



# Updated COVID-19 Protocols

Updated April 12, 2021

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton is committed to serving our families and working to ensure their health and safety. We are equally committed and focused on the health and safety of our employees. We are therefore adjusting our operations and levels of public interaction in an effort to do our part to slow the transmission of the virus. Please know that we are taking extra precautions to keep our facilities and offices sanitized. Our office remains open to serve you and your family. Please review the following information:

## Safe Distance Protocol

The Catholic Cemeteries has implemented a Safe Distance Protocol. We ask that there be no physical contact such as handshakes or hugs, and our employees will observe a 6-foot distance with visitors wherever possible.

## Screening

All visitors will be screened:

1. Do you have any of these symptoms?
  - Fever
  - Cough/Sneezing
  - Difficulty Breathing/Shortness of Breath
2. Have you travelled outside of the country within the last 14 days?
3. Have you or any member of your immediate family been in contact with someone who has or is suspected to have COVID-19?
4. Have you or any member of your immediate family been advised to self-isolate?
5. Has Public Health been involved?

**If a visitor answers YES to any of the above questions, we ask that they kindly return home and call us to make arrangements by alternative means (phone/email, etc.).**

## For All Office Appointments, Cremation and Interment Services

- Any individual who is under self-isolation or does not pass the self-screening test is not permitted to attend any of our offices, cemeteries or mausoleum building for any reason.

- While the outdoor cemetery grounds remain open, we recommend that visits unrelated to an interment service be avoided.
- Our mausoleum buildings are closed for visits during business hours that are unrelated to attendance at an entombment.
- Our reception rooms at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Burlington and Marymount Cemetery, Guelph are not available for use.
- Offices are open for both pre-need and at-need arrangements by appointment only. Where feasible, arrangements may be completed by telephone or other electronic means. Walk-in visits without an appointment will not be permitted.
- Cemetery offices in Grey/Lockdown Stages will be open for at-need appointments only. Pre-need arrangements may be completed by telephone or other electronic means.
- Families attending a cemetery office for an in-person meeting are required to wear a mask, unless they are unable to do so for medical purposes. No more than two family members will be permitted to enter the office.

Please be reminded of our Safe Distance Protocol to which all attendees will be required to adhere and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from employees at all times.

## Interments/Entombments for non-COVID-19-related Deaths

- In keeping with the most recent directives from the Province of Ontario and the Bereavement Authority of Ontario concerning attendance at a funeral, the following will be observed:
  - For cemeteries in areas in the **Green-Prevent** and **Yellow-Protect** Stages: a maximum of 100 people will be permitted to attend an outdoor graveside burial service, provided there is a funeral director in charge.
  - For cemeteries in areas in the **Orange-Restrict** and **Red-Control** Stages: a maximum of 100 people will be permitted to attend an outdoor graveside burial service; provided there is a funeral director in charge, and one funeral home staff member for every 10 attendees.
  - For cemeteries in areas in the **Grey-Lockdown** stage: a maximum of 50 people will be permitted to attend an outdoor graveside burial service, provided there is a funeral director in charge, and one funeral home staff member for every 10 attendees.
  - For all Stages: the number of attendees permitted to attend an outdoor or indoor graveside burial service where no funeral director is present will be **the lesser** of:
    - the maximum number of persons permitted to gather in public, and
    - 10 people
- Unless they are from the same household, attendees are required to maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet at all times.
- Immediately following the committal service, attendees must return to their vehicles and depart. Cemetery staff will not approach the grave until all attendees have left.
- The maximum number of attendees permitted at a committal inside a mausoleum where a funeral director is present is as follows:
  - Our Lady of Victory Mausoleum, Burlington: 20
  - Holy Souls Mausoleum, Burlington: 10
  - Our Lady of Peace Mausoleum, Burlington: 15

- Our Lady of Hope Mausoleum, Ancaster: 20
- Our Lady of the Angels Mausoleum, Stoney Creek: 20
- Our Lady of the Assumption Mausoleum, Paris: 20
- Our Lady Immaculate Mausoleum, Guelph: 20
- Immediately following the committal prayers, attendees must exit the mausoleum. No one will be permitted to accompany the casket to the place of entombment or witness the entombment process. Cemetery staff will not approach the casket until all attendees have left.
- Families for mausoleum committal who wish to have more than the maximum allowable number of attendees inside the mausoleum will be given the option of holding the committal service outside the entrance of the mausoleum. Immediately following the committal service, all attendees must return to their vehicles and depart. Cemetery staff will not approach the casket until all attendees have left. If this option is chosen, no family will be permitted to enter the mausoleum.

## Interments/Entombments for COVID-19-related Deaths

- For entombment inside a mausoleum, committal services must take place outside the main doors of the mausoleum. Once the committal service is complete, the casket or urn will be left outside the entrance door. Once the family has returned to their vehicles, the cemetery staff will proceed with the entombment. For an outdoor crypt or columbarium niche, staff will complete the entombment once the family has left the vicinity of the burial space.
- For in-ground burial, caskets will be placed into the concrete container (liner or vault) immediately upon arrival at the grave. All other protocols indicated above will be enforced.
- Attendance will be restricted to a maximum of 20 people, including clergy.

Thank you for adhering to these protocols and for your understanding and patience during these unprecedented times. We pray for those infected with COVID-19, those caring for the sick and for one another.