



**VIRGINIA'S  
HEALTH  
IS IN OUR  
HANDS.**  
Do your part,  
stop the spread.

## VIRGINIA RE-OPENING CHECKLIST FOR FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS-PHASE 2

Follow these rules to keep Virginia open.

Faith-based organizations must adhere to the strict physical distancing guidelines, increased sanitizing practices, and enhanced workplace safety practices provided in the "Safer at Home: Phase One Religious Services" guidelines.

### **Mandatory:**

- Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted in the establishment.
- Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding social distancing, gatherings, options for high risk individuals, and staying home if sick.
- Keep at least six feet of space between individuals or family groups. Mark seating in six-foot increments and in common areas where families may congregate.
- Recommend the use of cloth face coverings. (See CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings guidance for more detailed information. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>)
- All services must be limited to no more 50% of the lowest occupancy load on the certificate of occupancy of the room or facility in which the services are conducted.
- Persons attending services must be seated at least six feet apart at all times and must practice proper social distancing at all times. Family members residing in the same household may be seated together.
- Mark seating in six-foot increments and in common areas where attendees may congregate.
- It is recommended that persons attending services be encouraged to wear face coverings over their nose and mouth at all times.
- No items must be passed to or between attendees.
- Any items used to distribute food or beverages must be disposable and used only once and discarded.
- A thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces must be conducted prior to and following any service.
- Shared ritual garments should be avoided and all garments properly washed after each use.
- If any place of worship cannot adhere to the above requirements, it must not conduct in-person services. Other suggested guidance for faith communities and funeral directors can be found below.

## Suggested Best Practices:

In addition to the requirements provided above, faith communities are encouraged to utilize the following best practices to the extent they are feasible:

- Designate a health coordinator and/or health equity team who will be responsible for COVID-19 planning and preparation for your place of worship.
- For the building:
  - Conduct thorough cleaning before and between services, see CDC guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>
  - Use separate doors to enter and exit the establishment when possible.
  - Allow interior doors to remain open to limit touching of door handles.
  - Provide sanitizing stations throughout the building, particularly at entry and exit points.
  - Consider installing touchless door entry systems or providing single-use barriers (i.e., paper towels) for use in touching door and sink handles in bathroom facilities.
  - Use messaging boards or digital messaging and social media for announcements to eliminate use of bulletins and handouts.
- For weekly religious services:
  - Members are safer at home. Continue to provide and encourage use of online streaming and drive-in options for people who can utilize these options.
  - Consider holding multiple services, with time for thorough cleaning in between, to allow for greater distancing during services.
  - Continue to suspend the choir as part of services.
  - Consider shorter services to avoid the need for people to use bathroom facilities.
  - Consider limiting or suspending youth services until a safer time.
  - Consider holding small group or separate services for senior citizens and other high-risk populations. Consider making this the first service of the week, after thorough cleaning and disinfection of facilities have been performed.
  - Ensure social distancing in parking lots or common areas.
- Consider discontinuing use of common items (e.g., microphones, books, hymnals, scriptural texts) that may be shared between people and are difficult to clean. Consider assigning religious books to a family or individual that they can bring to each service, or use a projector for the display of sacred texts, scriptures, and songs.
- For all religious rituals, any items used to distribute or consume food or drink should be disposable (i.e., used only once and discarded).
  - No items should be passed throughout the membership or congregation (i.e., collections baskets).
  - When oils, water, ashes, or other materials are applied to a person's forehead, self-application should be used, to the extent possible.
- Discontinue corporate meals and other activities where people may gather in groups.
- Do not provide childcare or children's services at this time.