

CHURCH COVID-19 REOPEN CHECKLIST



Meeting TENTS

Ready to reopen your church after the COVID-19 pandemic? Please consider the following topics, along with local guidelines, to protect your congregation.

PREPARE

- Are you educated about how COVID-19 spreads? (droplets, close contact, eyes/nose/mouth/surfaces)
- Do you have an Emergency Team established? This should be a small team (3 people, from different departments) who will be activated to call the Health Department in the case of an outbreak, and also notify church members who may have been in contact with someone infected.
- Does your church culture encourage staff, volunteers, and members to stay home when they are sick, even with mild symptoms?
- Do you have sick/wellness policies in place to help you enforce a healthy environment so your church does not experience an outbreak?
- Do you have online services for those at high risk (or sick) who should stay home? This includes those over the age of 65, people of all ages with severe underlying conditions, or those with symptoms. Please encourage them to remain home until guidelines state otherwise.
- Is your church database up to date? You will need this to communicate changes, and this will be useful in the event of an outbreak so you can have efficient contact tracing in partnership with the Health Department.
- How and when are you communicating what church will look like, start dates, and policies to church members?
- Do you have masks available in the event that a person starts coughing during church?
- Are your bathrooms stocked with soap and paper towels?
- Do you have hand sanitizing stations or hand sanitizer available?
- Are your greeters trained to have minimal contact and to help open doors for members?
- Are coffee/food stations postponed or do they have a designated server (with gloves) to prepare all drinks/food to avoid high touch surfaces and entry points?
- Are you planning to serve communion? How will this look? Designated ushers with gloves handing it out? Prepackaged communion?
- How is offering being collected? Avoid passing buckets/baskets. Encourage online giving, mailing checks, and having boxes on site.
- Do you typically encourage the congregation to hold hands for corporate prayer? Consider asking members to raise hands and avoid touch for this season.
- How will ministry time look after church? Will prayer teams wear face coverings? Avoid contact? Is there a prayer hotline those at home can call?
- Are you sanitizing microphones, music equipment, and camera equipment between each use?
- Is your church building being cleaned before church, after church, and during the week? (focus on high touch surfaces)

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Have you mapped out what your building would look like with physical distancing? (3 feet between people, 6 feet between people, those in the same household sitting together)
- Are your ushers/greeters being trained in the new seating and how to help assist church members to follow seating guidelines?
- Screenings: Your primary form of screening is to encourage a culture where people stay home when they are sick. You may ask someone to leave and give them a mask if they are coughing. It is not recommended to take temperatures to screen for COVID-19.
- Goggles are not recommended. You do not need to have these to handout to members.
- Gloves are not recommended unless you are serving food/drinks. Gloves can spread germs when they are misused. Please encourage church members to wash hands often!
- Cloth face covering guidelines will be outlined by your Health Department. You may want to consider getting some in stock in case they are required and someone shows up without one.

LOCAL GUIDELINES

- Do you know your local Health Department phone number?
- Do you know where to find local Health Department guidelines?
- Are you aware of your local guidelines on face coverings and social distancing?

RETHINK OUTREACH

- How can you use church outreach to encourage a culture where people can actually stay home when they are sick? Think of what this would entail for a single mom. How can you support others to stay home to reduce the spread of disease, but still have access to groceries, errands, childcare, etc.? Supporting those who are sick to stay home is how we will stop the spread of this disease!
- Does your church have licensed therapists or mental health providers? These services are in high demand as this pandemic has impacted many. Please consider creating mental health resources for those in need if that is available within your congregation. If not, please look at resources other churches are using and provide links so your church members have resources available.
- Does your church go on mission trips to other countries? Encourage your missions team as they are learning valuable skills with hand hygiene that are often needed in other countries. They are learning skills through this pandemic that can be very helpful on the next mission trip.

ASSISTANCE

- Do you need assistance in creating sick/wellness policies, protocols, setting up your facility with social distancing guidelines, health educational materials, understanding your population through surveys, or creating an emergency team? Meeting TENTS can help your church with these services and more. Please visit meetingtents.org for more information.