Be Safe. Places of Worship

Be Safe Chicago- City of Chicago
Be Safe.
Places of Worship
Be Safe. Places of Worship
What's in this guide?

Cautiously reopening Chicago requires:

**Healthy interactions**
- Social distancing
  - Limitations on physical distance to other individuals
- Gathering size
  - Limitations on gatherings of individuals
- Protective gear
  - Use of protective gear by individuals
- Hygiene requirements
  - Ensuring hygienic interactions (e.g., hand washing)

**Safe spaces and conditions**
- Entry access
  - Entry/exit condition for access to space
- Cleaning standards
  - Actions taken to disinfect space
- Visual guidance
  - Hygiene resources and guidance posted in space
- Workplace conditions
  - Evaluation of foot traffic, ventilation, etc.

**Operational resilience and monitoring**
- Flexible models
  - Flexibility with sick leave, remote work (when possible)
- Operational resiliency
  - Support for operational flexibility (e.g., multiple shifts)
- Travel guidelines
  - Restriction of movement of people between locations
- Testing / tracking
  - Facilitation of testing and tracking

- Recommended guidance -
Be Safe. Places of Worship
Illustrative example

Illustrative example

CAUTIOUSLY REOPEN (Phase III)

What may be different?

1. Rooms may have no more than 50 as long as distancing is followed
2. Stagger ingress and egress times to avoid checkpoint crowding
3. Employees frequently disinfect facilities
4. Sanitation stations available throughout facilities
5. All individuals required to wear facial coverings
6. Seating spread out by 6 ft to promote distancing
7. Visual signage posted throughout facilities regarding hygiene, social distancing, proper PPE and more

- Recommended guidance -
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Healthy interactions

Ensure >6 ft. between individuals

- Except for members of the same household, adhere to 6 ft. social distancing at all times
- Seat members of the same household together; children must remain with their parents/guardians at all times
- Demarcate 6 ft. distancing between seating
- Areas where individuals queue should be clearly marked for 6 ft. distancing (e.g., entry ways)
- Encourage impermeable barriers where 6 ft. social distancing is not possible (e.g., entry ways)
- Dedicate staff to enforce social distancing for all services or gatherings (recommend one usher/staff member for every 10 participants)
- No handshaking and hugging

Rooms limited to 25% capacity, and not to exceed 50 people

- Require that
  - No room exceeds 25% capacity (e.g., in one large sanctuary), or
  - No more than 50 people per room, whichever is fewer
- If multiple enclosed rooms exist within a place of worship, each room is subject to capacity limits
- Stagger gatherings with different start/stop times (and if possible, different entrances and exits)
- No advertising of any event of more than 50 people

- Recommended guidance -

CAUTIOUSLY REOPEN (Phase III)
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Healthy interactions

Gathering size req’s

Encourage consistent cohorts of individuals, and no cross socialization of people, as much as possible

- Encourage consistent groups of individuals meeting at designated times each week to limit exposure risks between groups
- No events with cross socialization across multiple places of worship
- Where possible, encourage batched groups of individuals in separate rooms (e.g., 5 groups of 10 prayer groups in separate enclosed rooms, rather than one large gathering of 50 in the same room)

Consider alternative approaches to limit gathering size; for example,

- Multiple gatherings of 10 people in the same large room, separated by at least 6 ft., as long as such gatherings do not exceed 50 people
- Individual gatherings for distinct events (e.g., prayer circles, small gathering sermons) with different start/stop times

Protective gear req’s

Require face coverings for all

- In any outdoor and indoor common spaces, face coverings must be worn over nose and mouth for all individuals above the age of 2 (exceptions can be made for people with medical conditions or disabilities that prevent them from safely wearing a face covering)
- Prohibit entry to a person who refuses to wear a face covering for non-medical reasons; if available, masks can be provided upon entry

- Recommended guidance -
Where possible, provide hand sanitizer at ingress/egress points; no shared items

- Provide sanitation station(s) at a minimum at the entrance of the building; if available, make stations easily accessible throughout the facilities
- Train all staff/volunteers (e.g., Ushers, Deacons) on new cleaning policies and procedures prior to opening
- Communicate new operating procedures to staff and general public

Prohibit shared items (e.g., food, drink, clothing)

- No shared edible products (including drinks) of any kind (e.g., no shared communion) and no self-served food; distribution of prepackaged communion or sacraments allowed
- No social dinners or shared meals
- Places of worship running food pantries or other food distribution may continue operations
- No reusable, shared, or communal items (i.e., anything that would be passed or touched by more than one person); no sharing of microphones
- Where possible, provide programs, hymnals, bulletins, and prayer books in formats other than paper (e.g., projected on a wall, offered online to view from personal handheld devices)
- Modify collection of any financial contributions to eliminate shared contribution trays and baskets; consider no-touch methods, and encourage contributions through mail or electronic means

- Recommended guidance -
Be Safe. Places of Worship
Safe spaces and working conditions

CAUTIOUSLY REOPEN (Phase III)

Require health checks upon entry

- Prior to leaving home, all individuals encouraged to self-identify symptoms and stay at home if symptomatic
- Prior to entering establishment, employees self-screen (e.g., questionnaire - see appendix) to ensure no symptoms of COVID-19
- Require health checks for all who enter the building, which may include symptoms and/or temperature checks; persons who display signs of illness or with a fever of 100 degree Fahrenheit or above must not be permitted on premises

Monitor ingress/egress and ensure social distancing

- Monitor ingress/egress points to regulate the flow of traffic
- Leave doors open where possible during ingress/egress, or have ushers open and close doors as needed
- Encourage outdoor security to direct people at entrances and exits to minimize contact
- After entry, individuals immediately proceed to seats to avoid congregating
- Prohibit additional people from entering if capacity is met or 6 ft. distancing is no longer possible
- Consider dismissing individual gatherings in an orderly way to ensure social distancing

*Recommended guidance*
Take special precautions for vulnerable populations

- Restrict entry of any vulnerable populations (e.g., underlying medical conditions, 60+) until the risk is significantly reduced
- When vulnerable populations do return to place of worship, encourage entry before and exit after all other members
- If possible, provide vulnerable populations with separate entrances and exits
- Consider partitioning a portion of the place of worship dedicated to vulnerable populations
- If available, encourage radio and digital sessions for vulnerable populations, with aid provided by designated church staff or members
Be Safe. Places of Worship
Safe spaces and working conditions

CAUTIOUSLY REOPEN (Phase III)

Clean twice daily, and more frequently for high-traffic areas

- Clean entire place of worship during day and overnight, including pews and carpeting
- Increase cleaning frequency in public areas, focusing on high contact surfaces (e.g., door handles, counter tops, public restrooms, light switches, microphones) and high traffic areas (e.g., bathrooms)
- Clean pulpit and podiums at the end of each service (and any table-top surfaces in between each use)
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize the facility between gatherings for any place of worship with multiple services
- Sanitize microphones and any other shared instruments (e.g., keyboards, drums) before and after each worship service

Provide signage at any entry/exit points and any other high-traffic common areas

- Post visual guidance to promote social distancing, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and using non-contact greetings
- Provide visual guidance to direct traffic follow
- Post signage at entrances, including legal language of entering at own risk

Recommended guidance -
Optimize seating arrangement to ensure social distancing

- Rearrange seating to allow for 6 ft distancing (may include blocking rows in places with fixed seating)
- Require visual markings on seating to delineate 6 ft separation, as well as signage to indicate the maximum number of individuals permitted per row
- Consider removing, disabling, or spacing furniture in high density spaces (e.g., lobby); if not possible, furniture must be cleaned in between each use

Modify shared spaces and offerings of activities to minimize contact between individuals

- Close childcare programming during time of gatherings (not including daycare in a community center attached to the place of worship)
- Close common areas where social distancing cannot be maintained
- Where possible, promote ventilation of enclosed spaces; consider opening windows and doors to allow airflow

Adjust singing or performances to ensure social distancing and hygienic interactions

- Permit single singers or duos who can maintain 10 ft distancing; no choirs of more than 2 people
- Encourage virtual singing via media outlets
- Require face coverings for "praise teams," except for singing (when appropriately distanced)
Limit in-person interactions, where possible

- Minimize in person interactions (e.g., consider utilizing online trainings / virtual staff meetings)
- Continue offering online services (e.g., Facebook Live, Zoom, conference calls), where possible

Recommend alternative types of services (e.g., outdoor or drive in)

- Where possible, hold services outdoors; determine maximum attendance based on space required to ensure appropriate social distancing
- A gathering of people inside parked cars, trucks, or other enclosed motor vehicles – organized as a drive in service/gathering - shall not constitute a gathering that must adhere to the rules above so long as the following conditions are met:
  1. All people remain inside the vehicle at all times (no outdoor seating of any kind including the back of a pickup truck)
  2. An empty parking space remains between each parked car, and
  3. No exchange of materials takes place between leaders and attendees

Develop flexible work models for staff

- Ensure employees that can work from home continue to do so
- Ensure that staff who are sick stay home
- Minimize overlap of employee shifts

- Recommended guidance -
Limit travel by staff

- Minimize employees travel between places of worship with multiple locations

Follow CDPH and CDC guidance for testing and tracing protocols

- If employee does contract COVID-19, they must follow all CDC guidelines before returning to work
- If an employee is identified as being COVID-19 positive by testing, cleaning and disinfecting must be performed according to CDC guidelines
- Any employee who has had close contact with co-worker or any other person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 should self quarantine according to CDC guidelines
- If a place of worship becomes aware of 2 or more cases possibly associated with an establishment over a 14 day period, employers are required to report cases to CDPH
- Follow all other CDPH guidance set forth and comply with CDPH recommendations in response to a workplace outbreak
- For all individuals entering place of worship, keep log of attendance for at least 60 days
**Glossary**

**Gathering:** A group of individuals outside a single household who are part of a spontaneous or panned event and are interacting within six feet of one another for more than ten minutes.

**Handwashing:** The act of thoroughly cleaning one’s hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using a disinfectant capable of eliminating the virus that causes COVID-19.

**Social distancing:** The physical spacing of at least six feet between individuals, or groups of individuals.

**PPE:** Personal protective equipment (e.g., face coverings, goggles, face shields); requirements vary based on industry and specific circumstances.

**Self-screening:** A protocol by which an employee answers questions at the start of a shift. Subject to the guidance of the Commissioner of Health, the questions may include:

- Have you had a body temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit or have you used a fever reducer in the previous 24 hours to treat a body temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit?
- Do you have a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Do you have a new or worsening sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Do you have new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Have you recently developed a complete loss of smell or taste?
National resources for further guidance

**General workplace guidance**


**Places of Worship guidance**


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- Recommended guidance -