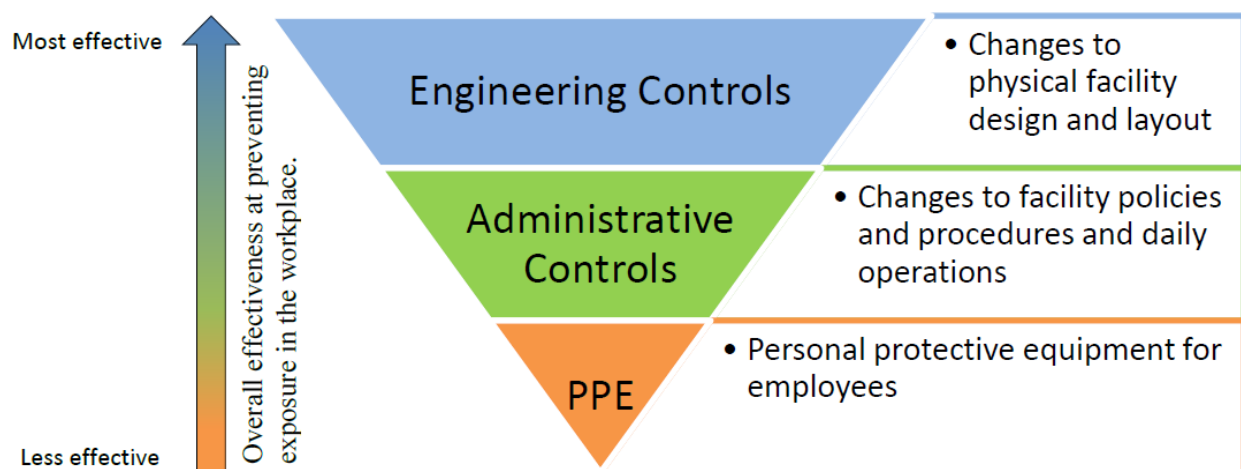


Figure 1: Hierarchy of Control Measures



This plan to safely meet has been developed considering each of these levels of, and the broad range of available control measures. Their appropriate and regimented implementation should allow for safe operations within the lodge.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Degrees are not to be conferred. A Board of Installed Masters (BOIM's) is not to be held until further notice and review. Procedures will be developed to allow Lodges to conduct a BOIM. Lodge Installations (WM serving a second term) are permitted following and adhering to the instructions provided in this document.
- Limit the number of people at the lodge – this means reducing attendance to a **minimum** complement to conduct Lodge business. The use of specific invitations is a significant method to control attendance. Remember, we cannot summons or require any Brother's attendance during this time; individual health and safety is and will remain the priority.
- Designate the touching of specific objects to individual Brethren or clean in between uses. The gavel can be placed on the pedestal for virtual exchange between the GM, DDGM and a WM at a Lodge meeting.
- Meetings outdoor must still follow ALL health & safety measures as if inside a Lodge Room.
- Increase the ventilation rates of the lodge's ventilation system, increase the amount of outdoor air that circulates through the ventilation system, and/or, open windows and doors to allow more outdoor air to circulate within the building.
- Do not use floor fans, ceiling fans are permitted to operate.
- Prop inner doors open, where possible, so the door handle does not need to be touched to walk through.
- Provide hand sanitizer at each door or entrance and egress point.
- Any Brother who has had symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 14 days must not attend any in-person Lodge function. Symptoms include fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, and new muscle aches or headache.
- Anyone directed by Public Health to self-isolate must not attend any in-person Lodge function.
- Anyone who has arrived from outside of Canada or who has had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case must self-isolate for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- Brethren who are not members of the Lodge holding the Communication are prohibited, unless specifically invited by the WM, SW, or JW, from attending any in-person lodge function.



- ALL Brethren **must** legibly sign the Porch Book. Visitors will also provide a telephone number.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is reducing the close contact of individuals and striving to allow for a 2-metre separation between Brethren:

- Increase distance between Brothers' stations or seating.
- Provide physical barriers. (where it makes sense)
- Rearrange seating to achieve 2m separation.
- Visually identify 2m distances so brethren can identify if they are standing or sitting too close to others. Make use of masking tape to mark out positions that brethren may or should occupy.
- Specifically guide individuals to their designated location.
- Direct foot traffic in one direction for access and egress. Use hi-visibility tape to make arrows showing the flow.
- Each Lodge must consider the space in their Lodge Room and calculate how many brethren can safely occupy the room considering physical distancing as well as functions to be performed within the Lodge Room. Ensure that Lodge members understand what this number might be.
- Brethren do not shake hands or hug at this time.
- One Brother to enter lodge room at a time. Designate a way in and a way out, very clearly marked.
- Read out the Lodge's Emergency Evacuation Plan describing how the Brethren can evacuate quickly and safely. It is also important to clearly communicate this plan to the Brethren of the Lodge and invited visitors.

Increased Cleaning and Sanitation

Increase the current cleaning and sanitation schedule to be more frequent and ensure it covers all common touch points. Sanitizers should be verified for their efficacy by the following steps:

- Use the list on Health Canada's website to identify if your current sanitizer has been reviewed and confirmed effective against SARS-CoV-2: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>



- If you use bleach for cleaning, it should be used at a concentration of 500ppm (made by mixing 10mL of bleach with 990mL (approx. 1 L) of water. Note: On food contact surfaces, this will require a rinse step after 5-minute contact time. **Do not use for hand sanitization.**
- Common touch points must be cleaned and sanitized before and after meetings, and if possible, after any potential contamination event; these include door handles, buttons, washrooms, lodge furniture, etc.
- Provide information about your cleaning plan. Specify, in writing, who is responsible for cleaning, the cleaning schedule, and what the cleaning protocols will include (e.g., which surfaces).

Hand Hygiene and PPE

Proper hand hygiene is vital to reducing the risk of illness. This should be done in conjunction with good cough and sneeze etiquette, avoiding touching your face and, where necessary, using personal protective equipment.

- Hand sanitizers **must** be available and used at the entrance.
- Handwashing sinks **must** be fully stocked with liquid hand soap, paper towel and warm, running water to promote proper handwashing. (Well before the meeting)
- Signs **must** be posted to remind brethren of proper hand washing techniques.
- Incorporate hand washing breaks to encourage frequent handwashing.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol) for hand hygiene.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – this may be needed when close contact cannot be avoided, however, physical barriers and/or a change to the general flow movement are preferred measures.
- Respiratory etiquette **must** be followed – coughing or sneezing into a tissue or elbow.
- PPE – Brethren **must** wear gloves (our white cotton gloves are fine but **must** be laundered after each use); proper hand hygiene must be practiced as regularly as it would if no gloves are worn – glove use does not replace hand washing. Wearing the white lodge gloves should suffice. If Brethren wish to wear surgical gloves or other disposable gloves, please do.
- PPE – Brethren **must** wear masks; they should avoid touching their faces and adjusting the mask as this may increase their risk. Masks should be appropriately fitted, and N95 masks do not work with beards. Non-medical masks are permitted.
- Donning and doffing procedures (how to safely put on and take off PPE) must be followed.



Illness Policy

Ill Brethren and family **must** not enter the lodge **at any time**.

- Brethren should be advised not to attend if they are exhibiting symptoms of illness.
- Brethren should advise the WM that they are exhibiting symptoms of illness and therefore not attending.
- Brethren must also inform the WM if symptoms develop after a Lodge visit.

Food Policy

It is possible to prepare and serve food safely

- Order in or get takeout from a Permitted facility shown to be operating safely.
- Consume food that has limited potential for food handling mistakes i.e. individually packaged take-out meals.
- Do not serve any meals buffet-style or share dining implements.
- If preparing food, use gloves and masks.
- Place disposable tablecloths over the eating area and maintain social distance while eating.
- Dispose of tablecloth and any food packaging. Wipe down the area with sanitizer, for certain where a Brother may have sat.

References:

Worksafe BC Covid 19
BC Restart Plan dated 22 May 2020
Provincial Health Officer