



Presbytery of San Gabriel

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Rev. Wendy S. Tajima, Executive Presbyter

Rev. Diane M. Frasher, Stated Clerk

July 8, 2020

Dear Congregations of the Presbytery of San Gabriel,

On Thursday, July 2 the Los Angeles Department of Public Health hosted a telebriefing to address changes made to protocols for the county of Los Angeles at the direction of the Governor and Los Angeles County. These changes are the result of the increased number of positive cases of COVID-19 and the increasing hospitalization rate. Los Angeles County now has the highest number of positive cases in the nation. Please find both the state orders and the county orders attached to this letter. For your convenience, we have also attached notes from the telebriefing. If you prefer, you may listen to the recording of the telebriefing by dialing 1-866-207-1041 and entering access code 6854355#. The two most important changes to protocols are:

- 1) A prohibition of singing, chanting, and group recitation both indoors and outdoors. The only exception offered was for the leader to be shown virtually. The leader should be recorded alone or with people in their household. Otherwise, ensembles should make use of software that allow for remote collaboration.
- 2) Gatherings that mix households are not allowed. The only exceptions are worship services, which now include weddings and funerals. This protocol is a continuation of the prohibition of gatherings that has not yet been lifted. Churches should not sponsor any sort of in-person gathering of a group including Bible studies, small groups, meetings, or youth groups. These types of meetings should remain online.
 - a. There is an exception granted for 12-Step groups of ten or fewer people. These groups are required to follow protocols outlined by the health department.
 - b. One-to-one consultations are allowed. There are protocols for how these meetings should take place.

You may notice that the printed protocols and the descriptions in the telebriefing do not line up entirely. In this ever-developing situation, the guidance is changing faster than the protocols are adapted. We believe the best practice to care for our communities when you do gather is not to sing, chant or recite. No meetings that mix family groups other than worship should happen either on the church campus or be church sponsored.

These are challenging limitations for our churches. We are being forced to reconceive of what it means to be church together in every way. We are developing resilience as leaders. We hope and pray for the Spirit to move in and through us building us up. The Presbytery staff continues to pray for each of our churches and their leaders. We invite you to join us for the next Church Leader and Clergy call on Tuesday, July 14 at 10:00 am. We will discuss these changes as well as ideas for connecting with our communities virtually over the summer months.

Grace and peace,

Presbyter for Administration and Associate Stated Clerk

**Telebriefing for Faith Communities, Thursday, July 2 with Dr. Muntu Davis, MD, MPH, Health Officer
for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health**

Notes from the Telebriefing:

- Still safer at home, reopening does not indicate that we are not at risk.
- The protocols on the website are required. These are not suggestions.
- Face coverings required in public.
- Maintain 6ft apart from anyone you do not live with.
- Wash hands frequently for 20 seconds.
- If you are sick or have been exposed, stay home for the time-period that is required.
- You cannot gather with people that you do not live with except for the exceptions listed in the local orders.
- These orders are not suggestions, they are mandates.
- LA County has the most cases of any county in the country; 8% of those who tested positive end up hospitalized. Daily average of positive tests has gone up 3 % in June. Last month 1 in 300 people were positive. Today 1 in 140 people are positive.

Houses of Worship

- Relatively higher risk even with face coverings.
- Not obligated to have in-person activity. Strongly recommended for churches to provide streaming or virtual options for those who are at higher-risk.
- Limited to 25% of the building capacity or 100 people, whichever is lower.
- Implement protocols and train employees and volunteers on those protocols.
- Train employees and volunteers on how the disease is spread and how to prevent the spread.
- Face coverings must be worn. Take temperature of staff.
- Prohibition of singing, group recitation, and chanting. Even with physical distancing. State requirement. Even if outdoors. The only way to do it is if the performers are virtual and located in different places, but those gathered listening should not sing.
- Take reasonable measures including signage that tells people they must wear face coverings and practice physical distancing.
- Do not pass offering plates. Use digital means or a drop box that can be cleaned.
- Sanitize microphones
- Install hand sanitizer stations at entry points.
- No shared self-service food service
- The only gatherings that are permitted are religious services (weddings and funerals). No Bible Study, no youth group. Still applies if those smaller gatherings are held outside.

Protocol for Places of Worship: Appendix F

Recent Updates:

6/29/20: In the event that 3 or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days the employer should report this cluster to the Department of Public Health.

7/1/2020: Please note that the California COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies was updated. Click [here](#) to review it.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health is adopting a staged approach, supported by science and public health expertise, to allow places of worship to safely reopen. In conformance with the July 1, 2020 California COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies, this Protocol provides guidance for places of worship and providers of religious services and cultural ceremonies (referred to collectively as “places of worship”) to support a safe, clean environment for employees, interns and trainees, volunteers, scholars, and all other types of workers (referred to collectively as “staff”) as well as congregants, worshippers, visitors, etc. (referred to collectively as “visitors” or “congregants”). In addition to the conditions imposed on houses of worship by the State Public Health Officer, places of worship must also be in compliance with the conditions laid out in this Protocol for Places of Worship.

Please note: This Protocol does not obligate places of worship to resume in-person activity. Further, it is strongly recommended that places of worship continue to facilitate remote services and other related activities for those who are vulnerable to COVID19 including older adults and those with co-morbidities.

This Protocol is not intended for food preparation and service, delivery of items to those in need, childcare and daycare services, school and educational activities, in-home caregiving, counseling, office work, and other activities that places and organizations of worship may provide.

This Protocol may be updated as additional information and resources become available so be sure to check the LA County website <http://www.ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/> regularly for any updates to this document. Note also that the California Department of Public Health will conduct a review to assess impact of the State Order and of these protocols 21 days after the date of the State Public Health Officer’s Order.

This checklist covers:

- (1) Workplace policies and practices to protect staff health
- (2) Measures to ensure physical distancing
- (3) Measures to ensure infection control
- (4) Communication with staff, visitors and congregants
- (5) Measures to ensure equitable access to critical services.

These five key areas must be addressed as your facility implements its Places of Worship Protocols.



All entities covered by this guidance must implement all applicable measures listed below and be prepared to explain why any measure that is not implemented is not applicable to the site.

Place of Worship name: _____
Facility Address: _____
Maximum Occupancy, per Fire Code: _____
Approximate total square footage of space used by visitors and congregants for services: _____

In the protocols that follow, the term “staff” is meant to include employees, volunteers, interns and trainees, scholars and all other individuals who carry out work at the site, The term “visitors” should be understood to include members of the congregation, worshippers, and members of the public who are on site as visitors. The terms “site” and “house of worship” both refer to the building at which worship occurs and any adjacent buildings or facilities at which permitted activities of the congregation are conducted.

A. WORKPLACE POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO PROTECT EMPLOYEE (STAFF) HEALTH (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY TO THE FACILITY)

- Staff who can carry out their work duties from home has been directed to do so.
- Vulnerable staff (those above age 65, those with chronic health conditions) are assigned work that can be done from home whenever possible.
- All staff have been told not to come to work if sick and to follow DPH guidance for self-isolation, if applicable.
- Work processes are reconfigured to the extent possible to increase opportunities for staff to work from home.
- Upon being informed that one or more worker/practitioner, independent contractors and temporary workers test positive for, or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (case), the employer has a plan in place to have the case(s) isolate themselves at home and require the immediate self-quarantine of all workers that had a workplace exposure to the case(s). The employer’s plan should consider a protocol for all quarantined workers to have access to or be tested for COVID-19 in order to determine whether there have been additional workplace exposures, which may require additional COVID-19 control measures. See the public health guidance on [responding to COVID-19 in the workplace](#).
- Symptom checks are conducted before staff may enter the facility. Checks must include a check-in concerning cough, shortness of breath or fever and any other symptoms the employee may be experiencing. These checks can be done remotely or in person upon the employees’ arrival. A temperature check should also be done at the worksite if feasible.
- In the event that 3 or more cases are identified within the workplace within a span of 14 days the employer should report this cluster to the Department of Public Health at (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821. If a cluster is identified at a worksite, the Department of Public Health will initiate a cluster response which includes providing infection control guidance and recommendations, technical support and site-specific control measures. A public health



case manager will be assigned to the cluster investigation to help guide the facility response.

- All staff who have contact with visitors or other staff during worktime are offered, at no cost, a cloth face covering. The covering is to be worn by the staff person at all work times when in contact or likely to come into contact with others. Staff need not wear cloth face coverings when alone in a private office or workspace.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is provided to staff, including eye protection and gloves as needed, responsible for washing religious garments and linens, seat or floor coverings, or other cloth items used in services or ceremonies.
- Staff are instructed to wash their cloth face coverings daily.
- All work areas are separated by at least 6 feet or by partitions.
- Common areas, including the both public areas and restrooms and other areas used by Staff are disinfected frequently, on the following schedule:
 - Entry area/lobby _____
 - Public worship area(s) _____
 - Meeting rooms _____
 - Shared work areas _____
 - Break rooms _____
 - Stairways/Stairwells _____
 - Elevators _____
 - Restrooms _____
 - Other _____
- Staff are prohibited from eating or drinking anywhere inside the facility other than designated dining areas to assure that masks may be worn consistently and correctly.
- Disinfectant and related supplies are available to staff at the following location(s):

- Hand sanitizer effective against COVID-19 is available to all staff at the following location(s):

- Staff are allowed frequent breaks to wash their hands.
- Staff have been instructed not to conduct home or other off-site visits to anyone who has tested positive for or exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 unless that person has completed the prescribed self-isolation or self-quarantine period.
- A copy of this protocol has been distributed to each staff person.
- Each staff person is assigned their own tools, equipment and defined workspace. Sharing held items is minimized or eliminated.
- All policies described in this checklist other than those related to terms of employment are applied to staff of delivery and any other companies who may be on the premises as third parties.
- Optional—Describe other measures:

B. MEASURES TO ENSURE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Attendance at religious services and cultural ceremonies at the **house of worship** is limited to a maximum of 25% of building capacity or 100 individuals, whichever is lower. This figure is understood to include all participants, celebrants, staff, organizers and visitors. Pre-registration is offered for all services and ceremonies to include participants name, email, and phone number.
- Measures have been implemented (advance registration, counting attendees at entry) to assure compliance with house of worship occupancy restrictions.
- Parking areas have been reconfigured to limit congregation points and ensure proper spacing (for example, by closing off every other space).
- If drive-in services are offered cars are directed to park at least 6 feet apart.
- Permitted religious events are planned to allow for physical distancing. The only exceptions to this are the two people who comprise a couple who are getting married and the members of a single household, who may attend the event together and sit together as a unit if permitted by their religion.
- Virtual access is considered for visitors who wish to participate in services or events but are at high risk if exposed to COVID-19.
- If attendees at events must wait online prior to enter or at any other point during their presence at the site, tape or other markings are used to demonstrate the required 6-foot distance between individuals.
- Events are conducted outdoors to the extent feasible, to permit physical distancing and allow for air flow.
- Services and celebrations are shortened to limit time spent at the site.
- Onsite events such as meetings and conferences are limited to the extent feasible.
- Separate entries and exits have been identified to minimize crowding, allow for monitoring of occupancy and leave room for symptom checks as staff and visitors enter.
- A staff person (or staff people if there is more than one entrance) wearing a cloth face cover is posted near the door but at least 6 feet from the nearest entering or department person to monitor use of face coverings and track occupancy.
- Event spaces are reconfigured to permit physical distancing. Whether chairs, benches or floor space are used arrangements and markings are used to permit a 6-foot space between individuals or between household groups and other household groups or individuals.
- Offices, public seating areas and other non-production worksite areas are reconfigured to support physical distancing.
- If applicable, aisles in the house of worship are designated as one-way to support physical distancing.
- Podiums, platforms and other speaker areas have been reconfigured to allow at least 6 feet between speakers or celebrants.
- Staff have been instructed to maintain at least a 6-foot distance from each other in all areas of the site.
- If applicable, elevator capacity is limited to 4 individuals or fewer at a time for any elevator that does not allow for 6-foot physical distance between riders. All riders are required to wear cloth face coverings. Consider elevator sizes, number of building floors, and daily number of employees and visitors to establish physical distancing guidelines appropriate for elevator riders.

- If applicable, stairwells have been opened for “up” or “down” traffic with increased cleaning of stairwells.
- Workstations in offices and other areas are separated by at least 6 feet and common areas are configured to limit employee gatherings to ensure physical distancing of at least 6 feet.
- Occupancy in staff restrooms, break rooms and other common areas is limited to permit physical distancing.

C. MEASURES FOR INFECTION CONTROL

- The HVAC system is in good, working order; to the maximum extent possible, ventilation has been increased through opening of doors and windows during gatherings.
- Hands-free equipment is installed wherever feasible (including restrooms) to reduce risk of contamination.
- Visitors are verbally screened at entry for respiratory symptoms and fever.
- Signs in visible locations are used to remind visitors that face coverings are required during services and celebrations except for children under age 2 or others with impaired breathing or other at-risk conditions.
- Signs in visible locations discourage visitors from engaging in handshakes, hugs, or similar greetings that pose contamination risk.
- If prayer books, rugs or other direct touch items are used in services or ceremonies, individuals are instructed to bring their own or disposable items are offered for participants.
- Microphones, stands, music stands, instruments and other items on pulpits and podiums are disinfected between uses.
- Site has discontinued passing offering plates and similar items. Digital systems or touch-free collection boxes or other devices are used for collection of contributions.
- The California Department of Public Health directs that “activities such as singing and chanting negate the risk-reduction achieved through six feet of physical distancing” due to an increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets. If done, these activities should be done outdoors with much greater physical distance or through alternative methods (such as internet streaming) that ensure individual congregation members perform these activities separately in their own homes. Please review the updated State Industry Guidance for Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies [here](#).
- Self-service foods and beverages are not offered.
- If multiples services are conducted daily, disposable seat covers are provided. Disposable or washable covers are provided for pillows used as seating on floors. Washable coverings are changed after each use.
- Religious garments and linens are washed after each service or event at the highest temperature water setting possible.
- Workspaces and the entire facility are cleaned at least daily when in use, with restrooms and frequently touched areas/objects cleaned more frequently.
- The site is kept closed between scheduled events to avoid contamination.
- Staff responsible for cleaning between events/or at the close of the workday are paid for time spent on these duties if not part of their regular work.
- Restroom signs remind visitors to wash hands frequently for 20 seconds.



- Restrooms are kept operational and stocked with extra soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer.
- Restrooms are sanitized regularly using EPA approved disinfectants consistent with manufacturer's directions on the following schedule:

- Hand sanitizer, tissues and trash cans are available to the public at or near the entrance of the facility.
- Optional - Describe other measures to promote infection control

D. MEASURES THAT COMMUNICATE TO THE PUBLIC

- A copy of this protocol is posted at all public entrances to the site.
- Online outlets of the congregation (website, social media, etc.) provide clear information about schedules, occupancy limitations, parking limitations, required use of face coverings, and options for virtual participation.

E. MEASURES THAT ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES

- Services that are critical to congregants have been prioritized.
- Services that can be offered remotely have been moved on-line
- Measures are instituted to assure access to services and celebrations for congregants who have mobility limitations and/or are at high risk in public spaces.

Any additional measures not included above should be listed on separate pages, which the site should attach to this document.

You may contact the following person with any questions or comments about this protocol:

Site Contact Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Date Last Revised: _____



COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE:

Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies

July 1, 2020

covid19.ca.gov



OVERVIEW

On March 19, 2020, the State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health issued an order requiring most Californians to stay at home to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 among the population.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health of Californians is not yet fully known. Reported illness ranges from very mild (some people have no symptoms) to severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups, including people aged 65 or older and those with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk of hospitalization and serious complications. Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact or in a poorly ventilated area with an infected person, even if that person does not have any symptoms or has not yet developed symptoms.

Precise information about the number and rates of COVID-19 by industry or occupational groups, including among critical infrastructure workers, is not available at this time. There have been multiple outbreaks in a range of workplaces, indicating that workers are at risk of acquiring or transmitting COVID-19 infection. Examples of these workplaces include places of worship, hospitals, long-term care facilities, prisons, food production, warehouses, meat processing plants, and grocery stores.

As stay-at-home orders are modified, it is essential that all possible steps be taken to ensure the safety of workers and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- ✓ physical distancing to the maximum extent possible,
- ✓ use of face coverings by workers and volunteers (where respiratory protection is not required) and congregants/visitors,
- ✓ frequent handwashing and regular cleaning and disinfection,
- ✓ training workers and volunteers on these and other elements of the COVID-19 prevention plan.

In addition, it will be critical to have in place appropriate processes to identify new cases of illness in workplaces and, when they are identified, to intervene quickly and work with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus.

PURPOSE

This document provides guidance for places of worship and providers of religious services and cultural ceremonies (referred to collectively as “places of worship”) to support a safe, clean environment for workers, interns and trainees, volunteers, scholars, and all other types of workers as well as congregants, worshippers, visitors, etc. (referred to collectively as “visitors” or “congregants”). This guidance does not obligate places of worship to resume in-person activity. Further, it is strongly recommended that places of worship continue to facilitate remote

services and other related activities for those who are vulnerable to COVID-19 including older adults and those with co-morbidities.

Even with adherence to physical distancing, convening in a congregational setting of multiple different households to practice a personal faith carries a relatively higher risk for widespread transmission of the COVID-19 virus, and may result in increased rates of infection, hospitalization, and death, especially among more vulnerable populations. In particular, activities such as singing and chanting negate the risk-reduction achieved through six feet of physical distancing.

*Places of worship must therefore discontinue singing and chanting activities and limit *indoor* attendance to 25% of building capacity or a maximum of 100 attendees, whichever is lower. Local Health Officers are advised to consider appropriate limitations on *outdoor* attendance capacities, factoring their jurisdiction's key COVID-19 health indicators. At a minimum, outdoor attendance should be limited naturally through implementation of strict physical distancing measures of a minimum of six feet between attendees from different households, in addition to other relevant protocols within this document.

This revised limitation will be subject to regular review by the California Department of Public Health in consultation with local Departments of Public Health to assess the impact of these imposed limits on public health and provide further direction as part of a phased-in restoration of activities in places of worship.

NOTE: This guidance is not intended for food preparation and service, delivery of items to those in need, childcare and daycare services, school and educational activities, in-home caregiving, counseling, office work, and other activities that places and organizations of worship may provide. Organizations that perform these activities must follow applicable guidance on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#).

The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any worker rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any existing safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA.¹ Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues. Cal/OSHA has more safety and health guidance on their Cal/OSHA Guidance on Requirements to Protect Workers from Coronavirus [webpage](#). The CDC has additional guidance [for community- and faith-based organizations](#).

Required Use of Face Coverings

On June 18, CDPH issued [Guidance on the Use of Face Coverings](#), which broadly requires the use of face coverings for both members of the public and workers in all public and workplace settings where there is a high risk of exposure.

People in California must wear face coverings when they are engaged in work,

whether at the workplace or performing work off-site, when:

- Interacting in-person with any member of the public;
- Working in any space visited by members of the public, regardless of whether anyone from the public is present at the time;
- Working in any space where food is prepared or packaged for sale or distribution to others;
- Working in or walking through common areas, such as hallways, stairways, elevators, and parking facilities;
- In any room or enclosed area where other people (except for members of the person's own household or residence) are present when unable to physically distance;
- Driving or operating any public transportation or paratransit vehicle, taxi, or private car service or ride-sharing vehicle when passengers are present. When no passengers are present, face coverings are strongly recommended.

Complete details, including all requirements and exemptions to these rules, can be found in the [guidance](#). Face coverings are strongly encouraged in other circumstances, and employers can implement additional face covering requirements in fulfilling their obligation to provide workers with a safe and healthful workplace. Employers should provide face coverings to workers or reimburse workers for the reasonable cost of obtaining them.

Employers should develop an accommodation policy for any worker who meets one of the exemptions from wearing a face covering. If a worker who would otherwise be required to wear a face covering because of frequent contact with others cannot wear one due to a medical condition, they should be provided with a non-restrictive alternative, such as a face shield with a drape attached to the bottom edge, if feasible, and if the medical condition permits it.

Businesses that are open to the public should be cognizant of the exemptions to wearing face coverings in the [CDPH Face Covering Guidance](#) and may not exclude any member of the public for not wearing a face covering if that person is complying with the [guidance](#). Businesses will need to develop policies for handling these exemptions among customers, clients, visitors, and workers.



Workplace Specific Plan

- Establish a written, workplace-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every location, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas and all work tasks, and designate a person at each workplace to implement the plan.
- Incorporate the [CDPH Face Covering Guidance](#) into the Workplace Specific Plan and include a policy for handling exemptions.
- Identify contact information for the local health department where the workplace is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among workers and congregants/visitors.
- Train and communicate with workers and worker representatives on the plan and make the plan available to workers and their representatives.
- Regularly evaluate workplaces for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
- Implement the necessary processes and protocols when a workplace has an outbreak, in accordance with [CDPH guidelines](#).
- Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected worker and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive workers and close contacts.
- Adhere to the guidelines below. Failure to do so could result in workplace illnesses that may cause operations to be temporarily closed or limited.



Topics for Worker and Volunteer Training

- Information on [COVID-19](#), how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using [CDC guidelines](#).
- The importance of not coming to work or participating in activities
 - If a worker has symptoms of COVID-19 as [described by the CDC](#),

such as a fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, OR

- If a worker was diagnosed with COVID-19 and has not yet been released from isolation, OR
- If within the past 14 days, a worker has had contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and is considered potentially infectious (i.e. still on isolation).
- To return to work after a worker receives a COVID-19 diagnosis only if 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, their symptoms have improved, and the worker has had no fevers (without the use of fever reducing medications) for the last 72 hours. A worker without symptoms who was diagnosed with COVID-19 can return to work only if 10 days have passed since the date of the first positive COVID-19 test.
- To seek medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).
- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds (or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol when workers cannot get to a sink or handwashing station, per [CDC guidelines](#)).
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
 - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
 - Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
 - Workers should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
 - Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth.
 - Face coverings must not be shared and should be washed or discarded after each shift.
- Information contained in the [CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face](#)

[Coverings](#), which mandates the circumstances in which face coverings must be worn and the exemptions, as well as any policies, work rules, and practices the employer has adopted to ensure the use of face coverings. Training should also include the employer's policies on how people who are exempted from wearing a face covering will be handled.

- Ensure all types of workers including temporary, independent contractors, and volunteer workers are also properly trained in COVID-19 prevention policies and have necessary PPE. Discuss these responsibilities ahead of time with organizations supplying temporary, contract, and/or volunteer staff.
- Information on paid leave benefits the worker may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on [government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including worker's sick leave rights under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and worker's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20 while that Order is in effect](#).



Individual Control Measures and Screening

- Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all workers at the beginning of their shift. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with workers to the extent possible.
- If requiring self-screening at home, which is an appropriate alternative to providing it at the establishment, ensure that screening was performed prior to the worker and/or volunteer leaving the home for their shift and follows [CDC guidelines](#), as described in the Topics for Worker Training section above.
- Encourage workers and congregants/visitors who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, or who have family members who are ill, to stay home.
- Employers must provide and ensure workers and volunteers use all required protective equipment, including eye protection and gloves, where necessary.
- Places of worship should consider where disposable gloves use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for workers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items. All workers and volunteers should wear gloves when handling items contaminated by body fluids.

- Workers, volunteers, etc., should not enter the home or visit someone who has tested positive for, exhibited symptoms of, or has been in contact with someone infected with COVID-19 for an appropriate waiting period as [described by CDC guidelines](#).
- Places of worship must take reasonable measures, including posting signage in strategic and highly-visible locations and in reservation confirmations, to remind congregants and visitors that they must use face coverings and practice physical distancing and should frequently wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds, use hand sanitizer, and not touch their face.
- Use social media, website, texts, email, newsletters, etc., to communicate the steps being taken to protect congregants/visitors and workers so that they are familiar with the policies (including to stay home if experiencing symptoms or are at increased risk of becoming sick, face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing and/or sanitizing, and cough etiquette), before arriving at the facility. Workers and volunteers are strongly encouraged to remind congregants/visitors of these practices with announcements during services or on welcoming guests.
- Remind congregants and visitors in advance to bring a face covering and make them available to anyone who arrives without one, if possible.
- Congregants/visitors should be screened for temperature and/or symptoms upon arrival to places of worship and asked to use hand sanitizer.



Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning of high traffic areas such as lobbies, halls, chapels, meeting rooms, offices, libraries, and study areas and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, handrails, and elevator controls. Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces including doorknobs, toilets, handwashing facilities, pulpits and podiums, donation boxes or plates, altars, and pews and seating areas.
- Establish frequent cleaning and disinfection of personal work areas such as desks and cubicles and supply the necessary cleaning products. Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the workers' job duties.
- Discourage sharing items used in worship and services (such as prayer books, cushions, prayer rugs, etc.) whenever possible and provide single-use or digital copies or ask congregants/visitors to bring personal items

instead. Avoid sharing work equipment and supplies, such as phones, office equipment, computers, etc., wherever possible. Never share PPE.

- Where such items must be shared, disinfect between shifts or uses, whichever is more frequent, including the following: shared office equipment (copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones, keyboards, staplers, etc.) and shared worship items, etc., with a cleaner appropriate for the surface.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed. Consider more frequently cleaning and disinfecting handwashing facilities that are used more often. Use signage to reinforce handwashing.
- Disinfect microphones and stands, music stands, instruments and other items on pulpits and podiums between each use. Consult equipment manufacturers to determine appropriate disinfection steps, particularly for soft, porous surfaces such as foam mufflers.
- Consider using disposable seat covers for congregants/visitors, particularly on porous surfaces or where a facility has multiple daily services. Discard and replace seat covers between each use. Provide disposable or washable covers on pillows used as seating on floors and change/wash them after each use.
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless whenever possible, at entrances and contact areas such as meeting rooms, lobbies, and elevator landings.
- When choosing disinfecting chemicals, establishments should use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide workers training on the chemical hazards, manufacturer's directions, ventilation requirements, and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers and volunteers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves or other protective equipment as required by the product instructions. Follow the [asthma-safer cleaning methods recommended by the California Department of Public Health and ensure proper ventilation](#).
- Wash religious garments and linens after each service or event, at the highest water setting possible. Ask congregants/visitors to bring their own storage bags for personal garments and shoes. Workers, congregants, and visitors should wear gloves when handling others' dirty linens, shoes, etc.

- Discontinue passing offering plates and similar items that move between people. Use alternative giving options such as secure drop boxes that do not require opening/closing and can be cleaned and disinfected. Consider implementing digital systems that allow congregants/visitors to make touch-free offerings.
- Mark walking paths between spaces designated for congregants/visitors to sit/kneel so that people do not walk where someone may touch their head to the floor.
- During meetings and services, introduce fresh outside air, for example by opening doors/windows (weather permitting) and operating ventilation systems.
- Where possible, do not clean floors by sweeping or other methods that can disperse pathogens into the air. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter wherever possible.
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in worship areas, offices, and other spaces.



Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Places of worship should continue to provide services through alternative methods (such as via internet live and/or recorded streaming, telephone, drive-in, etc.) whenever possible.
- Consider holding in-person meetings and providing in-person services outside whenever possible.
- Implement measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between workers and congregants/visitors, etc. This can include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor or pew markings or signs to indicate where people should sit and stand). Reconfigure seating and standing areas to maintain physical distancing of six feet or more between congregants/visitors from different households. Consider limiting seating to alternate rows. Members of the same household may be seated together but should maintain at least six feet of distance from other households.
- Consider dedicating workers to help people maintain distances during activities.
- Shorten services to limit the length of time congregants/visitors spend at facilities whenever possible. This could include limiting speeches, asking congregants/visitors to put on garments at home before arrival, etc.

- Close places of worship for visitation outside of scheduled services, meetings, etc., whenever possible.
- Consider implementing a reservation system to limit the number of congregants/visitors attending facilities at a time. This can include the use of digital platforms or other types of tools.
- Encourage congregants/visitors to meet with the same group, particularly when services meet frequently and/or require a certain number of people to be present. This can reduce the spread of transmission by minimizing the number of different individuals who come into close contact with each other.
- Consider offering additional meeting times (per day or per week) so that fewer guests attend meetings and services at one time. Clean meeting areas between each use as described in this guidance.
- Discontinue large gatherings that encourage congregants/visitors to travel and break physical distances during activities, such as concerts, large holiday and life event celebrations and remembrances.
- Children should remain in the care of those in their household unit and not interact with children of other parties at any time while visiting facilities. Close play areas and discontinue activities and services for children where physical distancing of at least six feet cannot be maintained.
- Encourage congregants/visitors to physically distance themselves from others outside their household, avoid touching surfaces, and to leave the facility if they do not feel well.
- Consider limiting touching for religious and/or cultural purposes, such as holding hands, to members of the same household.
- Dedicate workers to direct guests to meeting rooms upon entry to places of worship rather than congregating in lobbies or common areas. Consider using ushers to help people find places to sit and stand that are at least six feet apart from other guests/household groups. Ask congregants/visitors to arrive and leave in a single group to minimize crossflow of people. Welcome and dismiss congregants/visitors from altars, podiums, meeting rooms, etc. in an orderly way to maintain physical distancing and minimize crossflow of traffic, to the extent possible.
- Prop or hold doors open during peak periods when congregants/visitors are entering and exiting facilities, if possible and in accordance with security and safety protocols.
- Close or restrict common areas, such as break rooms, kitchenettes, foyers,

etc. where people are likely to congregate and interact. Consider installing barriers or increase physical distance between tables/seating when there is continued use of these areas.

- Remove from service or find low-community touch alternatives for communal/religious water containers such as fonts, sinks, and vessels. Empty and change water between uses. Where there is a possibility of contaminant splash, workers, congregants, visitors, etc., are strongly encouraged to use equipment to protect the eyes, nose, and mouth using a combination of face coverings, protective glasses, and/or face shields. Reusable protective equipment such as shields and glasses should be properly disinfected between uses.
- When washing is a required activity, modify practices whenever possible to limit splashing and the need to clean and disinfect washing facilities. Encourage necessary washing to be performed at home prior to entering a facility, if possible.
- Reconfigure podiums and speaker areas, office spaces, meeting rooms, conference rooms, etc., to allow for at least six feet between people.
- Establish directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic, if possible, and designate separate routes for entry and exit into meeting rooms, offices, etc., to help maintain physical distancing and lessen the instances of people closely passing each other.
- Limit the number of individuals riding in an elevator at a time. Post signage regarding these policies.
- Utilize practices, when feasible and necessary, to limit the number of workers and congregants/visitors in office, meeting spaces, etc., at one time. This may include scheduling (e.g. staggering start/end times), establishing alternating days for onsite reporting, returning to places of worship in phases, or continued use of telework when feasible.
- Consider offering workers and volunteers who request modified duties options that minimize their contact with congregants/visitors and other workers (e.g., office duties rather than working as an usher or managing administrative needs through telework).
- Stagger worker breaks, in compliance with wage and hour regulations, to maintain physical distancing protocols.
- Discontinue nonessential travel and encourage distance meetings via phone and internet.
- Close self-service item selection such as pamphlet displays and bookshelves and provide these items to congregants/visitors individually as necessary. Consider delivering items and information electronically.

- Consider limiting the number of people that use the restroom at one time to allow for physical distancing.
- Discourage workers, congregants, visitors, etc., from engaging in handshakes, hugs, and similar greetings that break physical distance. Take reasonable measures to remind people to wave or use other greetings.
- Reconfigure parking lots to limit congregation points and ensure proper separation (e.g., closing every other space). If performing drive-in services, ensure vehicle windows and doors are closed if six feet of distance is not possible between vehicles.
- Continue to support non-in person attendance of services and other related activities by those who are vulnerable to COVID-19 including older adults and those with co-morbidities.



Considerations for Places of Worship

- Discontinue offering self-service food and beverages. Do not hold potlucks or similar family-style eating and drinking events that increase the risk of cross contamination. If food and beverages must be served, provide items in single-serve, disposable containers whenever possible. Workers or volunteers serving food should wash hands frequently and wear disposable gloves.
- Discontinue singing (in rehearsals, services, etc.), chanting, and other practices and performances where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets. Consider practicing these activities through alternative methods (such as internet streaming) that ensure individual congregation members perform these activities separately in their own homes.
- Consider modifying practices that are specific to particular faith traditions that might encourage the spread of COVID-19. Examples are discontinuing kissing of ritual objects, allowing rites to be performed by fewer people, avoiding the use of a common cup, offering communion in the hand instead of on the tongue, providing pre-packed communion items on chairs prior to service, etc., in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).



Considerations for Funerals

- Consider reduced visitor capacity and stagger visitation times at funerals, wakes, etc., if possible. Follow all cleaning and disinfection measures as described in this guidance. Whenever possible, remind visitors to maintain physical distance from each other, from workers and volunteers, and from the deceased.
- Consider modifying religious or cultural practices when washing or shrouding bodies of those who have died from COVID-19, in accordance with guidance from [CDPH](#) and the [CDC](#). If washing the body or shrouding are important religious or cultural practices, work with funeral home staff and families to reduce exposure as much as possible. All people participating in these activities must wear disposable gloves and if there will be splashing of fluids, people must use additional protective equipment including protection for the eyes, nose, and mouth, such as face shields.
- Consult and comply with local guidance regarding limits on gathering sizes, travel, holding funerals for those who died from COVID-19, etc.
- Consider other recommendations and modifications of services related to places of worship outlined above, as applicable for funeral services.

¹Additional requirements must be considered for vulnerable populations. Places of worship must comply with all [Cal/OSHA](#) standards and be prepared to adhere to its guidance as well as guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#). Additionally, places of worship must be prepared to alter their operations as those guidelines change.

