

Eden Mills Writers' Festival COVID-19 Safety Plan

March 2023

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](#) provided 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 recommend, but do not require attendees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in advance of attending the festival. This will increase your safety and that of your peers, our volunteers, and our festival presenters.
- We recommend, 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, we encourage but do not require you to maintain physical distance and wear a mask while in line and while interacting with the author.
- 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.
- EMWF will follow the public health guidelines in place in Ontario at the time of the festival. 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.
- We recommend, but do not require presenters to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in advance of attending the festival. This will increase the safety of you, your peers, our volunteers, and our staff.
- 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 should [self-screen](#) before attending the festival. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 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 recommend, but do not require, that you wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Presenters will have the option to pre-sign copies of their books in a quiet location or to sign at the book signing table. We encourage, but do not require presenters and attendees to wear a mask in the book signing area if physical distance cannot be maintained.
- 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:

- 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 mask for your car ride, and a 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

- We recommend, but do not require staff and board directors to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in advance of attending the festival. This will increase the safety of you, your peers, our volunteers, and our presenting authors.
- 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](#) provided on the Ontario Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters that will be onsite at the festival. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been required to isolate, please do not attend any festival events.
- We recommend, 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, and to consider physical distancing.
- 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 return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols.

4. Volunteers

- We recommend, but do not require volunteers to be vaccinated against COVID-19 in advance of attending the festival. These measures will increase the safety of you, your peers, attendees, and our festival presenters.
- We require all volunteers to pre-screen for COVID-19 before attending the festival. You can do this by taking the [self-assessment](#) provided on the Ontario Government's website or by referring to the self-screening assessment posters onsite at the festival. 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 recommend, but do not require that volunteers wear masks/face coverings while indoors or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- 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. Publishers' Way exhibitors

- We recommend, but do not require, Publishers' Way exhibitors to be vaccinated against COVID-19 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](#) provided 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 recommend, but do not require, that all exhibitors wear masks/face coverings 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:

- Please notify the [Festival Manager](#), return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols.

6. Food vendors

- We recommend, but do not require, all food vendors to be vaccinated against COVID-19 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 recommend, 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:

- Please notify the [Festival Manager](#), return home immediately and follow your local public health protocols.

7. Suppliers

- We recommend, but do not require, all suppliers to be vaccinated against COVID-19 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 recommend 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:

- 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 will always remain open to ensure proper ventilation (our usual is no tent-walls).

Green room

- 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
- Food service protocols will adhere to local Public Health guidelines at the time of the festival.

Book signing:

- We recommend, but do not require presenters and attendees to wear a mask in the book signing area if physical distance cannot be maintained.
- 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 clean 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.
- EMWF will develop a gate-management protocol that will limit the sharing of tools, equipment and supplies.
- EMWF will provide hand sanitizer dispensers at the festival gates.

Author transportation:

- We 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.

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.