

# Seventh-day Adventist® Church

MARITIME CONFERENCE  
ADMINISTRATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## COVID-19 Information March 12, 2020

**A**fter prayerful and careful reflection and consideration of the health, safety and wellness of our churches, schools and families, the Maritime Conference is issuing new guidelines for travel, convocation meetings and church & school activities, **effective immediately**.

The Bible has powerful messages for every occasion. God wants us to live a healthy life. “Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.” 3 John 1 (NASB) We should not allow this to create an atmosphere of fear and instability amongst us. We need the balance of faith and common sense precautions during this time.

### **For all Maritime Conference Employees**

The overarching aim of this communication is to protect the health, safety and wellness of our churches, schools and families. The following statements also help to ensure the continued activities and plans across our constituency. These guidelines are developed in conjunction with best practices established by public health authorities and designed to protect employees and individual members of our conference and to help reduce the spread of illness.

### **Travel restrictions while conducting Conference business**

Effective immediately, all travel by Maritime Conference employees to locations designated by **Global Affairs Canada** as “Level 3 - avoid all non-essential travel” and “Level 4 - avoid all travel” is suspended until further notice. If travel is deemed necessary/critical, special requests will be submitted to ADCOM for consideration. Please send written requests to **Teresa Ferreira** at [teresa.ferreira@maritimesda.com](mailto:teresa.ferreira@maritimesda.com) with details on why travel would be considered essential.

### **Travel outside the Maritimes**

No employee of the Maritime Conference is expected to travel on behalf of the conference if they are not comfortable doing so.

Travellers are expected to take all reasonable precautions to minimize the likelihood of exposing others to increased risk upon their return.

### **Personal travel**

Before booking or embarking on travel outside the Maritimes, all Maritime Conference employees are strongly encouraged to evaluate all associated risks, which may include the risk of becoming ill, falling under the restrictions of a foreign government, or forfeiting travellers cancellation or medical coverage.

All employees returning from a jurisdiction with an **active travel health notice** from the Government of Canada, whether the travel was business or personal travel, are expected to take reasonable steps to prevent exposing others to risk. If an employee has travelled internationally, it is strongly recommended and advised to consult with Provincial Public Health before returning to work.

### **Visitors to Church or School events**

If a Maritime Conference employee has plans to host visitors to a church or school event, they are required to assess the risk of exposing the community to COVID-19. This includes a temporary suspension of inviting guests arriving from or travelling through areas from high-risk locations designated by **Global Affairs Canada** as “Level 3” and “Level 4”.



## Infection control expectations

With recent presumptive cases of COVID-19 in the Maritimes, everyone must maintain high levels of infection control. These include steps such as:

- Cover your mouth with a tissue (or elbow) when you cough or sneeze. Then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- The Center for Disease Control has published guidelines for **faith-based organizations** and **schools** that are great checklists to follow. The common themes:
- Take common-sense precautions to prevent the transmission of disease in our facilities. (Just like in flu season.)
  - Limit or eliminate handshakes.
  - Encourage people to stay home if they have symptoms of illness.
  - Have extra hand sanitizer and facial tissue available.
  - Have a few face masks available for those that show symptoms of illness. (Put a facemask on them and send them home.)
  - Actively remind people to practice good personal hygiene and prevention habits. (See above)
- Make sure everyone in your church/school is aware of how further information will be shared.

*Please Note: We will continue to monitor conditions and will issue updates as warranted. Updates will be posted on the Maritime Conference website.*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### CDC comments on the Corona Virus

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

### Alberta Health Services/public health

ARM Resources: <https://www.adventistrisk.org/en-us/safety-resources/information-regarding-coronavirus>

Government of Canada: <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/health-safety/mass-gatherings>

World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

General Conference Adventist Health Ministries article by Dr. Peter Landless: <http://healthministries.com/articles/homepage/coronavirus-update>

