

**British Columbia Region of Narcotics Anonymous  
Regarding the Future of Opening Meetings During Pandemic**

**June 2020**

It is important to know this document is not a directive, rather it is a tool for your areas and home groups to take into consideration to protect the health and safety of everyone. As members of Narcotics Anonymous we have a vested interest in protecting the fellowship from the possibilities of litigation, or public controversies. As members, though our personal positions regarding the directives and how it has affected our fellowship may differ, it is important to know where the fellowship's liabilities end and where individuals may put themselves at legal risk.

In terms of our liability insurance it is important to note that our policy covers the meeting space listed on our schedules and outdoor spaces.

The goal of the BC Regional Service Board is to provide the best information for your areas to use, and is committed to helping all areas navigate through the information and provide support to safely begin to return to the meeting facilities with the attention to limiting the risk of liability, public controversy, and moreover the protection of members and the fellowship as a whole.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for more information.

Thank you for letting me be of service  
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# BCRNA

## British Columbia Region of Narcotics Anonymous

### Resumption of In-Person Meetings within the BC Region of Narcotics Anonymous

June 2020

The British Columbia Regional Service Committee (BCRNA) has been dedicated to providing the most updated and accurate information in regards to the current phase 2 reopening and future Social Distancing requirements due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and its impact on our fellowship and ability to meet.

The Narcotics Anonymous service structure places the Groups as the highest level of service, and as such neither the Area Service Committee nor Regional Service Committee can direct what a Group can or cannot do. The role of those bodies is to provide additional services to the Area or Region, allowing Groups to focus on their Primary purpose of 'Carrying the message to the addict who still suffers'.

In that spirit, the BCRNA Service Board has developed this document as a guide for groups to follow to resume in-person meetings, what guidelines and protocols would look like in practice, and what would put a group in opposition to the Public Health Order. We have received information from the COVID19 testing center in Maple Ridge, BC stating "... we can hold meetings as long as [they] comply with the current BC Public Health Order."

The 'BC Public Health Order' guidelines include measures to:

- Post Signage
- Protect Health
- Prevent Crowds from Gathering
- Keep People at Least Six (6) Feet Apart
- Prevent Unnecessary Contact
- Increase Sanitation

As a result, the BCRNA Service Board has reviewed the "BC Public Health Order" protocols and created a Social Distancing Protocol tailored to Narcotics Anonymous meetings that will ensure compliance with the Provincial Orders that groups may use.

***It's important to note, the company that provides insurance for NA meetings regionally has indicated that our policy covers the meeting space including outdoor meetings and events. If someone should get COVID19 from one of our meetings, and sues us, our insurance company would cover costs for any claim.***

Recommendations and steps for considering if resuming in-person meetings is right for your group:

- Conduct a group level business meeting to get group conscience regarding resuming meetings and review the required Social Distancing Protocols to determine if compliance is feasible for the group.
- Contact meeting facility to determine if they are able to host the group with adherence to the Social Distancing.
  - Is there an additional room to meet should there be over the limit.
  - Items to consider/discuss - Does the facility have extra cleaning charges? Can the group provide cleaning supplies needed for sanitizing twice per meeting and service members to perform such actions? Will the facility be able to accommodate extra time allowed before and

after the meeting to allow for social distancing setup and sanitation? Any additional requirements from the facility?

- If your group can't meet at your regular facility, are you able to meet outside?
- Complete the attached "BC Public Health Order" form (groups may use the suggested version for NA meetings **or** create their own).
- Please keep in mind that meetings (located inside of a facility) will have a capacity limit in order to be in compliance with the 6-foot social distancing requirement (for example, a 400 square foot room can accommodate approximately 11 people, including trusted servants, properly spaced). Therefore, it is encouraged that **groups discuss alternate plans if attendance is in excess of compliance. We must remain compliant.**
- If groups are considering temporarily meeting in a different location other than their previously listed meeting space at the facility (lawn areas or patios at facility, parks, parking lots, etc.), groups **MUST** get permission from the location.

In recognition and respect to our 4<sup>th</sup> Tradition, "Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole." If a group does not comply with the BC Health Order, the BCRSC may remove the group from the regional meeting schedule because it negatively impacts NA as a whole.

The following are attached to this document for reference and use by groups if desired:

- "BC Public Health Order" (Modified for in-Person Meetings of Narcotics Anonymous) ***This protocol is a suggestion for groups to use to be compliant. It is not a directive.***
- ***Sample chair format for in person meetings***
- Signage that groups may use in order to be in compliance.
  - COVID-19 Symptom check for anyone that enters the meeting facility.
  - Maximum Capacity Allowed in Facility.

The BCRSC is dedicated to assisting our region, our areas and groups safely return to meeting while limiting the risk of public health, controversy, liability, and the protection of our members and fellowship as a whole. We will continue to monitor the progression and re-opening of British Columbia, changes to Public Health Orders, and recommendations from the BCRNA. As new information is released, we will update the groups and make amendments to this document as needed. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate through these unprecedented times.

Thank you for letting us be of service.

BC Region of Narcotic Anonymous Service Committee

Email: [facilitator@bcrna.com](mailto:facilitator@bcrna.com)

“BC Public Health Order” form  
(Modified for In-Person Meetings of Narcotics Anonymous  
within **British Columbia**)

Group name and number:

Facility Address:

Approximate gross square footage of meeting space open to the public:

**Groups must implement all applicable measures listed below, and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is inapplicable to the group.**

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**Signage:**

- Signage at each public entrance of the facility to inform all service members and meeting attendees that they should: avoid entering the facility if they have a cough or fever; maintain a minimum six-foot distance from one another; sneeze and cough into a cloth or tissue or, if not available, into one’s elbow; and not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact.
- Signage posting a copy of the Social Distancing Protocol at each public entrance to the facility.

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**Measures To Protect Service Members and Meeting Attendee’s Health**

- All service members and attendees have been told not to come to the meeting if sick.
- Symptom checks are being conducted before service members and attendees may enter the meeting space. (Signage posted at meeting entrance for all participants to review before entering)
- All tables and chairs are separated by at least six feet.
- Meeting rooms, bathrooms, and other common areas are being disinfected frequently, on the following schedule:
  - Meeting rooms: Before and after designated meeting time.
  - Bathrooms: Before and after designated meeting time.
  - All tables, chairs, and surfaces are wiped down before and after designated meeting time.
- Disinfectant and related supplies are available to all participants at the following location(s):
- Hand sanitizer effective against COVID-19 is available to all participants at the following location(s):
- Soap and water are available to all participants at the following location(s):

Copies of this Protocol have been distributed to all service members.

Optional—Describe other measures:

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### **Measures To Prevent Crowds From Gathering**

Limit the number of participants in the meeting room location at any one time to  which allows for service members and meeting attendees to easily maintain at least six-foot distance from one another at all practicable times.

Post a service member at the door to ensure that the maximum number of participants in the facility set forth above is not exceeded and a plan in place if maximum occupancy is reached.

Optional—Describe other measures:

Limit meeting length to 1 hour with no break.

Discourage gathering in parking lot before, during, and after meeting.

Other:

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### **Measures To Keep People At Least Six Feet Apart**

Placing signs outside the facility reminding people to be at least six feet apart.

Placing tape or other markings at least six feet apart in meeting attendee line areas inside the facility (e.g. restrooms) and on sidewalks at public entrances with signs directing meeting attendees to use the markings to maintain distance if applicable.

Placing chairs and tables at least six feet apart in meeting facility and/or location.

All service members and meeting attendees have been instructed to maintain at least six feet distance from each other, except service members may momentarily come closer when necessary to accept payment, deliver goods or services (e.g. literature), or as otherwise necessary.

Preventing meeting attendees from circling up at the end of the meeting and holding hands to maintain six-foot distance.

Optional—Describe other measures:

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### **Measures To Prevent Unnecessary Contact**

Requiring meeting secretary and any other service member to wear gloves while handling any meeting materials, literature or other items that may come into contact with another meeting attendee or service member.

Providing for contactless 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition donations by placing 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition basket in stationary location, sanitizing basket or container which holds donations before and after meeting, and requiring

service member responsible for collecting and handling donation to wear gloves and/or utilizing an electronic donation system.

Utilizing electronic copies of readings that meeting attendees can access from their personal electronic devices and/or providing laminated readings that have been sanitized before and after each use and requiring reader to wear gloves while handling the reading, and/or providing one-time use readings that will be discarded after each meeting.

Sanitizing all key tags prior to distribution and engaging in contactless presentation.

Preventing meeting attendees from self-serving any items that are food-related by not providing coffee, snacks, or other items.

Optional—Describe other measures:

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### **Measures To Increase Sanitization**

Disinfecting wipes that are effective against COVID-19 are available at meeting location.

Service member(s) assigned to disinfect high-contact surfaces frequently in addition to before and after designated meeting time (e.g. door handles).

Hand sanitizer, soap and water, or effective disinfectant is available to service members and meeting attendees at or near the entrance of the facility, near literature, and anywhere else inside the facility or immediately outside where people have direct interactions.

All surfaces (e.g. chairs, tables, door handles, light switches, etc.) are disinfected with wipes or cleaning materials effective against COVID-19 PRIOR to and AFTER the designated meeting time.

Optional—Describe other measures:

\* Any additional measures not included here should be listed on separate pages, which groups should attach to this document.

**You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:**

Group Service Representative (GSR):

Phone number:

# WE ARE PRACTICING SOCIAL DISTANCING

We are implementing the mandatory social distancing protocols, as per the British Columbia Public Health Order until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended by the Health Officer.

**Avoid entering the facility if you have a cough or fever**

**Maintain a distance of 6 feet from others**

**Sneeze or cough into a cloth or tissue, if not available, use your elbow**

**Do not shake hands, hug or engage in any unnecessary physical contact**

**Max # of people  
allowed in facility at  
one time:**

# ATTENTION

For the health and safety of everyone attending this meeting or entering the facility, if **YOU** can answer **YES** to any of the following questions, **YOU** are **not to enter** this facility and not return until your symptoms are gone for at least 2 weeks:

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- Do you have a **fever**?
- Have you had a **fever within the last 2 weeks**?
- Do you have a **cough**?
- Do you have **shortness of breath** or difficulty of breathing?
- Have you been out of the **country** listed on the within the past 14 days? If so, you cannot enter this facility until the 14 days from re-entering the country have elapsed.
- Have you been in **direct contact with a person** who has, or is under examination or observation for having COVID-19 and **are you showing any signs of** symptoms as noted above?

We are requiring everyone in our meetings to self-police and be responsible members of society by answering these questions honestly and if **YOU** can answer **YES** to any of these questions, you are to leave the meeting facility until your symptoms have abated for 14 days or 2 weeks and/or COVID 19 exposure elapsed.

Anyone in the meeting or facility exhibiting signs or symptoms as noted above will be promptly asked to leave.

In the event you have a random cough or sneeze, do so into a cloth or tissue or, if not available, into your elbow; do not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact.

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## SOCIAL DISTANCING

In accordance with provincial and local regulations **EVERY PERSON** entering this meeting and facility **MUST** maintain a six foot (6'-0") social distance.



## SAMPLE MEETING FORMAT FOR IN PERSON MEETINGS

"Welcome to the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting of Narcotics Anonymous, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am an addict!"

First off, we welcome all, however if you feel sick, have a fever, headache, cough or chest congestion, we kindly ask you to leave the meeting and join an online meeting. We can help you if you do not know how to do that.

We are very serious in keeping this a safe space and following the government guidelines so that we can keep meeting.

We will not be collecting money, but you can e-transfer the regional treasurer if you wish, 7th tradition can be e-transferred to treasurer@bcrna.ca

We request the you keep 6 feet away from everyone in this meeting space. If you wish to wear a mask, please feel free.

We can be safe if we wash our hands, sanitize, and stay 6 feet apart. We discourage hugging and at the end of the meeting we will close in a circle not touching. We know this will seem strange, but we are together and that's what matters 😊

We will not be handing out key fobs, but we will recognize clean time in a bit.

We'll start with some readings!" Can someone please read

- Who is an Addict?
- Why are We Here?
- What is the NA program?
- How It Works
- 12 Traditions
- We Do Recover

Now we will celebrate clean time, anyone new or coming back to NA?

- 30 days
- 60 days
- 90 days
- 6 months
- 9 months
- 1 year
- 18 months
- multiple years
- JFT

### IDEAS:

The chair can pick a topic, The chair can read from the NA approved literature of their choice.

The Chair can either choose to open it up or pick on a people.

The chair can have a tag meeting

\*AT THE END OF THE MEETING\*

"I have asked a friend to read "Just for Today"

"God, Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change

The courage to change the things I can

And the wisdom to know the difference."