

Region PoV clarification

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Greetings Friends,

Over the last week, we have communicated several times with Ministry Personnel and Pastoral Charge Supervisors, as well as through the Rambler, about the modifications to the current [Public Health Order](#) in place from the provincial government. You'll be happy to know that there have been no further changes to the Proof of Vaccination (PoV) mandate from the information we sent on December 4. You can find this letter [here](#). I am simply writing to offer some clarifications about what is considered EXEMPT under the current health order as mentioned in that letter.

Anything that is part of the life, work, and ministry of the church is exempt from PoV. This means the following are exempt:

- Worship services (including weddings, funerals and wakes) and coffee following
- UCW meetings and sponsored events
- AOTS meetings and sponsored events
- committee and Governance meetings
- Prayer shawl groups, prayer groups, Bible study groups, Youth Groups
- fundraisers sponsored by the church: Bazaars, craft sales, dinners, thrift sales
- workshops that are sponsored by the church or for church members
- Congregational choir concerts
- Christmas concerts/pageants put on by members of the Congregation for the congregation
- Special worship services (i.e. Christmas Eve or Longest Night)
- Outreach ministries sponsored by the church

Additionally, services that are offered on the church premises in the following categories are exempt:

- 12-step programs
- Mental Health and Addictions support; Victim services; Religiously affiliated charitable organizations (such as a food bank); At Risk Youth Groups, etc.

Public gatherings and events require PoV. The Liaison from the Business Response Team explained the Public Health Order like this: ***if PoV would be required at the same event outside of the church building, then it would be required in the church building.*** This means that your renters who are using the building for groups like Weight Watcher or Grief Counseling, dinners or fundraisers, concerts, recitals, or private music lessons will be required to show PoV for people aged 12+.

Again, your congregation has the freedom to create a PoV policy that covers all usage of the building, regardless of church connection. It is our goal to meet or exceed the guidelines from the Public Health Order, in place until January 31, 2022. If you would like to see a sample policy, please contact Tracy Murton at tmurton@united-church.ca. A sample tenant waiver is on the [website](#).

Keep on caring for your community by making sure your space is safe for all those who gather. This is an act of love and compassion, not just obligation. Deep breaths, friends, you've got this.

Blessings and peace,

Tricia Gerhard
Chair, Regional Council Executive