

March 20, 2020

**MANITOBA GOVERNMENT DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY
TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC, REDUCE SPREAD OF COVID-19**

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**Focus Solely on Health and Safety
of all Manitobans: Premier**

The Manitoba government is declaring a provincewide state of emergency under The Emergency Measures Act to protect the health and safety of all Manitobans and reduce the spread of COVID-19, Premier Brian Pallister announced today.

“This decision was not made lightly. However, we must continue to use every tool available to ‘flatten the curve’ and reduce the spread of COVID-19 on our communities and our health-care system,” said Pallister. “Our government is focused solely on the health and safety of all Manitobans. This move will enable us to react more quickly on a broad range of supportive measures to stop the spread for COVID-19 and ensure that essential services are available for all Manitobans during this global health pandemic.”

A state of emergency has been declared by the powers set out in Section 11(1) and 11(2) of The Emergency Measures Act to enable the province to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the Chief Provincial Public Health Officer is issuing orders under The Public Health Act as approved by the Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living.

“With this declaration, the biggest roles for all Manitobans to play right now, is to protect yourself, your family, your friends and your community”, said Dr. Brent Roussin, chief provincial public health officer. “I cannot emphasize this enough – this is the time for action. We must change our day-to-day lives, and think about your role in protecting ourselves and all Manitobans.”

As authorized under The Public Health Act, the following measures will be in place, effective immediately, for a period of 30 days:

1. Limiting public gatherings of more than 50 people at any indoor or outdoor place or premises. This includes places of worship, gatherings and family events such as weddings and funerals. This does not apply to a facility where health care or social services are provided. Retail businesses including grocery or food stores, shopping centres, pharmacies or gas stations must ensure separation of one to two metres between patrons assembling in the business. Public transportation facilities must also ensure that people assembling at the facility are reasonably able to maintain a separation of one to two metres from others assembling at the facility.
2. Limiting hospitality premises where food or alcohol is served or any theatres offering live performances of music, dance and other art forms as movies theatres to 50 people or 50 per cent of the capacity of the premises, whichever is lesser. These establishments must be able to ensure social distance of one to two metres between customers.
3. Immediate closures of all bingo and gaming events.
4. All wellness centres offering physical activities, gyms, fitness centres and athletic clubs and training facilities

“This is a time to support our friends, families and communities,” said Pallister. “The situation is constantly evolving and changing rapidly. Enacting a state of emergency will further our province’s ability to be nimble, act swiftly and support Manitobans when they need it most.”