

MI SAFE START: COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

An informed-choice guidance for evaluating protective measures

As locations begin the process of reopening or scaling up after their initial response to COVID-19, certain actions will be inherently more protective of their staff and the general public. This document provides guidance that should be followed regardless of the current level of COVID-19 transmission, and additional measures that can be scaled depending on local levels of COVID-19 transmission and the protective measures desired. This document is to assist in making choices that best align for public health protection, business operations, and laws. Businesses are responsible for complying with all executive orders; this document does not supersede the executive order or other laws.

Guidelines for all communities of faith, regardless of local COVID-19 transmission levels:

Understand your community

- Establish and maintain communication with tribal, local and state authorities to understand facility roles in contact tracing protocol, local mitigation levels, or local reengagement phase for your community, as described in the [MI Safe Start](#) plan.
- Strongly consider special accommodations for staff who are members of an at-risk population. Possible considerations could include flexible leave, telework when feasible, or the reassignment to duties to reduce contact with the general public. Members of households with at-risk residents should be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not possible, they could carry the virus back home. Precautions should be taken to isolate from at-risk residents.
- Strongly consider special accommodations for patrons who are members of an at-risk population. Possible considerations could include special faith gatherings solely for those at-risk individuals, separate seating areas isolated from the rest of the establishment, or enhanced sanitation measures. Members of households with at-risk residents should be aware that by returning to environments where distancing is not possible, they could carry the virus back home. Precautions should be taken to isolate from at-risk residents.
- Employers should follow applicable Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for businesses to plan and respond to COVID-19.

Safe behaviors

- Enforce hand washing and the covering of coughs and sneezes at all times.
- Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene practices for both staff and members including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (at every entrance and other high contact locations), paper towels, and tissues.



- Consider whether physical contact (e.g., shaking hands, hugging, or kissing) can be limited among members of the faith community.
- Use gloves when removing garbage bags or handling and disposing of trash. Remove gloves properly and wash hands afterwards.
- Ensure enough time between gatherings for proper cleaning and disinfection of the gathering location.
- When disinfecting, use products that meet [EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2](#) and that are appropriate for the surface. Prior to wiping the surface, allow the disinfectant to sit for the necessary contact time recommended by the manufacturer. Train staff on proper cleaning procedures to ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants.
- Consider making available individual disinfectant wipes in bathrooms.
- Provide no-touch trash cans and, if equipped, encourage use of no-touch doors.
- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible such as by opening windows and doors. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety risk to staff, children, or customers.
- Take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to [minimize the risk](#) of Legionnaires' disease and other contaminants associated with water.
- Train all clergy and staff in the above safety actions while maintaining social distancing and use of face coverings during training.

Health checks and response actions

- Require clergy and staff who are sick to stay at home.
- Encourage members to stay home if sick.
- If implementing health checks, conduct them safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Confidentiality should be respected. Employers may use examples of screening methods in [CDC's General Business FAQs](#) as a guide.
- Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Staff should know who this person is and how to contact them.
- Create and test communication systems for staff for self-reporting and notification of exposures and closures.
- Staff with symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, or shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste of smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) at work should immediately be sent to their home or directed to a healthcare facility.
- Inform those who have had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, and to follow [CDC guidance for home isolation](#) if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms follow appropriate [CDC guidance for home quarantine](#). Coordinate with the local health department and follow their instruction.
- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone sick to their home or to a healthcare facility.



- Notify local health officials, staff, and patrons (if possible) immediately of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use them until after cleaning and disinfection. Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
- Advise sick staff members not to return until they have met [CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation](#).
- Implement flexible sick leave and other flexible policies and practices, such as telework, if feasible.
- Monitor absenteeism of staff and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- Support coping and resilience among staff. Visit [Michigan.gov/StayWell](https://www.michigan.gov/StayWell) for resources.
- As volunteers often perform important duties (e.g., greeters, ushers, childcare), consider similar monitoring, planning, and training for them. Consider that volunteer and staffing may need to increase to implement cleaning and safety protocols and to accommodate additional services with reduced attendance.

Be prepared for closings

- Check State and local health department notices about transmission in the area daily and adjust operations accordingly.
- Be prepared to temporarily close facilities if there is a case of COVID-19 in the facility or if cases increase in the local area.

Additional guidelines for communities of faith arranged by level of protective behavior:

Facial Coverings and Distancing:



Facial Coverings: Patrons	Facial covering required at all times	Facial covering encouraged at all times, required when within six feet of others	Facial covering encouraged when within six feet of others	No recommendations on facial coverings
Facial Coverings: Staff	Facial covering required at all times	Facial covering encouraged at all times, required when within six feet of others	Facial covering encouraged when within six feet of others	No recommendations on facial coverings
Personal Distancing: Patrons	Patrons are encouraged to remain six feet apart, closed seating, markings on floor, and one-way directional flow in aisles and hallways used to assist distancing	Patrons are encouraged to remain six feet apart, closed seating used to assist distancing	Patrons are encouraged to remain six feet apart	No recommendations on social distancing or faith gathering location precludes patrons from staying six feet apart
Personal Distancing: Patron to Staff (Including Clergy) (excluding during certain services as required)	Staff and patrons remain six feet apart during all interactions	Partitions are used when staff and patrons are within six feet of each other during all interactions	Staff and patrons are within six feet of each other (without partitions) numerous times during the faith gathering or event	Staff and patrons are within six feet of each other (without partitions) for the majority of the interactions
Personal Distancing: Staff (Including Clergy)	Staff are never within six feet of each other	Staff are within six feet of each other occasionally while passing	Staff are within six feet of each other commonly at typical choke points	Staff are within six feet of each other often



Business Operations:



<p>Gatherings of Faith</p>	<p>No in-person gatherings of faith are offered, gatherings of faith offered virtually</p>	<p>Gatherings of faith are offered in-person and virtually, attending virtual offerings is encouraged</p>	<p>Gatherings of faith are offered in-person, some gatherings of faith are offered virtually</p>	<p>Gatherings of faith are offered in-person</p>
<p>Clergy Visits</p>	<p>Clergy hold private visits by phone or online</p>	<p>Clergy hold private visits by phone or online, certain compassionate care situations, such as end of life, are held in-person with proper distancing as feasible</p>	<p>Clergy hold private visits in-person with proper distancing as feasible</p>	<p>Clergy hold private visits in-person</p>
<p>Size of Gatherings of Faith</p>	<p>In order to ensure social distancing, reservations are used to control capacity, extra services are provided to allow more opportunity and smaller gatherings</p>	<p>In order to ensure social distancing, extra services are provided to allow more opportunity and smaller gatherings</p>	<p>Capacity is limited at gatherings to encourage social distancing</p>	<p>No size limitations in place for gatherings of faith</p>
<p>Vestibules and Gathering Areas</p>	<p>Gathering areas like lobbies and vestibules are closed, patrons should wait in their cars or outside of the facility until seating is opened for the event, markings outside of building to indicate six feet spacing, seating is spaced six feet apart for different households</p>	<p>Patrons are encouraged to wait in cars or outside facility until seating is opened for the event, markings outside of building to indicate six feet spacing, gathering areas are open but have seating spaced six feet apart and standing areas marked off for social distancing</p>	<p>Gathering areas are open, social distancing is encouraged through the use of physical markings and signage</p>	<p>Gathering areas are open</p>



Seating	All seating is assigned, staff assist to ensure patrons are seated in correct seats, six feet apart from different households	Seating is assigned to a specific section, staff assist to ensure patrons are seated in correct location six feet apart from different households	Seating is assigned to a seat or section, but seating locations are not enforced	Seating is not assigned
Signage	Post signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, and properly wear a face covering		No signage posted	
Facility Entrance and Exits	Facility entrance location is different than the exit, patrons are dismissed after event by seat location to prevent overcrowding of exits	Patrons are dismissed after event by seat location to prevent overcrowding of exits	Facility entrance location is different than the exit	No considerations towards entering and exiting facility
Reducing Time in Facility	Reduce patron time spent in the facility by prohibiting entrance into facility until event is ready to begin, allow enough time for entrance to account for screening and social distancing, consider shortening the duration of event		Reduce patron time spent in the facility by prohibiting entrance into facility until event is ready to begin, allow enough time for entrance to account for screening and social distancing	Length of services and time spent in facility not considered
Patron Personal Items	Patrons leave personal items in car, only bring in car keys, prayer aids, or other essential items, keep items put away during visit unless being used	Patron brings in limited personal items, items are kept in a clear plastic bag during the duration of the event unless being used		No enhanced restrictions on patron personal items
Shared Items (e.g. worship aids, hymnals, prayer rugs)	No shared items	Shared items sanitized after each use	Shared items sanitized each day	Shared items unmonitored

<p>Food or Drink</p>	<p>No food or drink will be allowed in the facility</p>	<p>Patrons are not allowed to bring food or drink to the facility, facility may provide individually packaged food or drink for gatherings of faith</p>	<p>Individually packaged food or drink is allowed at the facility</p>	<p>No restrictions on food or drink provided at gatherings of faith or other events held in the facility</p>
<p>Financial Contributions</p>	<p>Financial contributions are collected using electronic methods</p>		<p>Financial contributions are collected using a stationary collection box that is sanitized frequently</p>	<p>Financial contributions are collected using shared collection trays or baskets</p>
<p>Singing or Chanting</p>	<p>Use of choir/musical ensembles and congregant singing or chanting is suspended, if appropriate within the faith tradition</p>	<p>Use of congregant singing or chanting is suspended, if appropriate within the faith tradition, and choir/musical ensembles are separated from congregation through the use of partitions</p>	<p>Use of congregant singing or chanting is suspended, if appropriate within the faith tradition</p>	<p>No restrictions on singing or chanting</p>



Sanitation and Cleaning:



<p>Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces (for example, door handles, seating areas)</p>	<p>Frequently touched surfaces cleaned between each event or group of people</p>		<p>Frequently touched surfaces cleaned daily</p>	<p>Frequently touched surfaces cleaned less frequently than daily</p>
<p>Clean and disinfect shared objects (for example, offering vessels, hymnals, worship aids)</p>	<p>Shared objects cleaned between each use</p>	<p>Shared objects cleaned between each event</p>	<p>Shared objects cleaned daily</p>	<p>Shared objects cleaned less frequently than daily</p>
<p>Deep Cleaning</p>	<p>Close one day per week (or proceed after business hours) for a thorough deep cleaning of the entire establishment</p>		<p>Deep cleaning of the entire establishment regularly performed, but not weekly</p>	<p>Deep cleaning of the entire establishment not regularly performed</p>
<p>Staff Duties</p>	<p>Cleaning and disinfecting time is built into the staff's daily work schedule</p>			<p>Cleaning and disinfecting time is not accounted for in the staff's work schedule</p>

Health and Wellbeing:



<p>Health Screening: Patrons</p>	<p>Staff led screening questions asked of all individuals when making appointments and/or when entering facility, signage posted on door or entrance to facility explaining symptoms of COVID-19</p>	<p>All individuals must attest to a set of self-screening questions before entering facility, signage posted on door or entrance to facility explaining symptoms of COVID-19</p>	<p>Signage posted on door or entrance to facility explaining symptoms of COVID-19 and not to enter if exhibiting any of these symptoms</p>	<p>Signage posted on door or entrance to facility explaining symptoms of COVID-19</p>
<p>Health Screening: Staff (Including Clergy)</p>	<p>Require self-conducted pre-shift health screening followed by on-site verification using temperature and symptom checks for all staff</p>	<p>Require on-site pre-shift health screening using temperature and symptom checks for all staff</p>	<p>Require self-conducted pre-shift health screening of all staff</p>	<p>No health screening of staff</p>
<p>Contact Tracing</p>	<p>Patrons are required to sign in with contact information when attending an in-person faith gathering</p>	<p>Patrons are encouraged to sign in with contact information when attending an in-person faith gathering</p>		<p>Patrons do not sign in when attending an in-person faith gathering</p>



Staff Policy:



Telework	Telework required whenever possible and feasible with business operations	Telework encouraged whenever possible and feasible with business operations	Telework considered whenever possible and feasible with business operations	Telework not supported even though possible and feasible with business operations
Staff Shifts	Set shifts so that staff are working with the same cohort of individuals on a day-to-day basis, stagger start times so staff cohorts do not overlap	Set shifts so that staff are working with the same cohort of individuals on a day-to-day basis	Staff work with different individuals from day to day	
Staff Common Areas	Common areas closed	Common areas open but enforce capacity to ensure six feet separation	Common areas open with six feet separation encouraged	Common areas open with no restrictions
Business Travel	Non-essential business travel not allowed	Non-essential business travel limited to local travel between similar transmission areas	Non-essential business travel limited to domestic travel between similar transmission areas	Non-essential business travel not restricted

