

# OPENING THE DOORS AGAIN: ST JOHN'S PROTOCOL FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP AND USER-GROUP BUILDING ACCESS



This document has been created by the work of St. John's Protocol Team: Leann Torgerson, Dawn Wheatley, Dave Baldwin, Kim Eichner, Jackie Grove and the Rev. Eliacín Rosario-Cruz. It is designed specifically for building use at St. John's, Snohomish, in accordance with the Office of the Bishop's document, *A Guide to Gathering in Person, The Diocese of Olympia's Phased-In Plan for Resuming In-Person Worship and Activities* (05/07/20 Version 1)

# Protocols for the Reopening of St. John's Episcopal Church

## Overview

At the direction of the Office of the Bishop of the Diocese of Olympia, St. John's Episcopal Church (hereafter, St. John's) suspended in-person worship in March 2020 because of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). This document describes the steps we will take (a) to prepare to reopen the church for in-person services and (b) to ensure parishioners worship in a safe environment after reopening. While the focus of this document is in-person worship at St. John's, beginning with services in the parish hall where social distancing can be observed safely, St. John's will continue streaming services for worshipers who are not able to attend or choose not to attend. It will be required that other groups using our facilities will abide by the protocols addressed in this document. These protocols will be adjusted as we progress through the Diocesan phases. The Office of the Bishop will be making all decisions about when we move toward full, in-person Sunday services.

These protocols also apply to outside groups using the St. John's facilities.

All programs for children shall be delayed until we create and test the initial protocols. We will develop protocols for children's programs by leveraging what we learn from planning for initial worship attendance.

This document contains the following:

1. **Initial steps in preparing for in-person attendance.** Action to be completed immediately while the church facilities are officially closed.
2. **Next steps in preparing for in-person attendance.** Planning decisions and actions for reopening the buildings to staff and to worshipers.
3. **Final preparations for in-person attendance.** Final preparations before St. John's reopens.
4. **Reflection and adjustment to protocols.** Critique and adjustment of original plans.

The Office of the Bishop will be making all decisions about when we move toward full, in-person Sunday services.

The state of Washington does not need to approve the St. John's plan before operations. However, St. John's must make the plan available, upon request, for inspection by state and local authorities. Failure to meet planning requirements may result in sanctions, including the shutdown of St. John's.

## **Initial Steps in Preparing for In-person Attendance**

St. John's will complete these actions immediately while the church facilities are officially closed.

**Insurance.** While the church building is closed (although staff and others have limited access), review the insurance coverage for St. John's. Do the following:

- Confirm St. John's insurance policy includes liability coverage of at least \$1 million.
- Confirm that any organizations using the church building or facilities have St. John's listed as an additional insured on their liability policies with coverage of at least \$1 million and agree to indemnify St. John's for claims arising from their operations.

**Signs.** Post signs with the relevant COVID-19 information:

- Post signs inside the building to communicate to staff, parishioners, others with outside groups, and workers on the remodel specific precautions concerning pandemic safety.
- Post signs outside all entrance doors. Also, post on easels where people must walk around to reach the door.
- St. John's will post signs similar to those by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) throughout the church spaces. See Addendum C for more details.

**CDC Signs.** The CDC has produced signs St. John's can use during COVID-19. St. John's will post these signs throughout the church spaces. See Addendum C for more details.

**CDC Recommendations for Cleaning and Disinfecting.** Instruct those with current access to church buildings (staff and others) to follow the CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting church facilities. These guidelines are found in Addendum C of this document.

This is the URL to the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>.

**Communications Plan.** Provide periodic updates to parishioners about progress toward reopening. Inform parishioners and other groups of procedures that will be followed upon reopening. Remind parishioners to assess their own risk status when determining whether to attend or not. Communicate with all user groups the requirement that they will comply with CDC and St. John's guidelines.

## **Next Steps in Preparing for In-Person Attendance**

This phase entails the planning decisions and actions necessary for reopening the buildings to staff and to worshipers eventually.

### **FACILITIES PREPARATIONS**

**Cleaning (see Addendum C).** Do the following:

- Deep clean the entire church, including floors, pews/chairs, bathrooms, kitchen, doorknobs, light switches, stair railings, microphones and all frequently-touched surfaces.
- Cleaning/disinfecting must be completed before, between, and after each service as well as after anyone has accessed the building (the portions of the building they have accessed).
- Follow cleaning and disinfecting protocols as outlined in the “How to Clean and Disinfect” section of the “Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities” in Addendum C at the end of this document.
- Determine which volunteers will complete the required cleaning and disinfection protocols before services, during services, between services, and after services.
- Make sure the facilities cleaning service for St. John’s follows the CDC guidelines when cleaning the facilities.

**Purchases (see Addendum C).** Do the following:

- Purchase and install CDC-approved anti-bacterial dispensers:
  - Outside the Parish Hall doors.
  - At the front of the hall for the priest and attendees.
- Purchase disposable gloves for the protocol monitor team.
- Purchase a supply of sanitary masks to provide each worshiper who arrives without one.
- Purchase disposable tissues and no-touch trash receptacles, enough to facilitate easy access by worshipers.
- Purchase non-invasive thermometers for temperature checks of attendees by the protocol monitor team as attendees arrive.
- Maintain a stock of tissue, soap, hand sanitizer, and disposable paper towels for drying hands.

## **PERSONNEL PREPARATIONS**

### ***Training.***

- Train the staff, protocol monitor team, and other relevant volunteers in the required protocols.
- Confirm those with current access to church buildings (that is, the staff and others) are following the CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting the church facilities. These guidelines can be found in Addendum C.

## **GENERAL PREPARATIONS BEFORE IN-PERSON WORSHIP**

***Worship.*** Initially, St. John's will worship in the parish hall, not the sanctuary.

***Eucharist and Baptism.*** Eucharist and baptism may be suspended or modified until directed by the Office of the Bishop.

When offered, follow the protocols for distribution of the Eucharist posted on the Diocese of Olympia website. See Addendum D of this document for the Eucharist protocols.

When offered, follow the protocols for administration of baptism posted on the Diocese of Olympia website. See Addendum E of this document for the baptism protocols.

***Social Distancing.*** The clergy will not process in or out past the seated attendees. Attendees will be directed to exit from back to front following the directional arrows taped to the floor, maintaining social distance and avoiding any backup.

***Coffee Hour.*** There will not be a coffee hour after services.

***Rector's Role.*** The rector will inform attendees what has been done to prepare the church spaces for worship services. Also, the rector will highlight the protocols, such as (a) no handshakes, hugging, or other touching, and (b) options for greetings and passing the peace.

***Additional Options.*** An online worship option will be maintained for those who are vulnerable or hesitant to come in-person. Online Bible study and other opportunities to continue interactions with other parishioners will continue.

***Assignments.*** Recruit volunteers or assign staff (or both) for these tasks:

- Service set up, including chair arrangement, personal protective equipment (PPE), forms, and so on
- Cleaning before and after the service
- Protocol monitors

***COVID-19 Potential Risks.*** Before attending church services or volunteering, individuals need to monitor their own health related to COVID-19 virus symptoms. If any of the symptoms described on the COVID-19 Event Disclosure and Screening Form (See Addendum B) are present, the individual should not participate in the

service or serve as a volunteer. This will protect others from the infection. In addition, if COVID-19 symptoms become apparent during the service, the parishioner will be asked to leave in order to protect the health of others.

**Seating Plan.** The maximum seating capacity and seating plan for services, whether the services are in the parish hall or in other spaces, shall be determined by the number of parishioners who can be seated in the space in accordance with required social distancing.

Following the Office of the Bishop guidelines, St. John's will hold indoor services in the parish hall with up to 25 percent room capacity or up to 200 people, whichever is less, so long as six feet of physical distancing can be achieved between households.

A seating plan for worship in the parish hall will establish appropriate social distancing using six-foot distance markers as well as arrows for one-way directional walking.

The parish hall will not have tables for parishioner seating.

Some seats will be unassigned for visitors to St. John's. These are for new attendees who are visiting and arrive without notice. Household members, attending together, may sit together.

Attendees must notify the church staff by 10:00 AM on the Friday before Sunday services to make a reservation. This allows the staff and volunteers time to set up the chairs. Once the office receives reservations, seats will be allocated for you and your family, but *seats will not be assigned*.

**Number of Services on Sunday.** Before reservations are taken, the times and number of services available each Sunday will be announced through means such as St. John's website, phone message, email, mailings, etc.

### **COVID-19 Disclosure Process (See Addendum B).**

To attend worship services in-person at St. John's, each parishioner shall fill out an initial event disclosure statement in which he or she agrees to the following:

- Has not traveled recently to a place with a COVID-19 outbreak
- Does not exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms as listed on the disclosure form
- Agrees to the other terms and conditions on the COVID-19 form
- Wears a mask at all times and maintains social distancing requirement

Contact tracing is required by the Office of the Bishop and will be collected using the COVID-19 Event Disclosure and Screening Form (see Addendum B). St. John's will send each parishioner a COVID-19 disclosure form to be completed before attendance at St John's. Forms will also be available at the church entrance. Completed forms will be given to the protocol monitor upon arrival at church. This contact tracing information is then entered into a St. John's Church database.

In the future, when the parishioner arrives for in-person services wearing a mask, the protocol monitor at the door shall access the database on the computer, verify

that the parishioner's disclosure statement is still accurate, and confirm attendance. After verification, the parishioner may attend services after having his or her temperature taken. The parishioner must continue to wear a mask.

**Thermometers.** Each attendee will have his or her temperature taken with non-invasive thermometers. If the attendee's temperature reading is higher than normal, the attendee will be asked to return only when the temperature is within normal limits. Normal temperature reading range should be between 97 and 99 degrees. A temperature of 100.4 or more indicates the possibility of an illness.

**Protocol monitors.** Protocol monitors will greet parishioners as they arrive, process the COVID-19 form, check every attendee's temperature, make sure the attendee is wearing a mask, and direct attendees to their seats.

**Procedures for Attendees Who Become Ill While at Services.** Through communications to the parishioners before the service, we will ask parishioners to monitor their own health by being especially alert to symptoms of COVID-19 as well as other infectious diseases.

As a rule, we encourage persons in particular risk categories or who display symptoms to stay home. That is the best precaution in preventing the spread of these diseases.

Finally, if COVID-19 symptoms become apparent during the service, the attendee will be asked to leave in order to protect the health of others.

## **Final Preparations for In-Person Attendance**

This phase entails the planning decisions and actions for reopening the buildings to staff and to worshipers eventually.

### **MAKE FINAL PREPARATIONS FOR WORSHIP**

**Books, Pens, and Notepaper.** Attendees will not have access to books, pens, pencils, or notepaper from the worship space and all other areas of the church open to attendees.

**Church Bulletins.** Service bulletins will not be handed out at the service. Accommodations will be made for providing the information in other formats.

**Singing.** Currently, the Office of the Bishop has established a "no singing at all—by the choir or by the congregation." St. John's will follow changing guidelines in step with the Office of the Bishop.

**Anti-bacterial Dispensers.** CDC-approved, anti-bacterial dispensers will be provided outside the parish hall doors and at the front of the church for the clergy and attendees will be provided.

**Disposable Gloves.** The protocol monitor team shall provide disposable gloves for the protocol monitor team, the set-up team, and the clean-up team.

**Face Masks.** The protocol monitor team shall provide disposable face masks to attendees who do not bring their own.

NOTE: Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under the age of 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

People with "neck gators" will be asked to use disposable face masks since neck gators have been proven to increase the spread of germs.

**Bathrooms.** The parish hall has two new bathrooms. Attendees are required to only use these bathrooms. The bathrooms have touchless faucets and hand dryers.

**Training.** Continue to train the staff, the protocol monitor team, and all others on all required protocols.

**Instructions for the Protocol Monitor Team.** No one should be allowed to enter the church unless wearing a mask. Furthermore, no one will be allowed to attend services unless he or she passes the temperature check and turns in the signed COVID-19 Event Disclosure and Screening form (see Addendum B).

For those attendees who request detailed information about masks, the protocol monitors can give those persons printed copies of the following:

- "How to Protect Yourself and Others"  
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention-H.pdf>).
- "What To Do If You are Sick" for those who resist wearing a mask  
(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>).

**Disposable Tissues and No-touch Trash Cans.** Make sure disposable tissues and no-touch trash cans are easily available.

**Volunteers.** Anyone considering volunteering is asked to consider health recommendations for individuals at risk and to assess your personal situation when you accept volunteer assignments. Certain individuals are at higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19 infection. These include women who are pregnant, people over the age of 65, and people with underlying or chronic health conditions. It is recommended these individuals take extra precautions to protect themselves from infection. Precautions include practicing social distancing and avoiding large groups of people or unnecessary gatherings. Any volunteer who reports for assignment showing signs of illness will be sent home immediately.

**Parish Hall Air Flow.** The new HVAC units that feed the addition of St. John's (all three floors), the new unit for the parish hall, and the new unit for the spaces below the church proper all run a continuous fan mode. They supply air constantly as required by code. They satisfy the COVID safety specifications for the spaces. The air is heated as required by the controls for each space. The new units will work with Merv13 spec (air filtration). This satisfies the safety standards for prevention of COVID 19 spread.

As weather permits, open the windows in the parish hall before attendees arrive. This will increase indoor air flow.

**Floor Signage.** Arrange floor signage to remind people to stay six feet apart.

**Church Committee Meetings.** Church committees will continue to meet via Zoom or other online venues until further notice.

**Weddings and Funerals.** Weddings and funerals will follow the same guidelines as required by the state of Washington. For more information, see this webpage:

- Additional Guidance for Weddings and Funerals  
(<https://www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/inslee-announces-additional-guidance-weddings-and-funerals>)

Responsibilities for the setup and cleanup after the ceremony will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**Cleaning and Disinfecting.** Follow the cleaning and disinfecting protocols as outlined in the "How to Clean and Disinfect" section of the "Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities." See Addendum C.

**All User Groups.** Direct all user groups at St. John's (for example, Community Kitchen, Girl Scouts, 12-step groups) to read and follow the current protocols as specified in this document. Confirm with each group the following:

- Insurance documents
- Signed release documents
- Cleaning protocol
- Building space location
- Food policies:
  - People coming to have a meal must wear a face mask and remain socially distanced.
  - People distributing the meals must wear a face mask and use gloves to handle the food that is being distributed.
  - Masks should be made available to those attending without one.
  - When and where appropriate, markers will be provided indicating every six feet to maintain social distance.
  - Social distancing will be monitored.
  - Attendees should not be allowed to congregate after receiving the meal.

## **Reflection and Adjustment to Protocols**

This phase entails the critique and adjustment of the original protocol plans.

Do the following:

- Observe and assist the protocol monitor team as St. John's begins welcoming others back into church spaces.
- Solicit input from the rector, protocol monitors, volunteer cleaners, and others involved in the reopening planning and execution.
- Adjust the protocols, as needed.
- Build protocols for children's ministry programs based on learnings after experiencing the re-opening for Sunday services.

## Addendum A: St. John's Checklist for COVID-19 Protocols

### **Initial Steps in Preparing for In-person Attendance**

1. Confirm St. John's insurance policy includes liability coverage of at least \$1 million.
2. Confirm that any organizations using the church building or facilities have St. John's listed as an additional insured on their liability policies with coverage of at least \$1 million.
3. Make sure that any organizations using the church building or facilities agree to indemnify St. John's for claims arising from their operations at St. John's facilities.
4. Post signs inside the building to communicate to all who enter on the remodel-specific precautions concerning pandemic safety.
5. Post signs outside all entrance doors. Otherwise, post on easels in which people must walk around to reach the door.
6. Post CDC sign: Stop the spread: • 8.5 x 11:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf> • 11 x 17: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs-11x17-en.pdf>.
7. Post CDC sign: Protecting yourself and others:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention-H.pdf>.
8. Post CDC sign: Wash your Hands (bathrooms and kitchen):  
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/Handwashing-Middle-School-8x11-p.pdf>.
9. Post CDC sign: Face coverings required:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-covering-building-entrance.pdf>.
10. Post CDC sign: Stay at home, 8.5 x 11:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/StayHomeFromWork.pdf>.
11. Post CDC sign: To be used at work, 24 x 36:  
[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/316129-B-StayHomeFromWork\\_Poster.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/316129-B-StayHomeFromWork_Poster.pdf).

12. Instruct those with current access to church buildings (staff and others) to follow these CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting community facilities: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaningdisinfection.html>.

## **Next Steps in Preparing for In-person Attendance**

1. Create plan for deep cleaning the entire church, including floors, pews, chairs, bathrooms, kitchen, doorknobs, light switches, stair railings, microphones, and all heavily, often-touched surfaces.
2. Create plan for cleaning and disinfecting before, between, during, and after each service as well as after anyone has accessed the building (that is, the portions of the building they have accessed).
3. Create plan for cleaning and disinfecting protocols as outlined in the "How to Clean and Disinfect" section of the "Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities" page on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>.
4. Determine which volunteers will complete the required cleaning and disinfection protocols before, during, between, and after services.
5. Purchase and install CDC-approved anti-bacterial dispensers (a) outside the Parish Hall doors for attendees, and (b) at the front of the hall for the priest and attendees.
6. Purchase disposable gloves for the protocol monitor team.
7. Purchase a supply of sanitary masks to provide each worshiper who arrives without one.
8. Purchase disposable tissues and no-touch trash receptacles, enough to facilitate easy access by worshipers.
9. Purchase non-invasive thermometers for temperature checks of attendees by the protocol monitor team as attendees arrive. As weather permits, open windows to increase air flow inside the hall before attendees arrive.
10. Maintain a stock of tissue, soap, hand sanitizer, and disposable paper towels for drying hands.
11. Train the staff, protocol monitor team, Altar Guild, and all others on all required protocols.

12. Confirm those with current access to church buildings (that is, the staff and others) are following the CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting the community facilities. These guidelines are specified in the St. John's cleaning and disinfecting protocols: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>.
13. Calculate the maximum seating capacity and seating plan.
14. Create a seating chart for worship in the parish hall.
15. Place six-foot distance markers, and signage, for one-way directional walking.
16. Determine how many seats to leave unassigned for visitors to St. John's.
17. If contact tracing is required, determine how attendees and their contact information will be tracked and retained by the protocol monitor team for the required 21 days.
18. Create a job description for protocol monitors.
19. Create procedures for the protocol monitor team (and church staff and other team volunteers) to handle attendees who get sick during services.
20. Develop the protocol for requiring attendees to check in with the protocol monitor when the attendee arrives for services.

## **Final Preparations for In-Person Attendance**

1. Remove all books, pens, pencils, notepaper, and so on, from the worship space and all other areas of the church open to attendees. However, sanitized pens will be available for filling out release forms.
2. Configure the finalized seating plan.
3. Fill the parish hall with the maximum number of chairs (representing the percentage capacity we are allowed) to be arranged weekly according to the reservation list.
4. Provide CDC-approved anti-bacterial dispensers outside the parish hall doors for attendees, and at the front of the church for the clergy and attendees.
5. Provide disposable gloves for the protocol monitor team.
6. Provide cloth, non-surgical, disposable face masks to attendees who do not bring their own. Attendees should also wear the same kind of mask.

7. Instruct all users of the church to only use the two bathrooms added to the parish hall.
8. Advise all user groups at St. John's to follow the current rules and regulations about COVID-19 protocols.

## **Reflection and Adjustment to Protocols**

1. Make sure the protocol monitor team has thermometers for attendee temperature checks at arrival.
2. Make sure disposable tissues and no-touch trash cans are easily available.
3. Maintain a supply of tissue, soap, hand sanitizer, and disposable paper towels for drying hands.
4. Arrange floor signage to remind people to stay six feet apart.
5. Direct the attendees to exit from back to front following the directional arrows taped to the floor. Remind the attendees to maintain social distancing and to avoid creating a backup. Furthermore, attendees should keep wearing their masks and maintain social distancing as they leave the church and go to their cars.
6. Communicate with parishioners about the preparation made by St. John's staff and the volunteer team for their arrival and that, if they are sick, they should stay home.
7. Inform the Community Kitchen that food preparation can continue inside the church kitchen.
8. Assign a planning committee member to observe and assist the protocol monitor team as we begin welcoming others back into our space.
9. Build protocols for children's programs based on learnings.

## Addendum B: COVID-19 EVENT DISCLOSURE AND SCREENING FORM

### COVID-19 EVENT DISCLOSURE AND SCREENING FORM

Church/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Event/Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Considering recent events, the health and wellbeing of our community is our paramount concern. Therefore, all participants at the above event are required to sign one of these forms and agree to voluntarily assume any risk of physically participating at this event.

Before attending, you agree:

I understand my attendance and participation in the above event can pose a risk of COVID-19 or other contagious or infectious diseases to me, and if I am a high-risk person, as defined by the CDC, I should stay home and avoid participation.

If I have been recently exposed to COVID-19, I understand I may pose a risk to others.

I agree that none of the following applies to me:

To my knowledge, I have not been in close or proximate contact with anyone who has had symptoms of COVID-19 or tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

I have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

I have not experienced symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days, including but not limited to fever, fatigue, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or sense of smell, sore throat, or dry cough.

If there is an outbreak, my information may be shared with public health officials to engage in an approved contact tracing program. I understand my information will be saved, and my information may be released to such public health officials in the event it is needed for such a program.

I agree to follow all social distancing protocols in place at this event or activity and agree to wear a face mask while attending this event.

Your participating in person at this event is conditioned upon your acceptance and agreement to the above.

Thank you for helping us keep our community safe and healthy. We are all in this together!

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Addendum C: CDC Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities

Addendum C replicates the information in this CDC webpage (updated May 27, 2020): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>.

NOTE: Some of the conditions described in this CDC instruction do not apply to St. John's.

Abstract: These are interim recommendations for U.S. community facilities with suspected/confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

### **Background**

There is much to learn about the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Based on what is currently known about the virus and about similar coronaviruses that cause SARS and MERS, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (within about six feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets, but disease transmission via infectious aerosols is currently uncertain. Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through objects and surfaces, like doorknobs, countertops, keyboards, toys, etc. Current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in community settings.

It is unknown how long the air inside a room occupied by someone with confirmed COVID-19 remains potentially infectious. Facilities will need to consider factors such as the size of the room and the ventilation system design (including flowrate [air changes per hour] and location of supply and exhaust vents) when deciding how long to close off rooms or areas used by ill persons before beginning disinfection. Taking measures to improve ventilation in an area or room where someone was ill or suspected to be ill with COVID-19 will help shorten the time it takes respiratory droplets to be removed from the air.

### **Purpose**

This guidance provides recommendations on the cleaning and disinfection of rooms or areas occupied by those with suspected or with confirmed COVID-19. It is aimed at limiting the survival of SARS-CoV-2 in key environments. These recommendations will be updated if additional information becomes available.

These guidelines are focused on community, non-healthcare facilities such as schools, institutions of higher education, offices, daycare centers, businesses, and

community centers that do, and do not, house persons overnight. These guidelines are not meant for cleaning staff in healthcare facilities or repatriation sites, households, or for others for whom specific guidance already exists.

## **Definitions**

*Community facilities* such as schools, daycare centers, and businesses comprise most non-healthcare settings that are visited by the general public outside of a household.

*Cleaning* refers to the removal of dirt and impurities, including germs, from surfaces. Cleaning alone does not kill germs. But by removing the germs, it decreases their number and therefore any risk of spreading infection.

*Disinfecting* works by using chemicals, for example EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs. But killing germs remaining on a surface after cleaning further reduces any risk of spreading infection.

## **Cleaning and Disinfection After Persons Suspected/Confirmed to Have COVID-19 Have Been in the Facility**

### **Timing and location of cleaning and disinfection of surfaces**

At a school, daycare center, office, or other facility that does not house people overnight:

- Close off areas visited by the ill persons. Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment (like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines) used by the ill persons, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.

At a facility that does house people overnight:

- Follow Interim Guidance for US Institutions of Higher Education on working with state and local health officials to isolate ill persons and provide temporary housing as needed.
- Close off areas visited by the ill persons. Open outside doors and windows and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area. Wait 24 hours or as long as practical before beginning cleaning and disinfection.
- In areas where ill persons are being housed in isolation, follow Interim Guidance for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection for U.S. Households with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019. This includes focusing on cleaning and disinfecting common areas where staff and others providing services may come into contact with ill persons, but reducing

cleaning and disinfection of bedrooms and bathrooms used by ill persons to an as-needed basis.

- In areas where ill persons have visited or used, continue routine cleaning and disinfection as in this guidance.

If it has been more than seven days since the person with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.

## How to Clean and Disinfect

### Hard (non-porous) Surfaces

If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water before disinfection.

For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available here. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products for concentration, application method, contact time, and so on.

Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use:

- Wear skin protection and consider eye protection for potential splash hazards
- Ensure adequate ventilation
- Use no more than the amount recommended on the label
- Use water at room temperature for dilution (unless stated otherwise on the label)
- Avoid mixing chemical products
- Label diluted cleaning solutions
- Store and use chemicals out of the reach of children and pets

You should never eat, drink, breathe or inject these products into your body or apply directly to your skin as they can cause serious harm. Do not wipe or bathe pets with these products or any other products that are not approved for animal use.

See the EPA's six steps for Safe and Effective Disinfectant Use.

Special considerations should be made for people with asthma and they should not be present when cleaning and disinfecting is happening as this can trigger asthma exacerbations. Learn more about reducing asthma triggers.

Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions (at least 1000ppm sodium hypochlorite, or concentration of 5%–6%) can be used, if appropriate, for the surface. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application, ensuring a contact time of at least one minute, and allowing proper ventilation during and after application. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household

bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.

Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of room temperature water
- or—
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of room temperature water

Cleaning staff and others should clean hands often, including immediately after removing gloves and after contact with an ill person, by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.

Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use.

- Keep hand sanitizers away from fire or flame
- For children under six years of age, hand sanitizer should be used with adult supervision
- Always store hand sanitizer out of reach of children and pets

See the FDA's Tips for Safe Sanitizer Use and CDC's Hand Sanitizer Use Considerations

Follow normal preventive actions while at work and home, including cleaning hands and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Additional key times to clean hands include:

- After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using the restroom
- Before eating or preparing food
- After contact with animals or pets
- Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance such as a child

## **Soft (porous) Surfaces**

For soft (porous) surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs, and drapes, remove visible contamination if present and clean with appropriate cleaners indicated for use on these surfaces.

After cleaning:

- If the items can be laundered, launder items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and then dry items completely. Otherwise, use products that are

EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19<sup>external icon</sup> and that are suitable for porous surfaces

## **Electronics**

For electronics such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines, remove visible contamination if present.

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products.
- Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics.
- If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

## **Linens, Clothing, and Other Items that Go in the Laundry**

In order to minimize the possibility of dispersing virus through the air, do not shake dirty laundry.

Wash items as appropriate in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting for the items and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person can be washed with other people's items.

Clean and disinfect hampers or other carts for transporting laundry according to guidance above for hard or soft surfaces.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Hand Hygiene**

The risk of exposure to cleaning staff is inherently low. Cleaning staff should wear disposable gloves and gowns for all tasks in the cleaning process, including handling trash.

- Gloves and gowns should be compatible with the disinfectant products being used.
- Additional PPE might be required based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash.
- Gloves and gowns should be removed carefully to avoid contamination of the wearer and the surrounding area. Be sure to clean hands after removing gloves.
- If gowns are not available, coveralls, aprons or work uniforms can be worn during cleaning and disinfecting. Reusable (washable) clothing should be laundered afterwards. Clean hands after handling dirty laundry.

Gloves should be removed after cleaning a room or area occupied by ill persons. Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.

Cleaning staff should immediately report breaches in PPE such as a tear in gloves or any other potential exposures to their supervisor.

Cleaning staff and others should clean hands often, including immediately after removing gloves and after contact with an ill person, by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.

Follow normal preventive actions while at work and home, including cleaning hands and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Additional key times to clean hands include:

- After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After using the restroom
- Before eating or preparing food
- After contact with animals or pets
- Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance such as a child

## **Additional Considerations for Employers**

Employers should work with their local and state health departments to ensure appropriate local protocols and guidelines, such as updated or additional guidance for cleaning and disinfection, are followed, including for identification of new potential cases of COVID-19.

Employers should educate staff and workers performing cleaning, laundry, and trash pick-up activities to recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 and provide instructions on what to do if they develop symptoms within 14 days after their last possible exposure to the virus. At a minimum, any staff should immediately notify their supervisor and the local health department if they develop symptoms of COVID-19. The health department will provide guidance on what actions need to be taken.

Employers should develop policies for worker protection and provide training to all cleaning staff on site prior to providing cleaning tasks. Training should include when to use PPE, what PPE is necessary, how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE, and how to properly dispose of PPE.

Employers must ensure workers are trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals used in the workplace in accordance with OSHA's Hazard Communication standard (29 CFR 1910.1200).

Employers must comply with OSHA's standards on Bloodborne Pathogens (29 CFR 1910.1030external icon), including proper disposal of regulated waste, and PPE (29 CFR 1910.132).

## Addendum D: Protocols and Guidelines for Distribution of Eucharist Through Phase III

The Office of the Bishop of the Diocese of Olympia specifies the following protocols and guidelines for the distribution of the Eucharist during Phase III.

1. Proper precautions and all PPE and distancing guidelines should be followed by all in the chain of work. The Altar Guild and all in the chain need to carefully sanitize all surfaces, wash and sanitize hands, wear masks, and so on. All linens, including the pall, should be cleaned thoroughly after each use and certainly before each use.
2. Everyone in the service and in the altar party should always wear masks. Only the one speaking at any time may remove his or her mask.
3. The presider alone will set the table. Try to keep all other hands out of this, including any altar assistants. This includes bringing items from the credence table. The presider should simply retrieve all the elements, vessels, etc.
4. The presider should vigorously wash and sanitize hands before the service, and multiple times throughout the service, most especially just before setting the table and beginning the consecration prayer. This should not be ceremonial washing but vigorous washing.
5. In setting the table, the presider should use the pall to cover all wafers, and only expose the priest host. If you want to use an additional covering, you may, but at least you should use the pall. The main point here is to stop droplets that may come from the presider.
6. The priest host will only be touched and consumed by the presider.
7. No one else should stand near the presider at the altar.
8. For distribution, the presider will either consume the priest host before distribution or set it aside to consume after all have received.
9. Wafers are then placed at least six inches apart in a line around the side and front of the altar. Presider should make every effort not to touch the linen if possible.
10. If there are steps or a concern about accessibility, you can consider another table put at floor level upon which the presider could also place wafers. This could also be used in larger settings to offer multiple access points to communion.

11. After the presider has placed these first wafers on the table, the ushers can begin to allow the congregants to come forward one at a time, all the while keeping social distance. You might consider putting marks with tape on the floor to show six feet distance and offer some guidance.
12. Before approaching the altar, EVERY PERSON receiving should sanitize hands and allow hands to dry before going forward.
13. Every person should take one wafer, and NOT consume it until back at his or her seat. At that point, he or she can remove the mask and consume the wafer. If possible, sanitizer could be in every pew or aisle so that people could sanitize after consumption, if possible and if desired.
14. You are highly encouraged NOT to use real bread during this time. If you choose to use bread, you must follow the previous guidelines. However, you can only distribute the bread by putting it into a dixie cup or something similar.
15. There is to be no wine offered to anyone other than the presider until at least Phase IV. More guidelines will come when we get to that phase.

## Addendum E: Protocol for Administering Baptism During Phase III

The Office of the Bishop of the Diocese of Olympia specifies the following protocol for baptism during Phase III.

1. For baptism, only one presider is allowed for all manual acts, blessing the water, baptizing, anointing, and so on.
2. Water should not be put into the font until the actual blessing of the water.
3. Only the presider may touch the water.
4. The presider will vigorously wash his or her hands and sanitize before the blessing of the water, and repeat this action before and after each baptism.
5. If aspersions are planned for the congregation, that water should be extracted from the font, in a dedicated bowl, by the presider, before any baptisms take place and set aside for use for this.
6. If there are multiple baptisms, you have several options when baptizing. You may take water in your hands and move away from over the font, and pour the water over the candidate's head. Otherwise, you could use a separate bowl and walk to the candidate to baptize, trying not to let water fall off the head of the person, back into the bowl. If this does happen, you must use a new bowl. In fact, it would be best to have a new bowl for each candidate.
7. Only the presider anoints. The presider must wear a mask.
8. Candles should either not be used during this time, OR, you may light the candle, show it to the person, then blow it out and keep this to be sanitized after the service and given to the candidate. You could do all of this after the service if you wish.
9. During this time there is to be no sprinkling of the congregation with the water in the font or bowls used for baptisms. Only use the water set aside in the beginning.
10. All water, in all bowls and in the font, should be discarded BEFORE the ending of the service.
11. Before baptism, you could send a link to the congregants with a card that people could download and print. The card includes the line, "Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support this person in her life in Christ? We will." Then ask the people to write a message and mail it to the baptismal candidate, affirming their participation in the liturgy and the covenant and whatever other message of welcome and support they want to give.