



Life Chain Canada Guidelines on COVID-19

As the killing of innocent human beings through abortion hasn't ceased during the pandemic, public pro-life witnesses like Life Chain are still necessary. Out of reverence for the sanctity of human life, however, we have a duty to ensure that this event proceeds in a safe and legal manner. As always, we ask our Heavenly Father for protection, but we also need to be prudent in taking appropriate health and safety measures ourselves.

Here are some steps to minimize the risks:

1. First and foremost, please abide by the directives of law enforcement and local government and health authorities.
2. Please review your local COVID-19 safety protocols as soon as possible, and in the week leading up to your event (in case they change in the meantime). Pay special attention to:
 - a. The maximum number of people permitted at an outdoor gathering/protest;
 - b. Contact Tracing Requirements/Recommendations;
 - c. Mask/Face Covering Requirements/Recommendations
3. Re. The maximum number of people permitted at an outdoor gathering/protest:
 - a. If you expect that your Life Chain will attract a greater number of participants than the maximum number permitted at an outdoor gathering, please consider establishing a second Life Chain location (and third, fourth, fifth, etc., if necessary). These locations could be far apart or just a few blocks away from one another. Please contact Life Chain Canada if you'd like us to add any of these new Life Chain locations to our web listing.
 - b. If the number of participants unexpectedly exceeds the maximum permitted at an outdoor gathering, be prepared to split the group apart and send some participants a couple blocks over, thereby creating additional Life Chains on an ad hoc basis.

It's important to demonstrate to authorities, media, passersby, etc. that we are making a sincere attempt to follow all pertinent regulations and to keep everyone safe.
4. Re. Contact Tracing: If you are required to contact trace, please do so. If you are not, you may still wish to consider registering participants for health and safety reasons and as a data-gathering exercise.
 - a. Encourage potential participants to register in advance so as to better anticipate attendance numbers and to increase efficiency on the day of event. Consider using www.lifechain.org (run by our U.S. counterparts) to do so.
 - b. Assign volunteer(s) to take down registration information from participants as opposed to passing a clipboard and pen between participants.
 - c. Consider having multiple sign distribution/registration locations so as to better facilitate physical distancing.
5. Re. Masks/Face Coverings: If participants are required to wear one as per local COVID-19 safety protocols, please communicate this expectation both during and in advance of the event. Even if not required, we strongly encourage the use of masks/face coverings



during Life Chain, not only to reduce the likelihood of contraction/transmission of COVID-19, but also to clearly communicate to all passersby that participants are taking health and safety seriously. However, in absence of any local requirements, we leave it up to each individual organizer to determine whether it is necessary to mandate mask usage or not. If there's heavy pedestrian traffic at a particular Life Chain location, mask usage will most likely be necessary. If a particular Life Chain location is in a remote area, it may be acceptable for participants to take off their masks once sufficiently distanced from one another.

6. Please review the [updated Life Chain Code of Conduct](http://www.campaignlifecoalition.com/life-chain). It is available at www.campaignlifecoalition.com/life-chain. Please disseminate it to any communities (e.g. local pro-life group or church members) you expect to participate in Life Chain.
7. Please bring hand sanitizer for your own use and to offer some to participants before handing them signs, in case they did not bring hand sanitizer of their own.
8. **IMPORTANT:** Ensure that participants are two metres apart from each other at ALL TIMES, unless they are part of the same family/social circle/bubble. Organizers have always been encouraged to space out participants to make the Life Chain seem as large as possible, and now there's a health-related reason to do so. Do not hesitate to spread out over multiple blocks, even if it means participants have to spend some time moving further down.
 - a. If your intended Life Chain location does not allow for physical distancing (e.g. the sidewalks are too narrow), please select a new Life Chain location (and inform Life Chain Canada) or be prepared to send participants a few blocks over to an area that does permit proper physical distancing.
 - b. Consider creating visual cues, e.g. with chalk, or using pre-existing cues, e.g. sidewalk slabs, to ensure participants are sufficiently distanced.
 - c. If anyone (participant, passerby, counter-protester) begins to encroach on the space of another individual, he/she should be politely asked not to do so. Be prepared to call law enforcement if someone is posing a threat to health and safety and is refusing to comply with polite requests to respect physical distancing rules.
9. While we encourage you to take photos of your Life Chain, please avoid having participants pose for a group photo, as it is not conducive to physical distancing.
10. Please remember to remind participants to remain in silent prayer, regardless of the response of passersby or counter-protesters, as talking, shouting, or singing increases the likelihood of spreading COVID-19.
11. Make sure to use hand sanitizer and/or wash your hands after collecting the Life Chain signs. You may also consider permitting Life Chain participants to take the signs home.
12. Please be prepared to explain what steps you are taking to protect health and safety should anyone (law enforcement, media, etc.) inquire, and consider taking along a copy of the [updated Life Chain Code of Conduct](http://www.campaignlifecoalition.com/life-chain) and your local COVID-19 guidelines. Remember that even during a pandemic, you still have a constitutionally-protected right to protest and that other groups (like Black Lives Matter) have done so. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau himself attended such a protest.



- a. By filming your event, you can prove that participants were abiding by all local COVID-19 safety protocols should anyone allege otherwise.
13. Please be prepared to communicate a cancellation of the event if:
- a. Local COVID-19 guidelines change in the days leading up to Life Chain such that it becomes too difficult to abide by the new legal restrictions;
 - b. There's a COVID-19 outbreak in your community such that it becomes too difficult to ensure the health and safety of participants;
 - c. You find on the day of your event (or in the days preceding) that you cannot be reasonably confident that you are healthy (though it may be wise to develop a back-up plan in this event, e.g. by contacting an alternative organizer in advance). Please **DO NOT** show up at the Life Chain location if doing so would mean breaking the Code of Conduct. Safety is our priority.
14. Consider contacting your municipality to inquire if they have any additional recommendations for ensuring a safe event for all. Also consider submitting a notice of demonstration to local law enforcement (though you're not obligated to do so).
15. If these efforts unexpectedly do not satisfy law enforcement (e.g. they issue a fine or order participants to disperse) or if a participant does test positive for COVID-19 in the immediate aftermath of the event, please contact Life Chain Canada (1-800-730-5358, lifechain@campaignlifecoalition.com).