

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension

Magnolia

2330 Viewmont Way W, Seattle, WA 98199

Re-Opening Plan for Limited In-Person Gatherings

Addressing: COVID-19 Policies, Concerns, Controls, and
Procedures

A copy of this plan must be available
at the church office for inspection by
state and local health authorities.

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Church of the Ascension Planning for Re-Opening during the COVID-19 Pandemic

This planning entails information concerning the re-opening of the Magnolia Church of the Ascension (COA) and is intended to be a guide to our church leaders, congregation, and visitors for safe and practical ways to gather for worship and other events held on COA property.

This document is based on the State of Washington requirements, The CDC (US Center for Disease Control), and the Diocese of Olympia guidelines.

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Policy

This Plan supports the COA Property - Building and Grounds Committee - Mission: To provide continuity, communications and planning for care and stewardship of our Church's property so as to keep it in good shape and order to support our Faithful and serve our Church as it serves us.

The health and well-being of our parishioners and staff is of utmost importance to the Church of the Ascension. All processes delineated in this document are designed to protect the most vulnerable of our congregation at all times. Acknowledgement that COVID-19 is a highly communicable and potentially lethal disease is key to taking the time and attention to prevent its spread in our faith community.

In some cases, our processes may exceed the guidelines of the CDC or Public Health experts due to the unique configuration and characteristics of our spaces and how they are utilized.

Primarily, decisions are based on reducing the spread of contagious elements of COVID-19 via breathing, touching of surfaces, and contact with infected persons.

This Plan applies to all persons who come to the Church of the Ascension premises, including: Staff, Congregation, scheduled meeting attendees, ad hoc event attendees, visitors, vendors, et al.

Key to maximizing transmission are these **three most important** practices:

1. **WEAR A MASK**
2. **Wash Your Hands**
3. **Maintain Social Distancing of at least 6 feet**

In all cases, anyone who has any of the following **should not** attend, officiate, or visit the Church:

1. Has active COVID-19, including asymptomatic COVID-19
2. has been exposed to someone who has COVID-19,
3. has been tested positive for COVID-19,
4. has expressed symptoms – high fever (over 100.4F), chills, dry cough, loss of sense of smell or taste, or muscle aches.

Anyone who develops any of the above within 6 days of attending a service, meeting, or event must report this as soon as possible to the Rector or Senior Warden of the Vestry.

Anyone who has exhibited any of these symptoms must self-quarantine for a minimum of 14 days before returning to COA premises.

People

COVID-19 Supervisor

The Rector of COA is the default COVID-19 Supervisor and may designate an alternate(s) as needed. The Senior Warden will be an alternate as well. Their responsibilities include:

1. Development and updating of this Re-Opening Plan (Plan) per local, state and CDC guidelines.
2. Monitoring and evaluating the Plan's effectiveness on a weekly basis
3. Reporting any cases of COVID-19 to appropriate Public Health and Diocesan authorities (see appendix)
4. Providing appropriate supplies – face masks, disinfectant wipes, gloves, cleaning supplies
5. Approval, scheduling, and publication of all on-premise services, meetings, or ad hoc events involving 5 or more.
6. Distribution, collection, and retention for at least 90 (14 days is the requirement, but they can certainly be kept longer) days of sign-ins, Meeting Checklists, and attendance information for all sanctioned events or gatherings of groups of 5 or more, including: services, rehearsals, or other meetings and ad hoc events. (see appendix for checklist and sign-in sheets)

Worship Staff

- Worship staff consists of the Rector, Lay ministers, Readers, Acolytes. Only these persons should access the altar, Sacristy, and vestment storage and dressing areas.
- Ushers will be at front door and to assist location of seating and to direct the congregants leaving after the service to ensure that social distancing is preserved.

Music Staff

- Only music staff will touch or operate any musical equipment and will be responsible for cleaning before and after use. This includes rehearsals and during services.
- Choir and singing will be only as allowed by music director and with at least 10+ feet of social distancing.

Office Staff

- Office staff are responsible for access to office area and for cleaning before and after use of keyboards, copier, and phones or any other equipment in office.
- Masks will be worn if more than one person is in office area.

Ushers

- Ushers will greet congregation at front door of Narthex.
- At Check-in, people will check-in with an usher. Usher takes temperatures (with a touch free thermometer), enter data in a log, collects disclosure and screening forms (see appendix), ensures all are wearing masks, and direct parishioners to their seat (see seating chart in appendix). Ushers also assist with dismissal.
- The entry table for check-in will include: hand sanitizer, extra Disclosure and Screening Forms, sanitized pens available and a place for used pens.

- There are COVID-19 safety and protocol signs in the entry way (inside and outside of the church).
- Also, the sidewalks and entry way into the church are marked at 6 foot distances so that people know where to stand while waiting to enter.

Congregation

- All services are open to congregation and visitors.
- Limit of 49 total in Sanctuary plus Worship Team and ushers per seating chart (see appendix).
- Pre-registration is suggested to limit and record number at each service
- Multiple Services may be required

Visitors and Vendors

- All visitors and vendors must check in at office and be escorted while on premises other than attendees of services

Places

Prior to re-opening, these areas should be deeply cleaned using CDC recommended cleaning products. All prayer books, hymnals, note paper, pencils, etc., should be removed and stored.

Main Entry to Narthex

- Doors are opened an hour before services for ventilation
- Table at entry way door includes supplies (see the Usher section above).

Narthex

- The Narthex should be used primarily for transit to other areas, such as Sanctuary, stairs or MacLauchlan Hall
- All doors to Sanctuary will be open during occupancy by 5 or more persons

Sanctuary

- Windows and all doors are to be opened at least one hour before services. Space will be defined for the Worship Team at the altar, pulpit/lectern with a 15-foot perimeter for social distancing to allow scripture readings and sermons to be delivered without a mask.
- Prior to and following each service the chairs, pews, and all surfaces touched will be cleaned/sanitized by the ushers.
- The offertory plate will be placed on a separate table for the receipt of offerings. It is encouraged to use the QR code provided for contactless offerings. The plate(s) will not be passed during the service.
- Ushers will direct families/households to designated seating areas. Ushers dismiss, beginning from front and direct the congregants to the Narthex doors so that social distancing can be preserved while leaving the sanctuary.

- Pew seating and chairs are marked as designated for social distances of at least 6+ feet apart in all directions. See Appendix for seating charts. Most seating locations will be single or double seats, and some will seat up to 6 people from a family unit.
- In pews, there are stations with tissue, hand sanitizer and waste receptacles

Altar and Music area

- There should be at least 15 feet separation from the pulpit, altar, or congregation –facing music to the first occupied pews
- Only the organist or musicians should touch any musical devices. Before and after use, the device will be wiped down or sprayed with disinfectant as appropriate
- All who are in the altar or music area will wear masks unless speaking or performing.
- Hand sanitizers are available at Altar and near organ.

Sacristy

- Only worship service participants should go into the Sacristy
- Anyone handling altar materials – chalice, trays, etc. must wash hands before arranging materials and before putting them away after cleaning – as required

Courtyard/Columbarium

- Since it is outside, social distancing of at least 6 feet is minimum requirement.
- Gatherings should be limited to households, or groups of 5 at least 10 feet apart.
- The 10' X 10' canopy can be used. It covers some of the courtyard, but has no walls, so it has full, natural ventilation.

MacLauchlan Hall

- Until Phase 4 is reached, there will be very limited access to MacLauchlan Hall – no meetings of more than 5 – socially distanced and masked.

Kitchen

- Kitchen is for Office staff use only until Phase 4

Bathrooms

- Cleaning kits are available in all bathrooms.
- Bathrooms are sanitized by spraying before and after services only – other users should use provided disinfectant wipes as needed to wipe handles, etc.
- All but the upstairs Men's room have been equipped with motion sensor lights and fan switches – do not turn them on or off manually.
- Downstairs bathrooms should not be used if possible. If used, disinfectant wipes are available in each bathroom.
- Protocol for use of the bathrooms should be posted inside each bathroom. Disinfectant wipes should be available if needed to wipe faucets, toilet handles, etc.
- Outside the bathrooms, signage should be posted regarding number of people allowed in the bathroom at one time. Also, it is suggested that the floor outside be marked at 6 ft distances so that people waiting know where to stand to remain socially distanced.

Processes for Eucharist and Baptism

Protocols and Guidelines for the distribution of Eucharist through Phase III

- Proper precautions and all PPE and distancing guidelines should be followed by all in the Worship Team. Members of Altar Guild, and all in the Worship Team need to carefully sanitize all surfaces, wash and sanitize hands, wear masks, etc.
- All linens, including the pall should be cleaned thoroughly after each use and certainly before each use.
- All at the service, and in the altar party, should always wear masks. Only the person speaking at the Altar or Pulpit may remove their mask.
- The Presider alone will set the table. Try to keep all other hands out of this, including any altar assistants. The Presider should go to retrieve all the elements, vessels, etc.
- Presider shall vigorously wash and sanitize hands before the service, and sanitize hands 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.
- 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 the pall. The main point here is to stop droplets that may come from the Presider.
- Priest host will only be touched and consumed by the Presider
- No one else should stand near the Presider at the altar. All should in Worship Team or musicians must stay at least 6 feet behind or 15 feet in front.
- For distribution, the presider will either consume the priest host before distribution or set it aside to consume after all have received.
- Wafers are then placed at least 6 inches apart in a line around the side and front of a table in front of the altar at floor level. Presider should make every effort not to touch the linen if possible.
- After 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 6 feet social distance as indicated by markers on the floor.
- Before approaching the altar EVERY PERSON receiving should sanitize their hands at the provided sanitizer dispenser, allowing them to dry, before going forward.
- Every person should take one wafer, and NOT consume it until back at their seat. At that point they can remove their 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.
- There is no wine offered to anyone other than the Presider (until at least Phase IV. More guidelines will come as we get to that phase.)

Protocol for administering baptism through Phase III

- For baptism, only one Presider is allowed for all manual acts, blessing the water, baptizing, anointing, etc.
- Water should not be put into the font until the actual blessing of the water.
- Only the Presider may touch the water.

- Presider will vigorously wash their hands and sanitize before the Blessing of the Water, and will repeat this action before and after each baptism.
- [do we do this? Jim] 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.
- [do we do this? Jim] If there are multiple baptisms, there are two options when baptizing. The Presider may take water in their hands and move away from over the font, and pour the water over the candidate's head. Or the Presider could use a separate bowl and walk to the candidate to baptize, using a new bowl for each candidate.
- Presider only anoints. Wearing mask.
- Candles will not be used during Phase 3; however, 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 after the service.
- During this time there is to be no sprinkling of the congregation with the water in font or bowls used for baptisms. Water may be set aside in the beginning for this purpose.
- All water, in all bowls and the font should be discarded BEFORE the ending of the service
- Prior to the baptism, a link may be sent to the congregants with a card that people could download and print that 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." It will ask 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.

Appendices

Links to COVID-19 resources

Note: These sites are updated on a regular basis. Please check for current status as needed.

King County - <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19.aspx>

CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>

State of Washington - <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/what-you-need-know/safe-start/whats-open>

Governor's "Healthy Washington — Roadmap to Recovery," a COVID-19 phased recovery plan. - <https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/HealthyWashington.pdf>

Diocese of Olympia - <https://ecww.org/sample-reopening-plans/>

<https://ecww.org/a-guide-to-gathering-in-person-the-diocese-of-olympias-phased-in-plan-for-resuming-in-person-worship-and-activities/>

The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) - an independent global health research center at the University of Washington <http://www.healthdata.org/COVID/updates>

Cleaning and sanitization resources:

- The CDC page on how to disinfect: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- EPA approved disinfectants for COVID-19: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- King County Health Department resources, including posters: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/child-teen-health/child-care-health/bleach.aspx>
- Child Care Health Program (CCHP) of Public Health Seattle & King County <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/~media/depts/health/child-teen-health/child-care-health/documents/comparison-health-practices.ashx>

COA's Meeting Checklist

Please complete this checklist every time you meet. Leave it on this clipboard with the registry of names of those who attended the meeting. Thank you.

Date: _____ Group: _____ Location: _____

Who is the designated COVID-19 Supervisor for this gathering? _____
Contact information – phone _____ email _____

	✓ Action
Were all “high touch areas” cleaned and disinfected before the gathering?	
Has each person filled out the disclosure form and gotten their temperature taken?	
Is there a copy of the “COA’s COVID 19 Re-Opening Plan”? A copy of this plan must be available for inspection by state and local authorities.	
Are necessary COVID-19 safety and information posters visibly posted?	
Is everyone wearing a face mask before, during and after the gathering?	
Is everyone refraining from physical contact?	
Is there soap and running water available to everyone?	
Is there disinfectant available in at least two locations of the gathering space?	
Are all parties sitting at least 6 feet apart? Those in the same family or household may sit closer.	
Are tissues and trash cans available in at least two locations of the gathering space?	
Were all “high touch areas” cleaned and disinfected after the gathering?	
Did we maintain a log of the names of everyone who attended? This log must be maintained for at least four weeks.	
(Only applicable when bathrooms are available to the public) Is there someone insuring that only the number of people in each bathroom matches the amount of stalls and those waiting in line are standing 6ft apart?	

Gathering Sign-in Sheet

Gathering Reason: _____ Date: _____

Designated COVID-19 Supervisor for this gathering? _____

Attendees:

Name	Telephone	email	Other

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 that:

1. 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;
2. If I have been recently exposed to COVID-19, I understand that I may pose a risk to others;
3. I agree that none of the following applies to me:
 - a. To my knowledge, I have not been in close or proximate contact with anyone who has had symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
 - b. I have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
 - c. I have not experienced symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days, including but not limited to fever, fatigue, difficulty breathing, loss of smell and/or taste, or dry cough.
4. If there is an outbreak, my information may be shared with Public Health officials to engage in an approved contact tracing program. I understand that 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.
5. 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:

Church Safety Guidelines Poster

CHURCH SAFETY GUIDELINES

Virtual services are the safest way to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

- If hosting in-person services:
- Outdoor is safer than indoors
 - Shorter services are safer than longer services
 - The fewer people, the safer
 - Improve ventilation and airflow when indoors*
 - Assume that someone with COVID-19 is present



Wear face mask
(including clergy,
staff, and visitors)



Wash hands frequently
with soap and water



Practice social
distancing
(at least 6 feet)



Stay home if you have
COVID-like symptoms
or were exposed



Children under 10
should stay at home



Avoid shaking
hands



Avoid crowding



Elderly 60+ should
pray at home



Avoid sharing supplies
or ritual objects
(Bring your own
readings, use
one-time containers
for Eucharist.
Sanitize shared objects)



Singing is high-risk and allowed with restrictions
For full details, visit kingcounty.gov/covid/faith.



Exit church after
services end

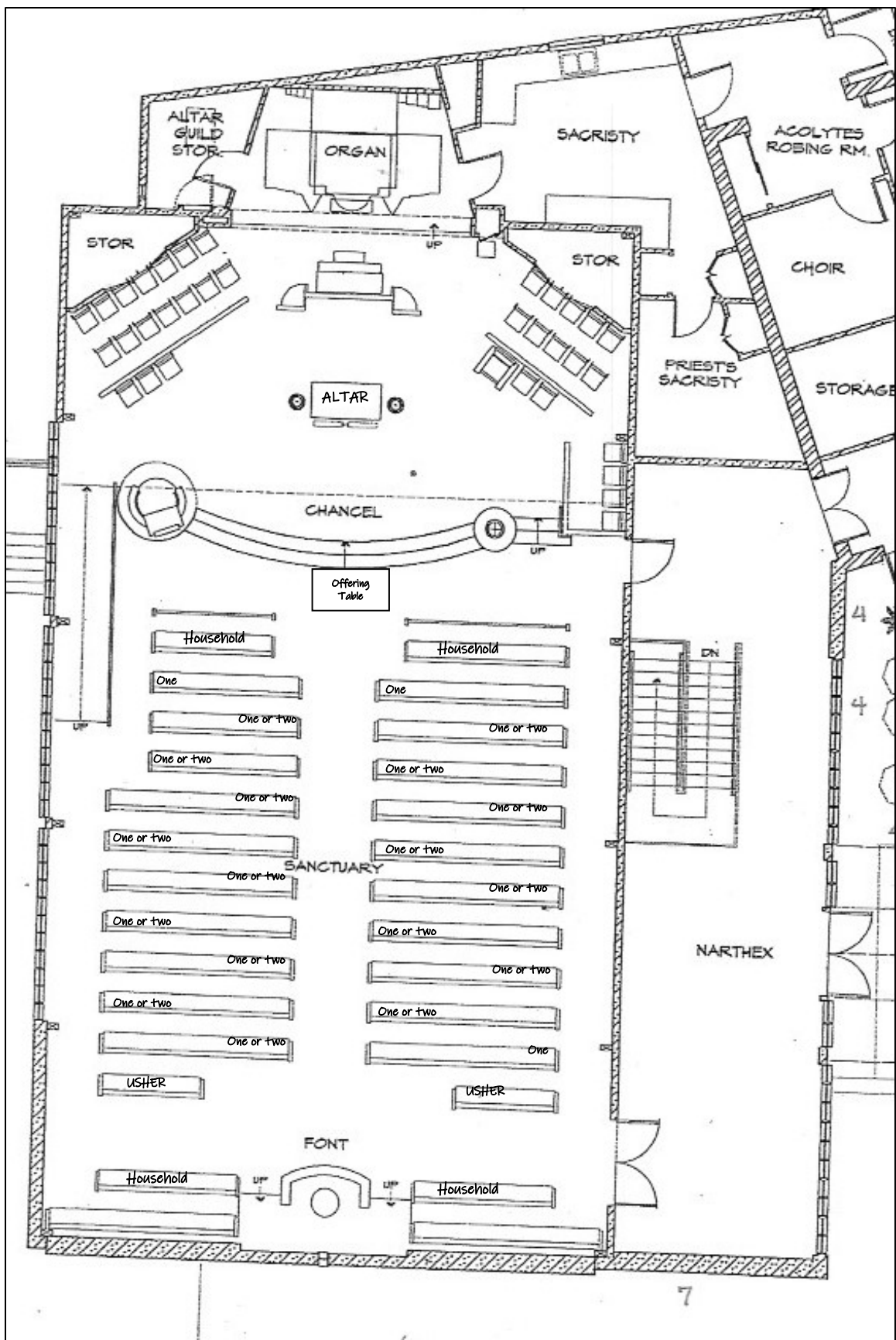
*Consult with an HVAC Specialist

February 2, 2021

Public Health
Seattle & King County



Ascension COVID-19 Social Distance Seating Chart





THE DIOCESE OF OLYMPIA PHASED APPROACH

Reopening Church and Modifying Physical Distancing and Sacraments

ecww.org

1

Phase 1

2

Phase 2





3

Phase 3

4

Phase 4

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Eucharist	NO	NO	YES, NO Common Cup	YES, with Common Cup
Virtual Services	YES, 10 or Less People	YES, 10 or Less People	Continue for Those That Cannot Physically Attend	Consider Continuing
Funerals/ Weddings	NO	YES, 10 or Less People, Follow Specific Guidelines	YES, No More Than 50 People	Unrestricted
Meetings	ONLINE	5 People or Less or ONLINE	50 People or Less	Unrestricted
Diocesan and Group Events	ONLY ONLINE	ONLY ONLINE	50 People or Less	Unrestricted
Church Buildings	CLOSED	CLOSED	OPEN for 50 or Less and Under Guidelines	Unrestricted
Childcare, Sunday School, Youth Activities	NONE	NONE	50 People or Less	Unrestricted

WASHINGTON'S PHASED APPROACH Reopening Business and Modifying Physical Distancing Measures				
	 Phase 1	 Phase 2	 Phase 3	 Phase 4
High-Risk Populations*	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Continue to Stay Home, Stay Healthy	Resume public interactions, with physical distancing
Recreation	Some outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, golf, boating, hiking)	All outdoor recreation involving fewer than 5 people outside your household (camping, beaches, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outdoor group rec. sports activities (5-50 people) - Recreational facilities at <50% capacity (public pools, etc.) 	Resume all recreational activity
Gatherings (social, spiritual)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None - Drive in spiritual service with one household per vehicle 	Gather with no more than 5 people outside your household per week	Allow gatherings with no more than 50 people	Allow gatherings with >50 people
Travel	Only essential travel	Limited non-essential travel within proximity of your home	Resume non-essential travel	Continue non-essential travel
Business/ Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Essential businesses open - Existing construction that meet agreed upon criteria - Landscaping - Automobile sales - Retail (curb-side pick-up orders only) - Car washes - Pet walkers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remaining manufacturing - New construction - In-home/domestic services (nannies, housecleaning, etc.) - Retail (in-store purchases allowed with restrictions) - Real estate - Professional services/office-based businesses (telework remains strongly encouraged) - Hair and nail salons/Barbers - Housecleaning - Restaurants <50% capacity table size no larger than 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restaurants <75% capacity/ table size no larger than 10 - Bars at <25% capacity - Indoor gyms at <50% capacity - Movie theaters at <50% capacity - Government (telework remains strongly encouraged) - Libraries - Museums - All other business activities not yet listed except for nightclubs and events with greater than 50 people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nightclubs - Concert venues - Large sporting events - Resume unrestricted staffing of worksites, but continue to practice physical distancing and good hygiene

* High-risk populations are currently defined by CDC as: persons 65 years of age and older; people of all ages with underlying medical conditions (particularly not well controlled) including people with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, people who have serious heart conditions, people who are immunocompromised, people with severe obesity, people with diabetes, people with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, and people with liver disease; people who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility.