



Oregon Conference OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

CHURCH RE-OPENING PLAN

UPDATED 10/8/2020

As a Conference team, we can't wait for the day that every church building is open and hosting worship for our faith community. At the same time, the safety of every church member is our top priority.

Both Washington and Oregon are taking a phased, county-by-county approach to re-opening their economies. **Oregon Conference Churches may re-open in phases, at the same pace as the county and municipality in which they reside.** When States update their guidance, these changes will be sent out. ***Each Church is to Follow State/County/Municipal guidelines for reopening and/or operating in accordance with OHA/CDC/DOH recommendations.***

General Guidelines for All Phases: (this guidance is not exhaustive. See links to each individual State for more comprehensive guidance)

We will be living with the threat of COVID-19 until there is an effective treatment or vaccine for this disease. The following guidelines apply to every phase of re-opening.

- 1) **Limit all gatherings to the phase-appropriate size. This applies to all meetings of the church: Worship services, Bible studies, Staff meetings, Board meetings, etc.** (Refer to next section for phase-specific requirements)
- 2) Encourage personal hygiene and effective handwashing.
- 3) **FACE COVERINGS ARE REQUIRED** for both Oregon and Washington, including speakers. In Oregon those 5 years of age and older, must wear face coverings. Washington does not give a minimum age; however, we do not recommend face coverings on children under the age of 2. Washington does have medical accommodation for the speaker. Please call the Risk Management department or read the full Washington State religious and faith-based guidance for more information. Face Coverings include:
 - **Cloth – Face Shield – Paper** / See link in both States for additional guidance.
- 4) No physical contact should take place while on church property.
- 5) Develop habits of effective sanitation for all high-touch surfaces and all A/V equipment (no shared microphones. 1 person/1 program/1 microphone)
- 6) Maintain adequate physical distancing at all times. (at least 6 ft. except in household units)
- 7) Do not pass offering plate. Establish alternate forms of returning tithes/offerings.
- 8) Encourage "high-risk" members and guests to remain home. (Age 65+ and those with underlying health conditions)

Oregon Health Authority Requirements

- **Phase 1:** No more than 50 attendees (35 sq. ft. per person required), indoors or outside, including staff. If indoors, face-coverings/face shields are required for everyone – even the speaker and performers.
- **Phase 2:** Indoors - Up to 1 person for every 35 sq. ft. Maximum of 100 attendees, including staff. Face-coverings/face shields are required for everyone – even the speaker and performers. Outdoors – 1 person for every 35 sq. ft. Maximum 250. Face-coverings are encouraged. (Face coverings required if unable to maintain a 6 ft. physical distancing)
- Assign 1 volunteer to each of the following roles:
 - Sanitation Attendant- Sanitize high touch surfaces and high-traffic areas.
 - Bathroom Sanitation volunteer- Sanitize all restrooms hourly and insure access to paper towels, hand sanitizer and other needed supplies.
 - Physical Distancing Monitor- Reinforces cooperation with all distance requirements, including all areas where attendees may congregate
- Maintain record of every attendee (including name and phone number) for each meeting to be kept on file for 60 days.
- Signs showing symptoms of COVID, handwashing, social distancing and face covering requirements MUST be posted around your church.
- [Face-Coverings Required Sign Link](#)
- [Other Required Signs \(Scroll Down to Signage Section\)](#)
- Employees, Volunteers, and Attendees must wear face-coverings at all times.

Washington State Department of Health Requirements

- **Phase 1:** Outdoor Services only, of up to 100 attendees, excluding staff. No potluck or choirs. Face-coverings required. Indoor services are not allowed in this phase.
- **Phase 2:** Indoor services of 25% capacity or 200 people, whichever is fewer (excluding staff). No potluck or choirs. Face-coverings required.
- **Phase 3:** Indoor services of 50% capacity or 400 people, whichever is fewer (excluding staff). No potlucks or choirs. Face-coverings required.
- Have a written COVID-19 plan available for each venue that includes exposure control, mitigation, and recovery. (Consider using this document as a template. See WA State guidelines for more detail.)
- Require all attendees to wear face-coverings for the duration of the event.
- One singer with one accompanist is allowed. This goes for song service or special music.
- No choirs are allowed. Congregational singing is permitted as long as face-coverings remain in place.
- Access to restrooms must be controlled. No more than 2 people in a restroom at a time.
- Consider maintaining a record of every attendee (including name and phone number) for each meeting to be kept on file for 14 days.

Oregon State Reopening Guidance Documents

[Oregon Phase 2 Venue Guidance](#)

[Oregon Phase 2 Venue Guidance FAQs](#)

[Oregon Guidance on Gatherings](#)

[Oregon Statewide Face-Covering Policy](#)

Washington State Reopening Guidance Document – Phases 1-3

[WA Religious Gatherings Guidance](#)

[WA Guidance on Weddings and Funerals](#)

Oregon Conference Phased Re-Opening guidance based on Current OHA Guidance & DOH Guidance

1) All Church Gatherings and Meetings

- If multiple meetings occur in a day, allow time for proper cleaning, complete air exchange in venue, and to eliminate crossover of attendees between events.
- All events must maintain appropriate physical distancing.
- Remember that virus risk increases with increased time together. Take this into consideration when planning your services.
- If a facility has different spaces that have separate entrance, parking, restrooms and gathering space, it can be considered a separate gathering.

2) Worship services

- Avoid handing out bulletins. Instead project announcements on screens.
- Change the way you offer communion.
 - We suggest you have a table where single serving plates with cup and wafer are placed for individuals to pick-up on their own and no cross contamination can take place
- Continue offering online giving options.
- Come up with a fun way to greet others in a non-contact way.
- Consider dismissing in an orderly way to ensure physical distancing.
- Remove toys, blankets, and other objects from your mother's room. Remember to sanitize this area each week.

3) A/V Teams

- Clean microphones, headphones, computers, laptops, etc. after every use. DO NOT USE WATER! Rubbing alcohol or alcohol-based cleaners are best. Keep record of when each item was cleaned.
- Secure a CCLI license for copyright compliance, if you have not already done so.

- If you don't have media support for announcements or singing, then print texts and place them in the pews/chairs. Encourage people to take the sheets home with them and not leave them in the pews.
- 4) **Greeters and other volunteer staff**
- Train greeters on how to greet post-quarantine: NO hand shaking or hugs.
 - Ensure doors are propped open or have the greeters hold them open.
 - Train greeters and volunteers to answer questions on procedures and policies upon the return to the building

Be thoughtful when scheduling volunteers, taking into consideration a person's comfort level, health issues, etc.

5) **Church Campouts**

- Church campouts fall under the category of "social gatherings." Churches must follow current "Social Gathering" guidance for their area in planning campouts or reschedule to a time when guidelines have changed to allow for church campouts. As of this update, Oregon allows social gatherings of 10. Washington allows 10 or less, depending on county.

Still Have Questions?

Contact the Risk Management Department: 503-850-3553 wendy.kessler@oc.npuc.org or simona.cardwell@oc.npuc.org

Remember...

Even though your church has opted to reopen, many of your members may not be ready or able to rejoin you. Please continuing to offer services online.

We will continue to update you on protocols as Phases change. If you follow these guidelines and the guidelines of your County/State, and the guidelines outlined here, you will not have any difficulties with compliance.