

Universal Recommendations for Personal Protection and Personal Responsibilities for Reducing Risk of Transmission of COVID-19

Personal Protection

The following recommendations are published by the CDC and reflect similar recommendations from the World Health Organization. The italicized text represents commentary to facilitate interpretation and practice. These precautions should be considered universal and applicable in all situations for personal protection. The precautions provide guidelines for all conduct related to church activities.

COVID-19 most commonly spreads between people who are in close contact through respiratory droplets or small particles produced when an infected person coughs, talks, or breathes. Growing evidence shows that droplets can remain suspended in the air and travel distances beyond six feet, according to the CDC. Indoor environments with poor ventilation increase the risk of transmission.

To prevent infection and to slow transmission of COVID-19, do the following:

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or clean them with alcohol-based hand rub.
 - *When possible wash hands for at least 20 seconds. When using alcohol-based hand rubs ensure content of at least 60% alcohol. Hand rub should be easily accessible in your personal possession and available throughout the church building or/and any small group gathering.*
- Maintain at least six feet distance between you and people coughing or sneezing.
 - *In general, maintain at least 6 feet distance in all circumstances outside of your home (WHO recommends 3 meters or 9 feet).*
- Avoid touching your face.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- Stay home if you feel unwell.
- Refrain from smoking and other activities that weaken the lungs.
 - *This includes vaping.*
- Practice physical distancing by avoiding unnecessary travel and staying away from large groups of people.
 - *The duration of interpersonal interaction is also a risk factor for transmission. The briefer the interaction, the lower the risk of transmission from infected to uninfected persons.*
- **Finally, there is broad advocacy among healthcare experts for wearing facial masks.** Masks reduce the release of droplets and aerosols that transmit virus from person to person. Masks should be considered a necessity in any circumstance – indoors or outdoors – where people come into close proximity. The only exceptions include immediate family members in the home, children under age 5, or people with physical or cognitive conditions that contraindicate the use of masks.

Personal Environmental Precautions

- **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- **If surfaces are dirty, clean them.** Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- **Then, use a household disinfectant.** Most EPA-registered external disinfectants will work.
 - *The EPA website below provides a list of disinfectants that can be used to clean surfaces. The list includes approximate times following application when the surface will be reasonable safe to use.*

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-advanced-search-page-disinfectants-coronavirus-covid-19>

Personal Responsibilities for Protecting Others

We are all responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of others by avoiding unnecessary contacts when we are infected with or have been exposed to COVID-19. Please, do not participate in face-to-face meetings or other group activities outside the home environment in the following situations.

- When knowingly infected with COVID-19.
- If you or anyone in your household is experiencing flu-like or other respiratory symptoms.
- If you have experienced a fever in the past 48 hours.
- If you have come into contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14-days.
- If you have participated in any large group activities, i.e. sports events, church services, etc., during the past 14-days.

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