



ARC Re-Entry Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Registering

Q. Do I have to do anything (besides the obvious) to register for the upcoming season?

A. Besides the obvious (i.e., registering and paying), we are asking that you download and review the Alberta Health (AH) daily checklist

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/56c020ed-1782-4c6c-bfdd-5af36754471f/resource/58957831-a4ab-45ff-9a8e-3c6af7c1622e/download/covid-19-information-alberta-health-daily-checklist-2021-09.pdf>

to review in advance of each in-person choir event. (If indicated by the checklist, please stay home and consider attending via live stream.)

Most importantly, you will need to bring proof of vaccination documents and your completed Health Declaration (if it has not already been submitted to ARC electronically) to your first rehearsal.

If you believe you qualify for an exemption to ARC's mandatory vaccine policy (i.e., medical or on protected grounds), you will need to indicate this on your registration form. ARC will subsequently email you information about what you need to submit to the ARC Board of Directors for approval. Exempted members will need to submit a negative COVID test result from an AH approved provider, conducted within the previous 72 hours, at each in-person choir event.

Q. What if I don't want to share my vaccination status because I believe that is private information?

A. We respect your choice. However, without proof of vaccination, you will not be allowed to attend in-person choir activities, as per Board policy. Bear in mind that ARC will not retain copies of vaccination records and the collection of this information will meet all provincial statutes regarding collecting and managing private information.

Q. If I don't feel comfortable in the in-person rehearsals, can I get a refund?

A. We encourage you to consider your own risk tolerance **before** registering. ARC has taken all recommended precautions (and then some) to ensure member safety but we acknowledge that individual opinions may differ on the adequacy of those measures. The live streaming option is available for those who feel that in-person singing is not the best option for them. However, once rehearsals have started, there will be no refunds.

Covid protocols

Q. Does ARC have a policy about vaccinations?

A. Yes. The ARC Board of Directors has made the decision that in order to participate in in-person choir activities, attendees must show proof that they have received the full measure of AH recommended doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine (subject to changing regulations).

As noted above, members with *bona fide* medical or protected exemptions must have submitted to the ARC Board of Directors for approval at the time of registration, a copy or scan of their signed, original exemption letter from an appropriate professional; and negative results from an AH approved testing facility conducted within 72 hours of each in-person choir activity. Those who have not been fully vaccinated and do not have an approved exemption are welcome to participate in live streamed choir activities only, at this time. This policy may be amended as AH regulations are updated.

Q. What if I believe ARC's vaccination policy is a violation of my personal rights?

A. The *Alberta Human Rights Act* protects people in Alberta against discrimination based on a list of protected grounds, such as disability and religious belief

<https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/covid/Pages/vaccines.aspx#preference>.

Service providers, employers, and landlords have a duty to accommodate a person who has a medical exemption prohibiting them from getting a vaccination, but **the Act does not have a provision that protects a person's personal preference not to get vaccinated, even where that preference is based on health concerns or political beliefs**. The duty to accommodate only arises when, for instance, a health concern rises to the level of supporting a valid medical exemption. In addition, only religious beliefs that are sincerely held and connected to a faith must be accommodated in the areas protected under the *Act*, such as employment, services, or tenancy. Any appeal to the Canadian Charter of Human Rights is under federal jurisdiction. [Although there is little available case law, it is generally acknowledged that individual rights are not absolute in the face of a public health crisis.](#)

[\(https://www.parlee.com/news/mandatory-vaccination-policies-in-the-workplace/\)](https://www.parlee.com/news/mandatory-vaccination-policies-in-the-workplace/)

Q. Will I have to present my proof of vaccination at every rehearsal?

A. No. Our intention is to record that you have shown proof at the beginning of each season. Those who have an approved exemption will have to present their negative test results at each in-person choir event. These requirements are subject to change in accordance with AH guidelines.

Q. What information do I need to provide for a medical exemption?

A. You will need to submit to the ARC Board of Directors for approval a letter from a physician or nurse practitioner that includes all of the following information: (i) the exempt person's name that matches their identification, **and** (ii) a statement that there is a medical reason for not being vaccinated against COVID-19; **and** (iii) the time period that the exemption is valid **and** (iv) the medical professional's name,

contact information, registration number and signature.

<https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/covid/Pages/vaccines.aspx#dta>

Q. What information do I need to provide for an exemption on protected grounds?

A. Given that vaccines are available to all, ARC may have a duty to accommodate those whose religious beliefs do not allow vaccination. It is not obvious what religions specifically prohibit vaccinations <https://www.vumc.org/health-wellness/news-resource-articles/immunizations-and-religion>. However, in the event you wish to apply for an exemption on these grounds, you will need to provide to the ARC Board of Directors for approval an original letter from a recognized leader in your faith community. The letter must include all of the following information: (i) the exempt person's name that matches their identification, **and** (ii) a statement that cites specific doctrine for not being vaccinated against COVID-19; **and** (iii) the authority's name, contact information, and signature.

Q. Is ARC doing contact tracing?

A. Here is what ARC will be doing in compliance with AH requirements. Attendance will be recorded at every rehearsal. If an individual voluntarily notifies the choir director or choir coordinator of a positive test result (and it is highly recommended that members do so), ARC will send a general notification to those who were in attendance that an individual in the choir has tested positive for COVID, along with the date of any formal choir event at which there may have been contact. No specific information about the individual who tested positive will be provided. Additional contact tracing will not be undertaken by ARC. The onus is on the individual who has tested positive to notify any other close contacts.

Q. What happens if I get sick?

A. An individual who suspects they have contracted COVID must arrange for a COVID test immediately and self quarantine until the results are known. Should a test come back positive, our expectation is that the individual will voluntarily inform the choir director or choir coordinator. A member who tests positive for COVID must follow all AH public health restrictions <https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx>

Q. What happens if someone else tests positive for COVID?

A. We ask such individuals to voluntarily notify the choir director or choir coordinator of their positive test result. ARC will then send a general notification letting members know that ARC was notified of an individual who tested positive for COVID, reminding everyone to be aware of symptoms, and urging members to get tested and participate via live stream if feeling unwell. Members who have tested positive for COVID must follow all AH public health restrictions <https://www.alberta.ca/isolation.aspx>

Q. I'm worried about getting too close to other singers at rehearsals. Can I move my chair farther away to distance myself from others?

A. Seating will be arranged in an offset pattern with distance between singers in compliance with AH requirements for choirs and it will be difficult to accommodate the rearranging of chairs after they have been set up. Nevertheless individual members are free to discuss this concern with the choir director or choir coordinator to see if an easy solution can be found. If you feel you are at particularly high risk with COVID, please consider attending live streamed rehearsals instead.

Q. Is each singer responsible for sanitizing items that they touch and will there be sanitizing wipes available in washrooms and other areas of the church to do so?

A. There will be ample hand sanitizing and hand washing opportunities available to choir members. ARC will be looking for volunteers to assist with sanitizing high touch surfaces prior to and following all choir rehearsals. Please do not share items such as binders, pencils, eyeglasses, water bottles, etc. Bring your own to each rehearsal and remember to take them home afterward.

Q. I have plans to be out of the country for a while. Can I rejoin practices when I return to Canada?

A. Yes, with the proviso that you follow all AH and Government of Canada directives in place at the time of your return.

Arriving at Rehearsal

Q. Is it okay to park anywhere in the lots outside the church? There are a bunch of different reserved signs and I don't want my car to be towed.

A. The church has 60+ stalls reserved in the main lot in front of the church. Most (but not all) of the other reserved parking is primarily reserved for daytime until 6pm on weekdays. For overflow, the church manager suggested we use the reserved stalls adjacent to the medical/dental clinic after 6pm to avoid any issues with the two car dealers that may need to park new cars in their reserved stalls. There are ample handicapped stalls near the front door of the church.

Q. It sounds like entering the rehearsals (especially the first one) will take a lot of time. What are you doing about that?

A. Our plan is to recruit enough volunteers to staff a number of tables to do the initial checking. No one doing that job will be required to make any judgements about documentation. They will simply record that proof of vaccination or negative test results have been provided. We suggest arriving 10 - 20 minutes ahead of rehearsal time on the first night. Please bring both your vaccination document and your QR code. The advantage of the QR code is that it is faster. However, they don't always work, in which case we will need to review your vaccination document instead. Your vaccination record and QR code are available on the [MyHealth.ab.ca](https://myhealth.ab.ca) website.

Please socially distance two metres apart if there is a line up at any time. If you see a long line-up at the door on the first night of rehearsals, consider waiting in your car until the line becomes smaller, particularly since it may be quite cold out.

Rehearsals

Q. What does a hybrid rehearsal mean?

A. Rehearsals will be conducted in-person but they will also be live streamed via Vimeo so that members can participate from a remote location. Rehearsals will also be recorded and available for all members to view on the ARC website at a later date.

Q. What will a rehearsal look like?

A. After passing the checkpoint tables in the foyer, members may use the coat rack and then proceed directly to a chair in the church sanctuary. The front doors of the church will be locked once rehearsal starts and there will be a number posted outside for late-comers to call or text in order to gain entry.

After the introductory remarks, there will be a 60-minute rehearsal block. Individuals are encouraged to take their own short breaks if needed during that time. Then there will be a 15-minute break that will not include the provision of food or drinks at this time. Members may have short conversations at a reasonable distance (masks on), fill their drinks, use the facilities, check their phones for messages, and/or step outside during the break. Conversations with the choir director should be limited to 5 minutes per member. The break will be followed by a second 45-minute rehearsal block. Members are asked to exit the building promptly after rehearsal, maintaining distancing and masking until they are outdoors.

Q. Do I have to wear a mask when I'm singing?

A. Yes. No mask = no participation. This is a legal requirement even with mandatory vaccinations. Currently, members must wear a mask for the entirety of any in-person choir activity. We recommend you bring a few masks with you so you can exchange them when they become damp or otherwise compromised. If you forget your mask, ARC may be able to provide you with one (availability permitting). <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/989e490e-5959-4a20-bfc7-b126b08ea996/resource/bbaa331f-8b57-46bc-b46e-8927b970a109/download/covid-19-guidance-for-non-medical-face-masks-for-general-public-2021-09.pdf>

Q. What kind of mask can I wear?

A. You are free to wear any mask that is comfortable as long as it covers the mouth and nose and meets these AH criteria: (i) The mask material should be a tight weave, (ii) The construction should be three ply,

(iii) The fit must be snug around the perimeter of the mask with no gaping and (iv) There should be at least one filter in the construction (usually the middle ply).

A clear face shield alone is not sufficient. Should you choose to wear one, you must also wear a face mask.

You might consider getting a well fitting 'choir mask'. These are designed to keep the front of the mask away from your mouth. Anecdotal information suggests these may be more comfortable for singers, that they do not get damp as quickly, and that they may produce a more resonant sound.

Q. Will we have the same social mingling between rehearsal times?

A. No. You are free to bring your own beverage in a spill-proof container but there will be very limited social mixing. As noted above, members may have short conversations at a reasonable distance (masks on), fill their drinks, use the facilities, check their phones for messages, and/or step outside during the break. Conversations with the choir director should be limited to 5 minutes per member. You can bring your own snacks if necessary but these must be consumed outside the rehearsal hall and at a distance from others. No food or garbage may be left at the facility.

Q. What do I do if I start coughing or have to sneeze during rehearsal? Can I take off my mask and blow my nose?

A. It is very important that you keep your mask on during rehearsals. If you have to sneeze or cough, direct the potential droplets into the inside of your bent elbow, even though you will have a mask on. For protracted coughing or sneezing or to blow your nose, please go to the foyer or bathroom to address the problem and ensure you wash your hands and sanitize affected surfaces afterward. Change your mask, as required.

Q. Are we doing any choreography?

A. Because of the physical nature of doing choreography and required spacing, we will not be including choreography for now. We acknowledge that the visual nature of ARC's performances is a part of who we are, and we will work toward including visual elements as we make plans for a year-end show.

Q. What will my experience attending a live streamed rehearsal be like?

A. There will be live images of the choir rehearsing. The director will have a microphone and you should be able to hear the ambient sound of the choir. This will allow the feeling of being present while you practice from home. We are working on other ways to enhance live streamed attendance at rehearsals and will provide updates as they are available.

Q. What about a year-end show?

A. The Artistic Team is making tentative plans for a year-end show, but will be seeking feedback from members while also remaining aware of AH regulations and changes that may impact our ability to put on a year-end show that meets our standards.

Miscellaneous

Q. Will there be a lost & found bin at the church? I have left my choir bag and a water bottle behind in the past and have appreciated help getting them back.

A. The church has a bin by the coat rack where lost items are placed, but we encourage our members to manage their belongings to the best of their ability and not rely on others, given that we are engaging in a high risk activity for COVID transmission (singing). ARC itself will not be providing a lost and found service.

Q. My friend is interested in joining the choir. Can I bring him to a rehearsal or do I have to wait for a tire-kicker? Also, can I bring my child to a rehearsal if I can't get a babysitter?

A. Only registered members of the choir may attend rehearsals at this time. If your friend meets ARC membership criteria relating to attending in-person rehearsals, it may be possible to arrange for them to attend with prior authorization from the choir director. It will not be possible to bring children to rehearsal and we suggest that you attend the live streamed option if childcare is unavailable.

Q. Can I smoke outside the front doors of the church?

A. No. Please refrain from smoking anywhere in the vicinity of the church as it is not permitted.

Q. What precautions have been taken by ARC to enhance our safety at the rehearsal venue?

A. The ARC Board of Directors and Executive Director struck a Re-Entry Committee to assist with finding a new venue that would meet our capacity needs and AH COVID requirements. An extensive checklist was developed and several venues were visited and thoroughly assessed. The venue chosen met all requirements and exceeded many. In addition, the Board approved a mandatory vaccination policy. AH restrictions are being adopted in the most conservative manner possible. High touch surfaces will be disinfected before and after rehearsals. Live streamed rehearsal attendance is being provided as an option to in-person attendance. Note that ARC is not operating under the Restrictions Exemptions Program (REP) at this time.

Members are asked to play their part by complying with all AH requirements, not all of which are covered in this document, but that can be accessed at

<https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-public-health-actions.aspx>