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## Condo Smarts

Headline: What is a Safety Plan for Covid Operations?

Topic: COVID-19

Publication / Date: Province, June 17, 2021

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**Dear Tony:** Our strata corporation has been hoping to open our gym and our common room to permit council meetings and owner events such as Crib night on Tuesday and Bridge on Thursday. We were planning to open our building services to access starting the week of June 15<sup>th</sup>, but the confusion over meetings and the requirement for a safety plan is creating concern for our council. Is there a sample or profile of a safety plan that we could model, or a list of conditions to follow when considering our openings?

*Dave Barkley, Victoria*

**Dear Dave:** An essential task of opening that all organizations and associations must follow will be to follow daily and weekly announcements from our health regions and the chief medical health officer. Strata corporations are no exception and have a duty to comply. While everyone is eager to open their facilities, including meeting rooms, pools, and gyms, it is important to remember the key objective is public health and safety and to not engage in activities that will potentially spread the virus or the variants.

Phase 2 opening permits indoor gatherings of up to 50 persons if they are seated and socially distanced. Does this mean we can have our annual general meeting or council meeting for the strata indoors? Potentially yes, but it also means everyone must be 2m apart, seated and you have a published safety plan. I doubt any strata corporation will have sufficient space to accommodate all eligible voters who register, and remember if you cannot accommodate everyone who registers you will be prejudicing the voting rights of owners and likely end up with an unenforceable meeting.

The general effect of staying 2 meters apart results in approximately 15% of the normal capacity of a room

can be accommodated. If your room normally holds 100 people comfortably seated, the number is reduced to 15 when everyone is seated and safely distanced.

Wherever possible, increase ventilation and open doors and windows or host your gathering outside, continuing to social distance. A strata corporation cannot impose conditions such as issuing a proxy or, if you cannot make it into the room physically you can register on-line. Eligible voters may be given options, but there is no method to predict how many people will register in person, which could jeopardize the legitimacy of your meeting.

A complete safety plan requires you to determine how and when your facility is operated, how user safety protocols are applied, the janitorial/sanitization procedures and frequency, occupancy limits, social distancing requirements, use of masks and hand sanitizers, workplace safety requirements for employees or contractors, plus reporting and contact tracing. The easiest method of producing a safety plan is responding to a series of questions, such as a Q & A, and publishing and posting those responses to ensure users are well informed.

Users should also be prompted to respond to a check list of questions that have become familiar to all of us as we enter any of facility or attend any permitted function.

- Have you been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with Covid or tested positive for Covid?
- Have you been outside of Canada or in a restricted region within the last 14 days?
- Are you exhibiting any of the following: fever, chills, flue like symptoms, headaches,

unexplained tiredness and soreness, cough or  
runny nose, headaches, shortness of breath?

We all want to open our doors and get back to normal, but a well managed, responsive opening, is essential to prevent another wave of infections and restrictions. Continue to insist on masks in gatherings. Promote hand washing and the use of sanitizers and be disciplined about the limits placed on gatherings. For more information, links to updates on COVID-19 and the Summer Webinar Schedule, go to: [www.choa.bc.ca](http://www.choa.bc.ca)