

Eden Mills Writers' Festival COVID-19 Safety Plan

Version 2: September 2022

The purpose of this plan is to promote the health and safety of the Eden Mills Writers' Festival (EMWF) board and staff, festival presenters, suppliers, volunteers, audience members, vendors, and other participants by providing appropriate information that can be used to prevent and reduce the risk of contraction, spread, and impact of COVID-19.

The EMWF takes the safety of all festival stakeholders very seriously. We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and accessible event.

This document will be updated and maintained regularly to meet new guidelines, recommendations, and Public Health Orders.

EMWF's Safety Plan outlines our regulations for stakeholders and key areas of the main festival, including:

1. Attendees
2. Festival presenters (authors and hosts)
3. Staff and Board Directors
4. Volunteers
5. Publisher's Way exhibitors
6. Food vendors
7. Suppliers
8. Venues
 - a. Festival sites
 - b. Green room
 - c. Book signing
 - d. Gates
 - e. Presenter transportation
 - f. Volunteer headquarters
 - g. Rivermead (office space)
9. Additional protocols/recommendations
 - a. Garbage disposal
 - b. Guideline for disinfecting of high touch services
 - c. Seating arrangements
 - d. Safety Coordinator
10. Resources

1. Attendees

- We encourage all attendees to purchase their tickets in advance of the festival to reduce the contact between attendees and volunteers at the gate.

- We require all attendees to pre-screen for COVID-19 before attending the festival. You can do this by taking the [self-assessment](#) listed on the Ontario Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters that will be available at each event. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please do not attend any festival events.
- We encourage, but do not require, all attendees to be fully vaccinated in advance of attending the festival. This will increase the safety of you, your peers, our volunteers, and our festival presenters.
- We encourage, but do not require, that all attendees wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- If you wish to have a book signed by a festival author, you must maintain physical distance and wear a mask at all times while in line and while interacting with the author. If you are medically unable to wear a mask, you may purchase a signed copy, where available, from the festival's bookselling partner.
- We require that all attendees maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from presenters during the festival. Please be respectful of this requirement and ensure that presenters are not placed in an uncomfortable situation where they need to decide between politeness and safety.
- We recommend that all attendees wash their hands frequently with soap and water and use hand sanitizer when a handwashing station is not available.
- Lastly, if you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the festival, please put on a mask, return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols.

2. Festival presenters (authors and hosts)

Things to consider before the event:

- EMWF is committed to providing a safe, accommodating, and welcoming space for your time with us. Please let us know if we can assist you in any way.
- In addition to following the public health guidelines in place in Ontario at the time of the festival, EMWF intends to use additional safety measures as outlined in this Safety Plan in order to maintain the health and safety of its stakeholders. This Safety Plan will be updated regularly as new regulations are announced and will apply to all attendees to the festival, including our festival presenters.
- Businesses and organizations in Ontario remain permitted to require proof of vaccination. For your safety and the safety of others, **all festival presenters taking part in EMWF must be fully vaccinated (as defined by the Province of Ontario) and show proof of vaccination, or proof of exemption, in advance of festival participation.** Those seeking exemption from this vaccination requirement must notify EMWF at least 60 days before the festival so that reasonable accommodations can be considered.
- For your safety, all EMWF staff and board directors, plus any volunteers who may be indoors with presenters or transporting them via golf cart at the event,

must also be fully vaccinated. EMWF will not be requiring attendees to show proof of vaccination (as presentations take place outdoors) but for your safety, we are requiring that attendees maintain a distance of two metres from any festival presenters.

- Festival presenters attend the festival at their own risk and EMWF is not liable for any damage or illness caused by attending the event.
- Please consider having an isolation plan in mind in case you fall ill while at our event and cannot easily travel home to isolate
- Festival presenters are required to answer a [self-screening questionnaire](#) before attending the festival. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please advise our [Artistic Director](#), and do not attend our event.

Things to consider during the festival:

- All festival presentations will take place outside under a tent canopy with no walls, where there will be open air ventilation.
- There isn't adequate space on our event risers for six feet of physical distance between presenters so mask use will be at your personal discretion depending on your comfort level.
- We encourage, but do not require, that all attendees wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Festival presenters must maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from the attendees. Attendees have been informed of the same requirement to maintain distance from festival presenters.
- Presenters will have the option to pre-sign copies of their books in a quiet location or to sign at the book signing table where EMWF volunteers will ensure that attendees are masked and maintain the appropriate distance from authors at all times, as required by this Safety Plan.
- For your peace of mind, we are requiring that all persons visiting or working within the Festival green room (presenters, staff, board directors, and volunteers) must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Please consider the feelings of your fellow presenters and be mindful and respectful of others' varying comfort levels when it comes to being indoors with others, physical distancing, etc.
- We recommend that you wash your hands frequently with soap and water and have hand sanitizer with you for times when a handwashing station is not available.
- Presenters staying at the hotel will follow the hotel's COVID-19 protocols whilst at that location.
- If you are being transported to the festival with other presenters from the hotel, we recommend wearing a mask while in transit.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the festival:

- If you drove yourself to the event and are well enough to drive, please notify the [Artistic Director](#), return home immediately, and follow your local public health protocols.
- If you are staying at the hotel, please contact the [Artistic Director](#) and we will organize transportation back your accommodation. EMWF will provide a KN95 mask for your car ride, and rapid antigen test for you to take in your hotel room. If your test is positive, please follow public health guidance.

3. Staff and Board Directors

- All staff and board directors working onsite at the EMWF must be fully vaccinated and show proof of vaccination in advance of attending the festival. We require this to ensure the safety of you, your peers, our volunteers and our festival stakeholders.
- We require all staff and board directors to pre-screen for COVID-19 before attending the festival. You can do this by taking the [self-assessment](#) listed on the Ontario Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters that will be available at each event. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please do not attend any festival events.
- We encourage, but do not require, that all attendees wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Staff and board members act as the hosts who welcome our presenting authors to the village of Eden Mills. As representatives of EMWF, it is our job to ensure they feel comfortable and included. It is important to be mindful and respectful of others' varying comfort levels when it comes to being indoors with others, physical distancing, etc.
- We recommend that you wash your hands frequently with soap and water and have hand sanitizer with you for times when a handwashing station is not available.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the festival:

- Please notify [EMWF's Safety Officer](#), return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols.

4. Volunteers

- We encourage, but do not require, all volunteers to be fully vaccinated in advance of attending the festival. These measures will increase the safety of you, your peers, attendees, and our festival presenters.
- We require that all volunteers who wish to work in the festival's green room, or as a golf cart driver, show proof of vaccination as a requirement of accepting this position.
- We require all volunteers to pre-screen for COVID-19 before attending the festival. You can do this by taking the [self-assessment](#) listed on the Ontario

Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters that will be available at each event. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please do not attend any festival events.

Please contact the Festival's [Volunteer Coordinator](#) if you cannot attend.

- We encourage, but do not require, that all volunteers wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Festival presenters must maintain a physical distance of two metres from attendees and volunteers. Please be respectful of this requirement and ensure that presenters are not placed in an uncomfortable situation where they need to decide between politeness and safety.
- We recommend that you wash your hands frequently with soap and water and have hand sanitizer with you for times when a handwashing station is not available.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the festival, please put on a mask immediately, contact the [Volunteer Coordinator](#), and return home to follow your local public health protocols.

5. Publisher's Way exhibitors

- We encourage, but do not require, all Publisher's Way exhibitors to be fully vaccinated in advance of attending the festival. This will increase the safety of you, your peers, volunteers, attendees, and our festival presenters.
- We require all vendors to pre-screen for COVID-19 before attending the festival. You can do this by taking the [self-assessment](#) listed on the Ontario Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters that will be available at each event. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please do not attend any festival events.
- We encourage, but do not require, that all exhibitors wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- We recommend that you frequently wash your hands with soap and water and have hand sanitizer with you for times when a handwashing station is not available.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the festival:

- If you drove yourself to the event and are well enough to drive, please notify the [Festival Manager](#), return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols.

6. Food vendors

- We encourage, but do not require, all food vendors to be fully vaccinated in advance of attending the festival. This will increase the safety of you, your peers, attendees, and our presenting artists.
- We require all vendors to pre-screen for COVID-19 before attending the festival. You can do this by taking the [self-assessment](#) listed on the Ontario Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters that will be available at each event. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please do not attend any festival events.
- We encourage, but do not require, that all food vendors wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- We recommend that you frequently wash your hands with soap and water and have hand sanitizer with you for times when a handwashing station is not available.
- All vendors are expected to adhere to all [public health guidelines](#) and other applicable legislative requirements with respect to the safe preparation and service of food.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the festival:

- If you drove yourself to the event and are well enough to drive, please notify the [Festival Manager](#), return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols.

7. Suppliers

- We encourage, but do not require, all suppliers to be fully vaccinated in advance of attending the festival. This will increase the safety of you, your peers, attendees, and our presenting artists.
- We require all suppliers to pre-screen for COVID-19 before attending the festival. You can do this by taking the [self-assessment](#) listed on the Ontario Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters that will be available at each event. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please do not attend any festival events.
- We encourage, but do not require, that all suppliers wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- We recommend that you frequently wash your hands with soap and water and have hand sanitizer with you for times when a handwashing station is not available.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms while at the festival:

- If you drove yourself to the event and are well enough to drive, please notify your supervisor, return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols

8. Venues

Festival sites

- Hand sanitizer will be made available for presenters at all festival sites.
- Presenter chairs, the podium and any hand-held microphones should be wiped with disinfecting wipes between events.
- At least two walls of the tent shall remain open at all times to ensure proper ventilation (our usual is no tent-walls).

Green room

- All staff, volunteers and presenters in the green room must be fully vaccinated and adhere to the current public health guidelines.
- COVID-19 pre-screening signs will be posted at the entrance to the green room.
- Tables and chairs should be set up so that physical distance is possible, and presenters can find a quiet space to eat and relax if they do not wish to be close to other people.
- Washrooms need to be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.
- Any equipment that is provided for the use of members of the public must be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.
- EMWF will post [appropriate signage](#) in high-traffic areas to communicate hand-washing expectations
- EMWF will ensure hand-washing facilities are available and in good working order.
- EMWF will ensure there is an adequate supply of liquid soap, paper towel, hand sanitizer, tissues, and waste receptacles throughout the event site and in washrooms.
- EMWF will ensure an appropriate cleaning schedule has been set up and that supplies are replenished

For food service in the green room, EMWF will:

- Encourage placement of food and beverage orders onto a service area, rather than handing food directly to patrons.
- Ensure all equipment, service and consumption areas are properly sanitized, and eliminate shared items.
- Eliminate communal or self-serve food containers (i.e. fountain beverages, garnishes, buffets).
- Package all food in single-use containers or packaging (i.e. condiments, snacks, etc.).

Book signing:

- If attendees wish to have a book signed by a festival author, they must maintain physical distance and wear a mask at all times while in line and while interacting with the author. If they are medically unable to wear a mask, the attendee may purchase a signed copy, where available, from the festival's bookselling partner.
- Presenters will have the option to pre-sign copies of their books in a quiet location or to sign at the book signing table.
- Presenters will be provided with a new pen at the book signing tent or encouraged to bring their own from home.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available in this venue.

Gates:

- COVID-19 pre-screening signs will be posted at the festival gates.
- We encourage, but do not require, that all volunteers wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- EMWF will develop a gate-management protocol that will limit the sharing of tools, equipment and supplies. Any shared or high-touch items will be disinfected between use (i.e. contactless payment machines, touch screens, etc.).
- EMWF will provide hand sanitizer dispensers at the festival gates.

Author transportation:

- We strongly recommend that authors and staff being transported from the hotel should consider wearing a mask while in transit.

Staff headquarters (Rivermead):

- Washrooms need to be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.
- Any equipment that is used by members of the public must be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.
- Self-screening checklists will be posted in a visible location.
- A copy of this Safety Plan will be available on site.

Public Washrooms:

- Any washrooms made available to the public need to be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.
- EMWF will ensure all hand-washing facilities are available and in good working order.
- EMWF will ensure there is an adequate supply of liquid soap, paper towel, hand sanitizer, tissues, and waste receptacles throughout the event site and in washrooms.

- EMWF will ensure an appropriate cleaning schedule has been set up and that suppliers will be replenished.
- EMWF will post [appropriate hand-washing signage](#) in high traffic areas to communicate expectations.

Food court:

- Any equipment that is rented to, provided to, or provided for the use of members of the public must be cleaned and disinfected as frequently as is necessary to maintain a sanitary condition.

Some additional recommendations:

- Post menus electronically or print on large signage.
- Implement touchless service experiences.
- Encourage placement of food and beverage orders onto a service area rather than handing purchases directly to patrons.
- Ensure all equipment, service and consumption areas are properly sanitized and eliminate shared items.
- Eliminate communal or self-serve food containers (i.e. fountain beverages, garnishes, buffets).
- Package all food in single-use containers or packaging (i.e. condiments, snacks, etc.).
- Ensure all hand-washing facilities are available and in good working order.
- Ensure there is an adequate supply of liquid soap, paper towel, hand sanitizer, tissues, and waste receptacles throughout the event site and in washrooms.
- Ensure an appropriate cleaning schedule has been set up and that supplies will be replenished.
- Post [appropriate hand-washing signage](#) in high traffic areas to communicate expectations.

9. Additional protocols

a. Garbage and disposal protocols:

- Provide waste receptacles lined with a plastic bag, and empty as often as necessary.
- Consult waste management services about proper disposal of personal protective equipment.
- Place gloves and other disposable items used for cleaning and disinfecting in a bag that can be tied before disposing of them with other waste.
- Provide additional garbage bins for workers and attendees to dispose of their gloves and masks including at all entrances, exits, throughout the premises and parking lots.

b. Safety Coordinator:

- EMWF will designate a Safety Coordinator who will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of and adherence to the Safety Plan onsite at the festival.