

# Mass Gathering Reopening Response



- **Create a plan**

Make a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan which should be made available for review at company headquarters or work site.

- **Screen employees DAILY for COVID-19 symptoms**

A Sample Employee Screening Checklist is included in the business toolkit for your convenience.

- **Provide visible guidance of 6-ft physical distancing**

Guidance included in this packet about Social Distancing and how to establish visual distance markings in your facility for workers, clients, patrons, and vendors.

- **Limit capacity to comply with 6-ft social distancing**

Capacity should be limited based on the size of your facility to maintain appropriate social distancing requirements.

- **Make hand-washing and hand-sanitizing stations available and accessible**

Also, do not continue the use of hand dryers

- **Disinfect surfaces, equipment, and discourage sharing of items.**

- **Provide masks and allow employees to wear PPE**

- **Provide training for employees regarding COVID-19**

- **[The Partnership Center- COVID-19 Preventative Practices and FAQs](#)**

# Public Health Guidance for Mass Gathering Areas

## Libraries | Places of Worship | Community Centers



### Conduct Risk Assessment

**Establish critical protective guidelines. Consider the following questions:**

- Are there locations where employees routinely congregate?
- Are tools and equipment frequently shared by multiple employees?
- Does customer flow allow for social distancing measures?
- Where are areas in your business that would not allow customers and staff to properly distance?
- Who are your high risk employees?
- Is your business actively engaged in activities that promote disease transmission?
- Does your business have existing cleaning and disinfecting procedures?
- How quickly can you communicate with employees?
- Are communication resources needed in multiple languages?

### Physical Distancing

**Establish policies and procedures for social distancing. Consider the following:**

- Implement flexible worksites (e.g., telework), work hours (staggered shifts), and meeting and travel options (e.g. use video-/tele-conferencing for meetings, postpone non-essential meetings or events; travel separately).
- Staff should be included in facility risk assessments, especially in decision about how they do their own work.
- Facilities should participate in community conversation and coordinate with the local public health department to ensure their plans and procedures reflect the best practices adopted in the community.
- Deliver services remotely (e.g., phone, video, web) when possible.
- Deliver products through curbside pick-up or delivery when possible.
- Limit the number of people in elevators, bathroom, meeting spaces, and other common spaces; consider reconfiguring office spaces, large gathering spaces, and environment.
- Consider canceling, adjusting, or postponing large meetings or gathering that can only occur in-person.
- When video-/tele-conferencing is not possible, hold meetings in open, well-ventilated spaces where distancing is possible.
- Increase physical space – especially in waiting rooms, large gathering halls, and meeting rooms.
  - Libraries
    - Most employees who can do so should continue to work from home.
    - Libraries should continue to emphasize digital media and virtual experiences.
    - Limited access to physical objects like books and tools could be handled through a no-touch curbside service.
    - Staff work spaces must be assessed and reconfigured so staff in the building can socially distance.
    - Allowing access to actual library space will need to be implemented in phases as directed by social distancing requirement per Governor's orders.

# Public Health Guidance for Mass Gathering Areas (continued)

## Physical Distancing (continued)

**Establish policies and procedures for social distancing. Consider the following:**

- Places of Worship
  - Allowing access to in-person services and gatherings will need to be implemented in phases as directed by social distancing requirements (group gathering requirements) per Governor's orders.
  - High risk populations should not attend in-person services during early re-entry phase. These populations can receive pastoral care from persons trained in COVID-19 safety.
- Community Centers
  - Allowing access to centers will need to be implemented in phases as directed by social distancing requirements (group gathering requirements) per Governor's orders.
  - Non-essential activities such as in-person classes and games should be cancelled; continue to expand virtual opportunities.
  - Essential activities, such as nutrition programs, can be offered in a safe manner in partnership with public health.
  - Once restrictions are lifted, prioritize essential programming and offer in small group settings.



## Engineering & Environmental Controls

**Improve engineering controls and perform routine environmental cleaning.**

**Consider the following:**

- Increase ventilation rates and percentage of outdoor air that circulates into the system.
- Support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene for employees and visitors:
  - Provide tissues, no-touch disposal receptacles, and soap and water in the center (if not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol). Ensure adequate supplies are maintained and place hand sanitizers in multiple locations.
  - Place posters that encourage hand hygiene to help stop the spread of COVID-19 at the entrance of your building and in other areas where they are likely to be seen.
  - Discourage handshaking – encourage the use of other non-contact methods of greeting.
  - Direct employees to visit CDC website for information on coughing and sneezing etiquette and handwashing.
- Perform routine environmental cleaning and disinfection.
  - Routinely disinfect all frequently touched surfaces at least daily. Provide disinfectant wipes to wipe down keyboards, electronics, remote controls, etc.
  - For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Discourage workers from using co-workers' phones, desks, offices, or other office tools and equipment, when possible. If they must use, provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (including doorknobs, remote controls, etc.) can be wiped down by between each use.

# Public Health Guidance for Mass Gathering Areas (continued)



## Engineering & Environmental Controls (continued)

**Improve engineering controls and perform routine environmental cleaning.**

**Consider the following:**

- Perform enhanced cleaning and disinfection after suspected cases of COVID-19 have been in the center. Close off areas used by the sick person, open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation, and wait up to 24 hours or as long as possible before cleaning to allow for respiratory droplets settle before cleaning and disinfecting.
- If curbside services are selected, patrons should remain in the vehicles and staff should remove and place materials in their trunk/back seat.
  - Libraries
    - If physical objects are being checked-out through curbside services, consideration should be given to the kinds of material and whether any could harbor COVID-19. If physical objects are being checked out within the facility, install physical barriers (plexiglass or plastic window) in locations where exchanges may occur with customers.
    - Decontamination procedures or timeframes should be developed with assistance through CDC website.
    - Disable public WiFi to curb patrons gathering outside building.
  - Places of Worship
    - Designate a flow of traffic so worshippers can move about with minimal contact.
    - Avoid practices which could spread COVID-19 such as 'passing the plate'.
    - Alter rituals that formerly required contact so they can be practiced with social distancing.
  - Community Centers
    - Designate a flow of traffic so people can move about with minimal contact.
    - Avoid practices which risk spreading COVID such as games that require touching objects (e.g., balls).



## Administrative Controls

**Establish administrative controls while employees and visitors are onsite.**

**Consider the following:**

- Identify a workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 issues and their impact at the workplace.
  - Implement daily health and temperature screenings for employees upon arriving to work.
  - Provide education and training on new processes, COVID-19, and the use of PPE while in the building.
- Review Human Resource policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with both public health recommendations and existing state and federal workplace laws.
  - Implement flexible sick leave and supportive policies and practices.
  - Ensure that sick leave policies are flexible and consistent with public health guidance and provide employee training on new policies. If sick leave is not a benefit, it is recommended that employers draft a non-punitive emergency sick leave policy.
  - Maintain flexible policies that permit employees to stay home to care for a sick family member or take care of children due to school/daycare closures.

# Public Health Guidance for Mass Gathering Areas (continued)



## **Administrative Controls (continued)**

**Establish administrative controls while employees and visitors are onsite.**

**Consider the following:**

- Review Human Resource policies to make sure that policies and practices are consistent with public health recommendations and are consistent with existing state and federal workplace laws (continued).
  - Employers should not require a positive COVID-19 test result or a healthcare provider's note for employees who are sick to validate their illness, qualify for sick leave, or to return to work.
  - Connect employees to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources and community resources as needed. Employees may need additional social, behavioral, and other services for mental health support.
  - Consider temporarily assigning employees at high risk for COVID-19 to duties that do not involve close contact with the public.
- Assess essential functions and the reliance that the community has on your services/products.
  - Determine how you will operate if absenteeism spikes from increases in sick employees, those who stay home to care for sick family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children. Plan to monitor and respond to absenteeism in the workplace. Implement plans to continue your essential business functions. Cross-train employees to perform essential functions so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent.
- Messaging should be coordinated with the facility's National and State associations to ensure uniformity and accuracy, and should also reflect the most current State and CDC public health guidance.
- Employees who work with small groups within facilities that begin to reopen should be trained in practicing social distancing.
- Establish a procedures for identifying people who are symptomatic; if they are identified, they should be masked and isolated until they can leave the facility.



## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

**Require the appropriate type of PPE for employees and customers.**

**Consider the following:**

- Cloth face coverings should be worn; rather than wearing gloves, hands should be washed frequently.
- Consider requiring patrons to wear cloth face coverings upon entry. Keep in mind some customers may not be able to wear face coverings due to medical conditions. For this reason, be mindful of discriminatory behavior from staff or customers.

# FAQs for Administrators and Leaders at Community- and Faith-Based Organizations

## Get Prepared

### Q. What steps should my organization take to prepare?

A. To help your organization prepare for the possible spread of [COVID-19](#), ensure your emergency operations plan includes [key COVID-19 prevention strategies](#) and covers groups at [increased risk for severe illness](#). This includes, but is not limited to, older adults and people of any age with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes.

Be sure all staff, volunteers, and members are familiar with your emergency operations plan. Ensure you know how to contact them with information and updates (such as through text message and websites). Alert local public health officials about large increases in staff or regular member absenteeism, particularly if absences appear due to respiratory illnesses (such as, the common cold and the flu, which have [symptoms](#) similar to COVID-19 (fever, cough, and difficulty breathing). Read [CDC's guidance](#) to learn more about how to get your community- or faith-based organization ready for COVID-19. CDC also has [guidance](#) that covers additional strategies to protect your staff.

### Q. How can my organization lower the chance that staff and members will get sick?

A. The best way to prevent COVID-19 is to avoid being exposed to the virus. Start by encouraging your staff and members to use [everyday preventive actions](#) (such as washing hands often, avoiding close contact with people, and covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of the elbow). Be sure you have supplies on hand (such as soap, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, tissues, trash baskets) for your staff, volunteers, and those you serve. CDC has posters with messages you can post in your facility for staff about:

- [Staying home when sick](#); and
- How to [avoid spreading germs at work](#).

CDC also has information for members, including:

- [Health promotion materials](#);
- Information on [proper handwashing technique](#); and
- [Tips for families to help children develop good handwashing habits](#).

To help limit the spread of the virus, you should also develop [flexible sick-leave and telework policies](#) so that staff (and volunteers) can stay home when they are sick, when they need to care for a sick household member, or to care for their children in the event of [temporary school dismissals](#). You may also consider replacing in-person meetings with conference calls, video conferencing, or web-based seminars and postponing non-essential meetings and travel.



**Q. How should my organization clean the facility to limit spread of the virus?**

**A.** At least once per day, clean and then disinfect surfaces and objects that are touched often. Read [CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting](#) to learn more. This guidance includes cleaning objects and surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily, for example, doorknobs, light switches, and countertops. Clean with the cleaners typically used. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available [here](#).

**Q. Where can my organization find out if the virus has spread to the local community?**

**A.** You can get up-to-date information about local COVID-19 activity by keeping in touch with your local and state [public health officials](#), and keeping up-to-date with the [CDC website](#).

**Q. What are things to consider when determining if a group event or gathering needs to be postponed or canceled?**

**A.** Consult with local public health officials and continually assess current conditions. Be sure to regularly review the latest recommendations from the [White House](#) and [CDC](#) for all types of gatherings. When determining if you should postpone or cancel a gathering or event, consider the:

- Overall number of attendees or crowd size.
- Number of people attending who are at higher risk for serious illness.
- How close together attendees will be.
- Potential economic impact to attendees, staff, and the local community.
- Amount of spread in local community and the communities from where your attendees are likely to travel.
- Needs and capacity of the local community to host or participate in your event.

Read [CDC guidance on mass gatherings and large events](#).

**Q. How can my organization get involved to help the local community?**

**A.** Leaders should talk to staff and members about their concerns, as well as the potential [fears and anxiety](#) that may result from rumors or misinformation. Be sure to share resources that provide [reliable COVID-19 information](#) and speak out to prevent [stigma and discrimination](#).

Consider how your organization is uniquely able to assist the local community. Determine whether your organization can work with local health departments, if needed, so that your facilities can be used as temporary care facilities; quarantine facilities; or central distribution sites for food, water, supplies, or medicine. Coordinate with local health officials on ways to ensure care and services for vulnerable populations. Congregations and organizations with experience working with underserved communities (e.g., people who are incarcerated, people who are experiencing homelessness, immigrants, refugees, those with limited English proficiency, single-parent families, public housing residents, migrant-, farm-, and other low-wage workers) can work with local health officials to ensure these groups receive appropriate care and services.

**Q. Is there information my organization can share with staff and members about COVID-19?**

**A.** Share these resources to help people understand COVID-19 and steps they can take to help protect themselves:

- [How to Protect Yourself](#)
- [Groups at Higher Risk](#)

- [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
- [FAQs: Pregnant Women and COVID-19](#)
- [FAQs: Coronavirus Disease-2019 \(COVID-19\) and Children](#)
- [Handwashing: A Family Activity](#)
- [Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives](#)

## Minimal or moderate spread of COVID-19 in the local community

### **Q. What steps should my organization take to protect staff and members if there is minimal or moderate spread of COVID-19 in the local community?**

**A.** If there is minimal or moderate spread of COVID-19 in your community, you should:

- Continue to encourage [everyday preventive actions](#).
- [Clean and disinfect](#) surfaces daily.
- Use multiple strategies to increase space between people, especially for those who are at high-risk for serious illness (such as putting at least 6 feet of space between desks and between people who are in line).
- Develop ways to continue essential services for clients or members, such as meal, [mental](#) and spiritual and health, and social service programs.
- Cancel large events or modify into smaller gatherings. (see [CDC guidance](#) for more information)
  - Follow the directions of your state and local authorities.
  - Encourage people who are at [high-risk for serious illness](#) not to attend in-person. Instead, offer call-in or online viewing options.
- Postpone or cancel trips that could put staff, volunteers, or members at risk for COVID-19.
- Limit access of non-essential visitors to the facility.

For more information related to group activities or events, read CDC guidance on [mass gatherings and large events](#).

### **Q. Should my organization cancel or postpone an event if there is minimal or moderate spread of COVID-19 in the local community?**

**A.** To find out if your organization should cancel or postpone a group event or activity, read [CDC guidance on mass gathering and large events](#).

## Substantial spread of COVID-19 in the local community

### **Q. What steps should my organization take to protect staff and members if there is substantial spread of COVID-19 in the local community?**

**A.** If there is substantial spread of COVID-19 in the community, you should:

- Follow the directions of your [state and local authorities](#).
- Cancel in-person community and faith-based group events or gatherings of any size.
- Continue to encourage [everyday preventive actions](#).
- [Clean and then disinfect](#) surfaces daily.
- Develop ways to continue essential services for clients or members, such as meal, mental and spiritual and health, and social service programs.

- Consider closing the facility or limiting access to the facility by non-essential visitors and limit non-essential services.
  - Offer alternative ways (e.g., phone, online) for those at high risk of severe illness to participate.
  - Encourage them not to attend in-person.

For more information related to group activities or events, read [CDC guidance on community events](#).

**Q. Should my organization cancel or postpone an event if there is substantial spread of COVID-19 in the local community?**

**A.** You should first follow the directions of your state and local authorities. If authorities do not have specific directions related to cancelling or postponing a group event or activity, read [CDC guidance on community events](#).

**Confirmed COVID-19 case within your organization or facility**

**Q. What should my organization do if a member, volunteer, or a staff member might have COVID-19?**

**A.** If you think someone on your staff or one of your members who has been in your facility might be sick with COVID-19 (see [COVID-19 symptoms](#)):

- Send the sick person home right away or separate them from others (such as in a separate room just for sick people) until they can go home.
  - Give them a clean, [disposable facemask](#) to wear until they can leave, if available. If not available, provide them with a tissue or some other way to cover their coughs and sneezes.
  - Do not use of public transportation, shared rides, and taxis to transport the sick person home.
  - Contact emergency services for those who need emergency care, when needed, and let them know about the person’s symptoms.
- Contact local public health officials and communicate with staff, members, and volunteers about possible exposure to the virus.
  - Read [preventing the spread of COVID-19 if someone is sick](#) to learn more.
- Local health officials can offer guidance for closing the facility or restricting access. An initial short-term closure may be recommended to allow time for the local health officials to gain a better understanding of the COVID-19 situation.
  - Implement flexible telework and sick-leave policies for staff, if possible, and provide instructions about how and when to safely return to work.
  - Consider the need to cancel in-person group activities in other locations. Instead use phone and online (live or recorded) meeting and service options.
  - Work with local public health officials to decide when it is safe to re-open the facility and your programs and services.

**Q. What is the best way to clean and disinfect rooms and other areas after a confirmed case of COVID-19?**

**A.** CDC has guidance for cleaning and disinfecting rooms and areas where a person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 has visited. See [Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations](#).