



SAFER AT HOME: PHASE ONE GUIDELINES FOR ALL BUSINESS SECTORS

PHYSICAL DISTANCING BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Establish policies and practices for physical distancing between co-workers and between members of the public. (See sector-specific guidelines below for more detailed information on public engagement.)
- ✓ Provide clear communication and signage for physical distancing in areas where individuals may congregate, especially at entrances, in seating areas, and in check-out lines.
- ✓ Limit the occupancy of physical spaces to ensure that adequate physical distancing may be maintained. (See sector-specific guidelines for more detailed information.)
- ✓ Encourage telework whenever possible.
- ✓ For those businesses where telework is not feasible, temporarily move or stagger workstations to ensure six feet of separation between co-workers and between members of the public.
- ✓ Where possible, employees and customers should utilize face coverings. (See [CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings guidance](#) for more detailed information). Where six feet of physical distance is not possible in a given business setting, employers should provide face covering to employees, such as utilizing the [CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings guidance](#).
- ✓ Limit in-person work-related gatherings, including conferences, trade shows, and trainings.
- ✓ When in-person meetings need to occur, keep meetings as short as possible, limit the number of employees in attendance, and use physical distancing practices.

ENHANCED CLEANING AND DISINFECTION BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of high contact areas and hard surfaces, including check out stations and payment pads, store entrance push/pull pads, door knobs/handles, dining tables/chairs, light switches, handrails, restrooms, floors, and equipment. Follow [CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection](#) and use an [EPA-approved disinfectant to clean](#). For high contact areas, routinely disinfect surfaces at least every 2 hours. Certain surfaces and objects in public spaces, such as shopping carts and point of sale keypads, should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.
- ✓ To the extent tools or equipment must be shared, provide access to and instruct workers to use an [EPA-approved disinfectant](#) to clean items before and after use.
- ✓ Provide a place for employees and customers to wash hands with soap and water, or provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol. (See sector-specific guidelines for more detailed information.)
- ✓ When developing staff schedules, implement additional short breaks to increase the frequency with which staff can wash hands with soap and water. Alternatively, consider providing alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol so that workers can frequently sanitize their hands.
- ✓ Provide best hygiene practices to employees on a regular basis, including washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and practicing respiratory etiquette protocols. A CDC training video is available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/videos.html>.

ENHANCED WORKPLACE SAFETY BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ Prior to a shift and on days employees are scheduled to work, employers should screen employees prior to starting work. Employees should also self-monitor their symptoms by self-taking of temperature to check for fever and utilizing the questions provided in the [VDH Interim Guidance for COVID -19 Daily Screening of Employees](#) before reporting to work. For employers with established occupational health programs, employers can consider measuring temperature and assessing symptoms of employees prior to starting work/before each shift. CDC considers a person to have a fever when he or she has a measured temperature of 100.4° F (38° C) or greater, feels warm to the touch, or gives a history of feeling feverish.

- ✓ Implement practices such as those described in [VDH Interim Guidance for COVID - 19 Daily Screening of Employees](#) for examples of a screening questionnaire. A sample symptom monitoring log is available in this Interim Guidance.
- ✓ Instruct employees who are sick to stay at home and not report to work. If an employee becomes ill or presents signs of illness, follow [CDC What to Do if You Are Sick guidance](#). Employers should post signage in the common languages of the employees telling employees not to come to work when sick.
- ✓ Develop or adopt flexible sick leave policies to ensure that sick employees do not report to work. Policies should allow employees to stay home if they are sick with COVID-19, if they need to self-quarantine due to exposure, and if they need to care for a sick family member. Employers should recommend that employees follow [CDC guidance on If You Are Sick or Caring For Someone](#).
- ✓ Some employees are at [higher risk for severe illness](#) from COVID-19. These vulnerable employees include individuals over age 65 and those with underlying medical conditions. Vulnerable employees should be encouraged to self-identify and employers should take particular care to reduce their risk of exposure, while making sure to be compliant with relevant Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) regulations.
 1. Consider offering vulnerable employees duties that minimize their contact with customers and other employees (e.g., restocking shelves rather than working as a cashier), if agreed to by the employee.
 2. Protect employees at [higher risk for severe illness](#) by supporting and encouraging options to telework.
 3. If implementing health checks, conduct them safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Confidentiality should be respected.
 4. Other information on civil rights protections for workers related to COVID-19 is available [here](#).
- ✓ Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Employees should know who this person is and how to contact them.

- ✓ Implement staggered shifts for both work periods and break periods. Consider cohort scheduling where groups of employees only work with employees in their group.
- ✓ Limit the number of employees in break rooms and stagger breaks to discourage gatherings.
- ✓ Use messaging boards or digital messaging for pre-shift meeting information.
- ✓ If the building has not been occupied for the last 7 days, there are additional public health considerations that should be considered, such as taking measures to ensure the [safety of your building water system](#). However, it is not necessary to clean ventilation systems other than routine maintenance as part of reducing the risk of coronavirus transmission.
- ✓ Establish a relationship with your local health department and know who to contact for questions.

For healthcare facilities, additional guidance is provided on [CDC's Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Health-Care Facilities](#).

RESOURCES TO PRINT AND DISPLAY:

[CDC Symptoms English](#)

[Spanish CDC Symptoms](#)

[CDC Printable Flyer English](#)

[CDC Printable Flyer Spanish](#)

[CDC Printable Flyer Chinese](#)

[CDC Printable Flyer Korean](#)

[CDC Printable Flyer Vietnamese](#)

[FDA information](#)

[What Grocery Store and Food Retail Workers Need to Know about COVID-19](#)

[CDC Re-Opening America Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)

[CDC What You Need to Know About Handwashing VIDEO](#)

SAFER AT HOME: PHASE ONE
RELIGIOUS SERVICES

SCOPE: Religious Services.

PHASE 1: Establishments must either implement the following mandatory requirements or close.

Given the public health implications of the 2020 global pandemic, the Commonwealth’s diverse faith community quickly adjusted and powerfully mobilized in response to this unprecedented crisis.

Therefore, it is important that the diverse faith communities in Virginia stay informed with local, state, and national officials using the links below:

CDC’s main COVID-19 Web page: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Virginia Department of Health COVID-19 Web page: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

Virginia Governor’s COVID-19 Web page: <https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS:

Religious services must strictly adhere to the physical distancing guidelines, enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices, and enhanced workplace safety practices provided in the “Guidelines for All Business Sectors” document. They must also adhere to the following additional requirements:

- ✓ Places of worship must limit occupancy of religious services to no more than 50% of the lowest occupancy load on the certificate of occupancy of the room or facility in which the religious services are conducted.
- ✓ Individuals attending religious services must be seated at least six feet apart at all times and must practice physical distancing at all times. Family members, as defined in Executive Order 61, Order of Public Health Emergency Three, section B, paragraph 2 b, may be seated together. Mark seating in six-foot increments.

- ✓ It is recommended that persons attending religious services be encouraged to wear face coverings over their nose and mouth at all times (See [CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings guidance](#) for more detailed information.).
- ✓ No items must be passed to or between attendees.
- ✓ Any items used to distribute food or beverages must be disposable and used only once and discarded.
- ✓ A thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces must be conducted prior to and following any religious service.
- ✓ Shared ritual garments should be avoided and all garments used in the religious service should be properly washed after each use.
- ✓ Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19, or known exposure to a COVID-19 case in the prior 14 days, is permitted in the establishment.
- ✓ Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding social distancing, gatherings, options for high risk individuals, and staying home if sick (samples at the bottom of this document).
- ✓ If any place of worship cannot adhere to the above requirements, it must not conduct in-person services. Other suggested guidance for faith communities and funeral directors can be found below.

SUGGESTED BEST PRACTICES:

- ✓ In addition to the requirements provided above, faith communities are encouraged to utilize the following best practices to the extent they are feasible:
- ✓ Designate a health coordinator and/or health equity team who will be responsible for COVID-19 planning and preparation for your place of worship.
- ✓ *For the **building**:*
 - Conduct thorough [cleaning](#) before and between services.
 - Use separate doors to enter and exit the establishment when possible.
 - Allow interior doors to remain open to limit touching of door handles.

- Provide sanitizing stations throughout the building, particularly at entry and exit points.
 - Consider installing touchless door entry systems or providing single-use barriers (i.e., paper towels) for use in touching door and sink handles in bathroom facilities.
 - Use messaging boards or digital messaging and social media for announcements to eliminate use of bulletins and handouts.
- ✓ *For weekly **religious services**:*
- Members are safer at home. Continue to provide and encourage use of online streaming and drive-in options for people who can utilize these options. No place of worship should feel obligated to return to in-person worship before they are ready to do so.
 - Consider holding multiple services, with time for thorough cleaning in between each service, to allow for greater distancing during services.
 - Suspend the choir as part of services.
 - Consider shorter services to avoid the need for people to use bathroom facilities.
 - Consider limiting or suspending youth services until a safer time.
 - Consider holding small group or separate services for [senior citizens and other high-risk populations](#).
 - Consider making this the first service of the week, after thorough cleaning and disinfection of facilities have been performed.
 - Ensure the use of face coverings and physical distancing is maintained between individuals at this service.
 - Ensure social distancing in parking lots or common areas.
- ✓ Consider discontinuing use of common items (e.g., microphones, books, hymnals, scriptural texts) that may be shared between people and are difficult to clean. Consider assigning religious books to a family or individual that they can bring to each service, or use a projector for the display of sacred texts, scriptures, and songs.

- ✓ No items should be passed throughout the membership or congregation (i.e. or collections baskets).
- ✓ When oils, water, ashes, or other materials are applied to a person's forehead, self-application should be used, to the extent possible.
- ✓ Discontinue shared meals and other activities where people may gather in groups (e.g., limit or suspend coffee stations, shared food, meet and greet time before and after services etc.), with the exception of essential food services for low-income residents.
- ✓ *Possible methods for religious services:*
 1. **Drive-in/parking lot church:** This is the safer model of religious service where social distancing may be maintained.
 2. **Sign-up worship services:** This will limit the number of live worship services. Ask members, visitors, or guests to sign up for one live service per month, or every other week (in Phase 1). If needed, members can take turns between online and in-person worship services during this interim time. Allow space for impromptu visitors by registering fewer people (for each worship or religious service) than the maximum allowed per the occupancy restrictions.
 3. **Multiple gatherings during the week:** A place of worship may divide the number of congregants by the maximum occupancy level and offer worship services at that level. Consider adding online services, multiple services on one day, or alternative services during the week and/or on Saturdays and Sundays.
 4. **Utilize multiple methods:** As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, most places of worship lost the ability to gather in-person, but many gained a stronger online presence. Consider nurturing both aspects for at-risk individuals, as well as for the increased capacity to reach and serve those outside of the walls of the faith organization.
 5. **Adult-only services:** This method asks parents of young children to alternate worship attendance (naturally reducing attendance, as one parent stays home with children).
 6. **Online-only:** Take this approach if you are in a high-risk area, your place of worship is not yet prepared with the conditions outlined in the state guidelines for

opening, you or a member of your family has COVID-19 symptoms, or the governing authorities have requested additional measures in the interest of public health.

COMMUNICATION RESOURCES:

Members and leaders of the diverse faith communities and funeral homes around the Commonwealth can receive a signage tool-kit and register to receive updated information from the Governor’s Office of Diversity and Partners in Prayer and Prevention from the Virginia Department of Health by contacting DEIDirector@governor.virginia.gov or OHE@vdh.virginia.gov

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