

## Health and Safety – COVID-19

### Getting our Food Network Ready – Harvest, Food Banks and Agencies

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The work of Winnipeg Harvest and its Food Network is essential. It is business as usual, however, the health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and guests is of the utmost priority.

In view of the recent impact of COVID-19, we are closely following the guidelines provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the Manitoba Protocol. PHAC currently assesses the health risk associated with COVID-19 as low for Canada and we have few cases in Manitoba.

We will continue to monitor the on-going situation in our province, and will let you know if our concern increases. We will also be utilizing public media as needed (social, digital, radio, TV) to inform public of any significant changes to our operations.

At this time, we will be recommending that all persons adopt the Basic Protective Measures and Operational Changes noted below for safe interactions and food handling. These precautions are to ensure the health and safety of our workplaces and those who enter them – similar to the precautions we take during an aggressive flu season. We believe that these measures will help to prevent the greater spread of this virus, while not increasing undue fear or anxiety.

#### Basic Protective Measures against COVID-19

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Everyone is encouraged to educate and take care of themselves, and to practice effective handwashing and good respiratory hygiene. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to monitor the health of others and to educate them about these protective measures.

As per current guidelines, we recommend the following:

1. Stay home if you're feeling sick or unwell (unless directed to seek medical care). If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.

**Phone Health Links: In Winnipeg - 204-788-8200 OR Toll Free MB - 1-888-315-9257**

2. Wash hands with soap and water frequently (for at least 20 seconds). Clean between fingers, thumbs, nails and jewelry. Rinse and dry – air dry if possible.
3. Do not touch your face/eyes/mouth with unwashed hands.
4. Practice effective respiratory hygiene. Cough or sneeze into a tissue, or cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow. Dispose of the tissue and wash your hands immediately afterward.
5. Avoid handshakes & hugs. Minimize prolonged (more than 10 minutes) and close (less than two meters/six feet) contact between other individuals.

## Operational Changes – Recommended Safe Interactions and Food Handling

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We recommend the following specific and additional operational measures to increase safety and decrease the amount of social interaction and potential spread of the virus.

1. Try to limit any large gatherings or meetings. Use the phone and re-schedule if possible.
2. Try to limit the number of people who enter the building at one-time. Example – Serve 5 clients at a time / ask clients to wait outside instead of in a confined space (weather dependent).
3. If clients arrive at the facility and appear unwell (fever, cough, difficulty breathing), feed them first and ask them to go home and/or to seek medical care.
4. Everyone who enters the facility should immediately wash their hands with soap and water frequently (for at least 20 seconds). Clean between fingers, thumbs, nails and jewelry. Rinse and dry, air dry if possible.
5. Move from a “shopping model” of food distribution to a “pre-boxed model” and/or have volunteers bag/box items for clients.
6. Encourage staff and volunteers working with and serving clients to:
  - a. Limit physical interaction and maintain a safe distance. This could include viewing medical cards, etc., not physically handling them.
  - b. Wear gloves when handling food.
  - c. Serve from behind a table.
7. If using a ticket or numbering system, change to one-time-use tickets/numbers.
8. Establish regular cleaning protocols to ensure a clean & hygienic workplace, with extra attention being paid to surfaces in public areas of our facilities.

## Additional Operational Measures at Winnipeg Harvest

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### Client Services - Intake:

1. Will be making intake and tax appointments to reduce the number of people in smaller, closed offices and waiting rooms. We will be sending each walk-in home with a food kit.

### Resources:

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1. **World Health Organization (WHO)** - <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
2. **Manitoba Health** - <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/coronavirus/>