

Public Health Orders

The Funeral Board of Manitoba has sought clarification of the April 16, 2020 Public Health Order (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/soe.html>) as it applies to funerals. The Public Health Order states that:

ORDER 1

1(1) All persons are prohibited from assembling in a public gathering of more than ten persons at any indoor or outdoor place or premises. This includes places of worship, social gatherings and family events such as weddings and funerals.

The Funeral Board of Manitoba confirms that the Public Health Order limits gathering for the purpose of a funeral to ten individuals. This applies to individuals gathering for the funeral, but excludes funeral staff and officiants. All individuals must maintain a physical distance of 2m from each other at all times.

The limit of 10 imposed in the Public Health Order prohibits rotation of groups of 10 in and out of a service, or the addition of an additional person once someone has left. The Public Health Order also prohibits multiple groups of 10 at the same location in different areas. In other words, The Public Health Order prohibits more than 10 people gathering at a premise.

While Public Health Orders are in effect, it may be necessary to make additional arrangements to ensure attendance is limited to ten individuals. This may include informing the family about Public Health Orders, coordinating with officiants, and taking additional steps such as issuing ten attendance cards / car labels, and controlling access to the funeral site. All parties may need to be advised that additional attendees will not be permitted after ten have gathered for the funeral. All must work together to limit gatherings to ten participants. When arrangements can be made, it may also be possible to offer the option to defer a funeral until gathering is no longer limited to 10 individuals, or enabling participation via the internet.

While physical distancing requirements are in place, pallbearers can only be used if they can be spaced 2m apart or possibly if they reside together in the same household.