



Oregon Conference OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

CHURCH RE-OPENING PLAN

UPDATED 02/10/2021

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.

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 Risk Levels/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 for appropriate social distancing. This applies to all meetings of the church: Worship services, Bible studies, Staff meetings, Board meetings, etc.**
- 2) Encourage personal hygiene and effective handwashing.
- 3) **FACE COVERINGS ARE REQUIRED** for Oregon, including speakers. Washington allows a single person on the platform to speak without a face covering, but everyone else must wear a face covering. 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. 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

- 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
- 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.
- No potlucks until your county is at a risk level that allows for indoor restaurant seating. See restaurant guidance for more information.
- Children Sabbath School guidance can be found at the link for “Faith community FAQ’s” below, page 3, Q7. If you have questions regarding this guidance, please call the Risk Management Department.

Oregon State Risk Level Guidance Documents

[Faith Community Guidance](#)

[Faith Community FAQ's](#)

[Oregon Statewide Face-Covering Policy](#)

Washington State Department of Health Requirements

- 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 is allowed to sing on the platform with no mask if at least 15 ft from congregants.

- Choirs of 15 individuals are allowed as long as face coverings are worn and proper social distancing can be maintained (see Washington Faith guidance for details). Outdoor congregational singing is permitted if face-coverings remain in place.
- Sabbath School for children is permitted if childcare guidance is followed. See link to guidance below.

Washington State Reopening Guidance Document – Phases 1-2

[Faith Community Guidance](#)

[Road Map to Recovery](#)

[Child Care-Youth Guidance](#)

Oregon Conference Risk Level Re-Opening guidance based on Current OHA Guidance, DOH, and CDC 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 from the back of the sanctuary 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 & Outings

- Church campouts and outings fall under the category of "social gatherings." Churches must follow current "Social Gathering" guidance for their area in planning campouts and other outings or reschedule to a time when guidelines have changed to allow for church campouts. As of this update, Oregon allows social gatherings of 5. Washington allows 10 or less, outdoors only, depending on county phase.

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/Risk Levels 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.