



Phase 2 Guidance for Reopening: Churches and Places of Worship

Places of Worship can become operational on or after April 26, 2020 with reduced capacity and where strict physical distancing protocols can be maintained between non-household members.

State Guidelines:

- Avoid GATHERING in groups of more than 50 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.

Questions

- What is your level of comfort around reopening? (It is ok to delay reopening or reopen partially!)
- What are your biggest areas of concern for your establishment?
- Do you need signage?
- Do you have a plan for:
 - Encouraging Social Distancing?
 - Using Cloth Face Masks?
 - Cleaning and Disinfecting?
 - Encouraging Hand Washing?
 - Protecting Vulnerable Populations?
- Do you have a written plan that you can share with congregation members?
- Do you have any questions for us? Call the Health Department at 466-2562 if anything comes up.

Some Strategies You Could Use

Social Distancing Ideas

- Limit the number of people at gatherings to 50 people.
- Offer more services with limited occupancy to reduce gathering sizes.
- Continue to offer video/audio events.
- Rearrange seating to comply with social distancing (e.g. only allow seating in every other row).
- Remind parishioners to only sit near members of their household.
- Refrain from handshakes, hugs, and physical touch.
 - Opt for hands-free greetings such as waving.
- Encourage parishioners to bring their own bibles/books of worship to minimize the use of communal resources.
- Encourage parishioners to download the readings or weekly updates on their phones.
- Alter your practices to allow for social distancing (e.g. use individual plastic cups during communion).
- Consider holding a separate service for higher risk populations.



Cloth Face Masks

- Implement the use of cloth face masks by all church attendees and staff, if possible.
- Train staff on appropriate use of face coverings
 - Refrain from touching eyes, nose, and mouth while putting on and removing face masks.
 - Wash hands immediately after taking off facemasks.
 - Facemasks should be routinely washed depending on frequency of use.
- Consider laundering facemasks for all employees

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Clean all “high touch” areas such as counters, doorknobs, tables, benches, chairs, registers, card machines, etc. frequently.
 - Clean more often if surfaces become visibly soiled.
 - Clean any surfaces that may have blood, body fluids, and or secretions on them.
 - Wear disposable gloves when cleaning surfaces.
 - Clean and disinfect all surfaces after every service.
 - Visit the CDC website to view a list of EPA Approved Disinfectants.

Provide Hand Washing for Patrons

- Hand sanitizer at entry of place of worship
- Signs directing patrons to hand washing areas
- Post proper handwashing practices near handwashing areas.

Considerations for Vulnerable Employees and Customers

- The following groups are considered higher risk for developing severe complications from COVID-19:
 - People aged 65 and over
 - People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
 - People who are immunocompromised
 - People with underlying medical conditions
- **Vulnerable populations are still encouraged to stay home as much as possible.**