

Stage 2 Re-opening Information for Places of Worship

Faith communities have continued to meet in different ways during the COVID-19 Pandemic, whether it be by phone or virtually. As part of the Stage 2 Announcement, starting June 12 at 12:01 AM, places of worship may reopen under certain public health guidelines.

All places of worship in Chatham-Kent must adhere to the following requirements:

- Ensure there is no more than 30% capacity of your facility participating in worship at any one time.
- Provide hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol at all points of entry and exit to ensure that attendees have the ability to perform hand hygiene routinely.
- Maintain a distance of two metres/six feet between all persons from different households and/or social circles as much as possible.
- Wear a mask in the rare circumstance that physical distancing is not possible.
- Refrain from singing and loud speaking, as these acts can propel respiratory droplets further. If singing and loud speaking must be included in worship, require that all attendees wear a mask. Also consider spacing households and/or social circles further apart than two metres/six feet.
- Avoid opportunities for the virus to spread through touch, either directly or indirectly through surfaces and objects, including objects that may be used in rituals or ceremonies.
- Ensure enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices are implemented.
- Avoid fellowship activities before and after the service.
- Ensure no food or beverages are provided for consumption before, during, or after worship.

Faith community leaders/organizers are responsible for reducing the risk of infection among staff, volunteers, community members, and visitors who participate in their activities.

Preparation

- Consider alternative ways to involve individuals at greater risk of complications from COVID-19, including online services.
- Calculate 30% capacity of the available space in order to plan for seating that maintains physical distancing.

- Remove seating as needed to ensure a two metre/six foot distance. If seating is fixed, mark it unavailable or rope off as appropriate.
- Consider re-arranging the schedule to provide more, but smaller, services.
- Plan how to control movement into, out of, and within your facility to ensure two metre/six foot distancing is maintained at all times.
- Discourage movement against the flow of people moving in the space. It may be necessary to mark off two metre/six foot distances outside and/or in a vestibule if it is anticipated that lines will form. Consider controlled departure by row.
- Consider developing a system to RSVP attendance to specific services or events.
- Discontinue use of holy water stoup (if applicable).
- Temporarily cancel childcare for before, during, and after worship.
- If holding Sunday school, ensure that participants are physically distanced from each other, and are in groups of 10 or less.
- Develop a schedule for increased cleaning and disinfecting, particularly of commonly touched surfaces.

Prevention of COVID-19 Outbreaks

- Ensure a list of attendees is maintained for each service. If there is a case of COVID-19 who was contagious while attending services, public health will use that list to conduct contact tracing.
- Anyone with even one symptom of COVID-19 should remain at home and get tested.
- CK Public Health will advise of any additional outbreak control measures.

Effective Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Ensure frequent cleaning and disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces and common areas is implemented. Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID-19.
- Use only disinfectants that have a Drug Identification Number (DIN) or Natural Product Number (NPN) that confirms it is approved for use in Canada.
- Check the expiry dates of products you use and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Garbage bins should be lined and disposed of regularly.



Signage

[Ontario Hand Washing Sign](#)

[Physical distancing reminder](#)

[Covid-19 Screening Poster for Restaurants & Public Places](#)

If you have any further questions, please contact the CK Public Health COVID-19 intake line to speak with a Health Inspector at 519.355.1071 x 1900.

COVID Line: 519.355.1071 ext 1900

Email: covid19@chatham-kent.ca

