



Covid-19 Mitigation Guidelines (as of 5/19/21)

According to the latest pronouncement from the State of New York Health Department, fully vaccinated people in New York are no longer required to wear face masks or to socially distance. This goes into effect on May 19, 2021.

**What does this mean for our churches?
Can we resume a more normal worship program?
What does this mean for individuals?
How does this impact our mitigation practices?**

What does this mean for our churches? Can we resume a ‘normal’ worship program?

1. Church services, adult Sabbath School and potlucks can resume back at the pre-pandemic routine.
2. Signs should be placed in the facility stating the new guidelines by the state health department.
3. There is no system of verification of a person’s ‘vaccine status’. We will expect members to work on the ‘honor system’, much like many of the large retailers are going to be doing.

What does this mean for individuals?

Vaccinated individuals do not need to wear a face mask or socially distance.

Un-vaccinated individuals, according the state health department, are still expected to wear masks and socially distance.

How does this impact our mitigation practices?

Mitigation should continue. Please use this revised document for recommendations in this area.



1. Clean/disinfect facilities after church services. **
** If your workplace, school, or business has been unoccupied for 7 days or more, it will only need your normal routine cleaning to reopen the area. This is because the virus that causes COVID-19 has not been shown to survive on surfaces longer than this time.
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>)
2. It's a good practice to have hand sanitizer available for congregants to use as they enter the facility, if they desire.
3. Church offering - We encourage churches that, due to the restrictions regarding social distancing and face coverings for the unvaccinated,
 - Continue to use an 'offering box' to collect tithes and offerings.
 - Encourage use of the 'Adventist Giving app'.
4. We encourage continued use pre-packaged items for communion.
FOOT WASHING - This is part of the 'Lords Supper' and is encourage. If a congregant is not ready or does not feel comfortable with this yet, this should not keep them from participating in the rest of the communion service.
5. Children's Sabbath School - We encourage the resumption of classes. Masks should be worn if a distance of 3' cannot be maintained.
6. Signs stating that if a person doesn't feel well they should join the church online should be prominently posted.
7. **Potluck****: Potluck can/should resume with the following considerations.
Have dedicated food servers.

***There is no evidence that people can get COVID-19 from eating food. However, sharing utensils and congregating around food service areas may present risks.*

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/community-based.html>



WHAT DO WE DO IF A CHURCH MEMBER CONTRACTS THE CORONAVIRUS?

Determine, as far as possible, if the virus was contracted at church, or some other location. (store, work, etc.)

If at church - the church facility can be closed at least one week, per CDC guidelines on how long the virus can survive**. After that period, church services may continue.

If not at church - the services can continue as scheduled following the protocols that have been set out. The infected person should follow all relevant state and local medical instruction.

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See www.cdc.gov and www.forward.ny.gov for more information

New York Conference Admin Team