



Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre

85 Church Street, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 3C7

Phone: 905-685-6589 | Fax: 905-685-8376 | www.folk-arts.ca

PUBLIC STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2020

Preparing to Re-Open our Building to Serve our Community

Niagara Region is currently in Stage 2 of the COVID-19 Pandemic and that means we have limited services at our Centre between July and September 2020. Before we get to our reopening plan, let us start this newsletter by quoting one of the most respected health professionals during this pandemic, Dr. Bonnie Henry, Provincial Health Officer of British Columbia. On June 25, Dr. Henry was referring to the gradual increase of businesses and services opening to the public saying: “This has been a gradual increase, and I continue to believe that it is what we need to do. This is an exciting time, in many ways, because it has shown that we have been able to find our balance.”

We are all in this together as we recover a sense of normality, finding the balance between what it used to be before the pandemic started and new risks of infections and the anxiety that this uncertainty generates in each of us, our families and communities.

Dr. Henry explains: “As more stores and businesses open, as we travel more, we are going to have more cases. What we need to do is make sure we have those measures in place so we can stop transmission quickly, and make sure it’s not spread to large numbers of people.”

Locally we monitor updates from our public health officials and adjust our service plans accordingly and all information related to COVID in Niagara can be found at this website: <https://niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/>

In our Centre, the Health and Safety Committee is preparing our reopening plan, which will be partial for the summer months of July and August.

Some of the highlights include:

- Installation of plexi glass on workstations for one-on-one appointments
- Ensuring physical distancing in all areas of the building
- Regular sanitation of work areas and common spaces and door knobs.
- Reminding everyone the key aspects to stop the spreading infections: regular handwashing, maintaining a physical distance with people outside of your social circle,



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and using non-medical masks when keeping physical distancing is a challenge.

Starting on July 13th, limited in-person programming will begin in the following areas:

- A new mental health in-person pilot program
- Limited in-person settlement, youth, adult and seniors, employment supports and mentorship services pre-arranged by appointment only
- Limited short term child care services related to in-person settlement and mental health appointments only
- Curb side pick-up and drop off services at our main building's front entrance
- Robertson Hall will remain available for limited capacity rentals following Niagara Public Health guidelines

For information related to all of the above in-person services, please contact our intake office at 905-685-6589 ext. 225 or email generalenquiries@folk-arts.ca

Our virtual programs continue to happen as scheduled and all virtual activities can be found at the following link: <https://www.folk-arts.ca>

Blended ESL and child-care classes will resume in September following the DSBN model and further updates can be found here: <https://www.folk-arts.ca/covid-19/>

Niagara Folk Arts Festival events are happening this Summer!
Go to www.folk-arts.ca/festival to find out what's happening.

We continue to miss our volunteers dearly and we hope to resume limited in-person services in September if/when it is safe to do so. For all volunteering related information, please email: volunteer@folk-arts.ca

We will reassess our plans at the end of the summer and provide a new update for early September on a service model for all centre and satellite locations following the guidelines of our local Medical Officer of Health and all municipal, provincial and federal regulations.

This pandemic has taught us many lessons: appreciating family, valuing small gifts of life, finding creative ways to connect and help each other, etc. but perhaps the most important lesson learned is that we are all in this together and only together, keeping safe and healthy ourselves, our families and our communities we will come through.