

Return to In-person Singing, Fall 2022

Hello, everyone! We are looking forward to returning to in-person singing on September 13, while continuing with strict rules and measures in place to keep people as safe as possible while singing.

This Fall's plan continues to include both in-person and virtual options. Attendance in person is not risk-free, so please do consider the following as you decide which option to choose:

- Singing is a risky activity because we expel more air (and therefore more Covid 19-causing aerosols) than when we're talking.
- Covid-19 is still circulating in the community and the Omicron variant is more highly infectious than previous strains.
- Infection with Covid-19, including the Omicron variant, while generally mild, can still result in serious illness for individuals who may be more vulnerable for any reason.

Rules for participation:

The Covid-19 Safety Plan will be the same as last season, with the addition of protocols for notification of a potential Covid-19 exposure; and return to in-person singing after a Covid-19 illness/positive Covid-19 test.

For those of you who are returning for the first time, or who want a refresher, here's what you need to know:

You must be fully vaccinated for in-person singing:

- This means at least **three** doses of a Health Canada-approved Covid-19 vaccine. Getting a fourth dose is highly encouraged.
- While other organizations may no longer be requiring vaccination, we will continue to do so to ensure our members, some of whom are in a higher risk demographic, have all the protection available to enjoy this activity together as safely as possible.
- You will need to show proof of vaccination when you arrive for your first in-person practice. If you did not receive a record of your vaccination, you can go online to retrieve your record at <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/get-proof/>
- For anyone who is not fully vaccinated, you are welcome to participate in practices virtually.

We will also be following all public health directives, including:

- **Wearing masks:** The choir has purchased packages of disposable "singing masks" (N98) that we will provide to participants.
- **Hand sanitizer:** It will be available when you enter the rehearsal space. Please use it.
- **Distancing:** All participants will be seated at least six feet apart in all directions and will face forward during singing.
- **Windows will be opened to maximize ventilation.**
- **Not feeling well?** Please do not attend the practice in person that evening.

Venue and initial schedule:

- We will rehearse in the Banquet Hall at Woodroffe United Church (where we hold our concerts). This room has excellent ventilation, enabling us to practice for a longer period of time.
- Our first in-person rehearsal will be Tuesday, September 13, starting at 7:30 p.m. Please arrive no later than 7:15 so that proof of vaccination can be recorded.
- Choristers not attending in person on a particular week are expected to attend via Zoom; you can choose to do so for all practices if you'd prefer.
- Participants will be sent a screening questionnaire ahead of the practice; please submit it before you arrive.
- Practices will run from 7:30 to 9:30, with a break part way through the practice. If justified by Covid-19 levels in the community, we will adjust the practice duration.

*** NEW* Protocol for notification of a potential Covid-19 exposure during practice:**

- If a potential Covid-19 exposure has occurred at an in-person practice/event, the choir will be notified.
- This will happen only if a chorister has, within a day of attending practice, one or more of the following:
 - Covid-related symptoms, either at the practice or starting the next day AND/OR
 - A positive Covid-19 test.
- The name of the chorister who is ill/positive will be kept anonymous.

People who attended that practice will be advised to self-monitor for symptoms and take steps to protect those around them. There is an excellent (and easy!) tool on the Ottawa Public Health web site to guide you, at <https://secureforms.ottawapublichealth.ca/CM/Self-Isolation-Determination-Tool>

***NEW* Protocol for returning to in-person singing after Covid-19 illness and/or a positive Covid-19 test.**

- A chorister who has had Covid-19 may return to in-person choir:
 - Ten days AFTER the start of symptoms or the positive Covid-19 test (whichever occurred earlier) AND
 - After symptoms have been improving for 48 hours.