

FPS Covid Guidelines Update

In light of the enhanced restrictions issued from the Alberta government beginning September 16th, 2021, for the time being, the Board of the Foothills Philharmonic Society is implementing the following guidelines related to COVID-19. Please understand that these measures are still *temporary* and subject to change. The Board maintains its pledge to review these guidelines monthly and adjust accordingly to support all our members through this period of time.

The Board would like to continue to express great love and compassion for our members, who are resilient in the face of such a time of suffering, and we offer support and condolences to those impacted by illness, mental health challenges, financial struggles, and deaths. We are grateful for the tremendous outpouring of support for one another we've heard, and we thank you for your patience through this evolving process.

OBJECTIVE:

Our objective is to create a physical and emotional space where our members can all feel safe as we come together to make music, in accordance with AHS guidance and government restrictions. Our choice evolved as the COVID crisis worsened: we faced the decision to either shut down the rehearsals temporarily or abide by the Restrictions Exemption Program. By implementing the Restrictions Exemptions Program, these guidelines will allow us to rehearse in a safe and legal manner and continue to operate in alignment with our legally required obligations.

For the avoidance of doubt: the Alberta Government Website's term "service," as quoted in these guidelines, refers to "attendance at any FPS rehearsal, gathering, or event."

Changes to the previous guidelines are reflected in **bold**.

1. In accordance with government restrictions: we will operate without capacity or operating restrictions by requiring people aged 12 and over to show one of the following:

- Proof of partial vaccination (one dose) accepted Sept 20th – October 25th if received 2 weeks before time of service**
- Proof of full vaccination (two doses) required after October 25th**
- Proof of a privately-paid negative PCR or rapid test within 72 hours of service (tests from AHS or Alberta Precision Laboratories not allowed)**
- Documentation of a medical exemption.**

2. Please join rehearsals virtually if you are not able to attend in-person rehearsals, whether due to:

- vaccination status**
- unwillingness to provide proof of either vaccination or negative COVID test**
- symptoms of any illness**
- AHS advice to self-isolate**

3. If we are notified of a case of COVID-19 in any ensemble, Musical Directors will inform the Board, and we will notify the applicable ensemble(s), consult AHS, and follow their direction.
4. Sanitization stations will be set up and required for each rehearsal.
5. Rehearsals are not to be a forum for discussion/debate of politics, vaccinations, or debate over these guidelines.
6. Singers' masks must be worn during all vocal ensemble rehearsals, and regular masks must be worn by other ensembles. This mask requirement applies to rehearsal time, entering/exiting rehearsals, and during breaks. The Society will provide one Singers' mask to each vocal ensemble member who is eligible for in-person rehearsals as soon as possible. Regular masks will be provided if someone forgets their mask, but it is expected that each musician will remember to bring and wear their own mask to rehearsals.
7. Orchestra members who cannot play their instrument while wearing a mask will be required to use a cover for their instrument. One cover will be provided per musician who requires it by the Society, such style to be determined by the Musical Director for purchase by the Society. Spit valves must be emptied in a sanitary manner.
8. Board recommends a minimum of 1-2 seats between people and 1 row between rows, but we recognize Musical Directors may need to adapt this to suit musical needs. Members should feel free to express to the Director if they feel uncomfortable with their proximity to other members, and Directors will provide more space in that event.
- 9. Board recommends limiting the sharing of music due to the difficulty of sanitizing paper music. Each member will be responsible for their own music and keeping their belongings clean/sanitized.**
10. Board members in attendance at rehearsals will be responsible for having a conversation with any member showing visible symptoms of illness, and (if necessary) asking the musician to attend virtual-only rehearsals until such symptoms have resolved.
11. We will require members to sign a waiver for participation in ensembles.
12. All guests performing or rehearsing with FPS will only be invited to do so upon agreeing to comply with all of the applicable guidelines for the ensemble they are rehearsing with.
13. Ensemble subcommittees may add any additional measures for their own rehearsals to these guidelines, subject to Board approval.
14. Issue reporting procedure: for any concerns, please report an issue first to your section leader. If the issue remains unresolved, please report to the Board's ensemble representative (contact information to be made available to all members of the applicable ensemble). If the ensemble representative is not available, please report to the Musical Director. Ensemble representatives and Musical Directors can bring the situation to the Board as needed.
15. If you have any questions or concerns related to these guidelines, please reach out to the Board in writing, and all non-emergency concerns will be discussed at the next monthly Board meeting. Contact the Board: president@foothillsphilharmonic.com

We would like to reiterate that these measures are intended to be temporary. **While we previously did not require proof of vaccination status, in accordance with FPS guidelines, at least one Board member will attend each rehearsal to check vaccination documentation for each attendee, utilizing a checklist system and not retaining any photocopies or reproductions of any documentation shown. Those who provide proof of full vaccination (two doses) will not be required to show proof at every rehearsal for their regular ensemble but should be prepared to present their documentation upon request from a Board member or other authority.**

We respect that providing proof of vaccination or negative COVID tests is a contentious issue. The Board would like to stress that our guidelines reflect the requirements of the Government of Alberta, and proof of vaccination or negative COVID test requirements come from higher authorities than this Board. Compliance is the only way for our ensembles to continue to legally operate, and for any members uncomfortable with providing this documentation, we would like to invite you to continue attending rehearsals virtually.

We would like to thank all of you for your patience and help in our cooperation with the Government so we can continue to make beautiful music together.

Sincerely,

The Foothills Philharmonic Society Board

Elly Platt

Jeff Hibberd

Germaine Miese-Looy

Andrew Gunn

Naomi Davis-Robinson

Cortnee Bouwmeester

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