



While religious services were exempt from orders around COVID-19 in Ohio, many voluntarily stopped in person services and are beginning to resume some services. Below are recommendations on prevention practices that religious organizations and their parishioners should follow to help minimize the spread of COVID-19.

Recommended Best Practices

Social Distancing

- Host a separate service for older adults
- Drive-in or virtual church services are encouraged
- Follow social distancing guidelines and space attendees at least six feet apart from non-household members (Consider using every other or every third row for seating)
- Consider hosting additional services and reduce capacity at each service
- Reduce capacity to 50% of the fire code
- Consider using advance registration to limit the number of people attending each service
- Consider reducing the use of choirs where proper social distancing cannot occur amongst the members

Physical Spaces

- Provide hand sanitizing stations
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces (doorknobs, handrails, pews, counters, etc.) after each service
- Clean and sanitize frequently
- Consider using disposable fliers or brochures for each service rather than shared materials
- Remove any unnecessary objects to minimize the number of surface contacts
- Consider foot traffic patterns and open additional entrances/exits to minimize people congregating before and after services
- Consider closing childcare services or children's only services
- Close the kitchen and other self-service areas, including drinking fountains
- Close other common areas to discourage members congregating

Employees, volunteers, members

- Face coverings should be worn by everyone in attendance
- Attendees should not shake hands or hug anyone that is not part of their household
- Sharing food before and after services is strongly discouraged
- Members should wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer before taking communion
- Members should not share a communion cup
- Ask employees and volunteers to take their temperature before or when they arrive, send home if temperature is above 100.4
- Ask members to stay home if they feel sick
- Members offering communion should wash their hands before serving