

June 30, 2020
COVID-19
Frequently Ask Questions (FAQ) #8

1. Are churches required to remain closed in light of Governor Pritzker's announcement on June 26, 2020 that the State of Illinois was moving to Phase 4 of the "Restore Illinois" plan?

In line with [Bishop Sally Dyck's June 23, 2020, letter to laity and clergy...](#)

"Gatherings of up to 50 people are allowed. Accommodations should be in place to ensure the safety of vulnerable individuals. Face coverings and social distancing are the norm and time in crowded environments should be minimized."

In line with the guidelines issued by the CDC, wearing facemasks and practicing social distancing (staying 6 feet apart) serve as the cornerstone for ensuring the safety and well-being of everyone!

2. Where can I find information on the ReTurn Plan released by the Conference?

Information on the ReTurn Plan is available on the conference website at:

<https://www.umcnic.org/returnteam>

After a church prepares its respective reopening plan, the plan should be submitted to the District Superintendent for review.

3. Can drive-up parades wherein persons remain in their vehicles occur on the church's premises?

Yes, drive-up parades may occur on church premises. The following guidelines should be observed when coordinating and conducting drive-up parades:

- Check with your City government to determine whether drive-up parades are permitted
- Guest(s) of honor are required to wear a face mask at all times while receiving/viewing the motorcade
- Guest(s) of honor are required to practice social distancing (standing 6 feet apart)
- All persons are not allowed to exit their vehicle
- All persons are to keep their face, hands and feet inside of their vehicle
- Use of church bathroom(s) is not permitted by persons in the motorcade
- Guest(s) of honor and their immediate family are allowed to use the church bathroom (limited to only 1 person at a time and practicing social distancing)
- Parking of motorcade vehicles is not permitted

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4. Are COVID-19 waivers required for attendees/participants in meetings, VBS, camps, services, food pantries, etc.?

COVID-19 waivers are not required.

5. Can we “track” members, guests, visitors and other persons who come onto the church premises for the purposes of notification should a COVID-19 exposure/outbreak occur at the church?

Yes, “tracking” information may be performed at the church’s discretion.

If elected, the following process should be followed:

1. Prepare a sign-in sheet with “COVID-19 Tracking Form” as the title at the top.
 - a. Indicate the following: “Information required to provide notification to persons should a COVID -19 exposure/outbreak occur at (insert name of church)”
 - b. Column headings should capture the following:
 - i. Name
 - ii. Phone number
 - iii. Email
 - iv. 1st Notice Date
 - v. 2nd Notice Date
 - vi. Date Email Sent
 - vii. Date Letter Mailed

2. Should a COVID-19 exposure/outbreak occur the church is required to contact all persons listed on the Tracking Sheet. When contacting person(s) listed on the Tracking Sheet, do not communicate notice of the exposure/outbreak to anyone except the person(s) named.
 - a. The dates of the first and second phone contact, the email, and the letter notifying each person must be recorded.
 - b. The email/letter notification should state...

“Please contact XXX at XXX United Methodist Church regarding a recent COVID-19 matter.

Your timely response is requested.”

6. Can we open our school to host classes via the church and/or schools that are shared space usage?

On June 4, 2020, Governor JB Pritzker signed an executive order allowing schools to reopen for summer school as follows:

- a. All public and non-public schools serving students from kindergarten to 12th grade may reopen as long as they follow Phase 3 guidelines of Restore Illinois, including limiting the number of people in a space to 10 or fewer, perform social distancing - 6 feet of distance between people, ensure hygiene supplies and PPE are available and used. Refer to page 11 for information on Restore Illinois.
- b. All public and nonpublic schools may continue to provide food and other non-educational services. Schools must follow Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) guidance during Phase 3 and take proactive measures to ensure the safety of students, staff, and visitors.
- c. Limit number of people in one space to ten or fewer, consistent with public health guidance.
- d. Discourage physical contact between individuals.
- e. Ensure appropriate hygienic practices, including washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as frequently as possible or using hand sanitizer, covering coughs or sneezes (into the sleeve or elbow, not hands), discouraging the sharing of personal items, and regularly cleaning high-touch surfaces.
- f. Require the use of appropriate PPE, including the use of face coverings by students, staff, and visitors who are over age two and able to medically tolerate a face covering.
- g. Schools must provide face coverings to all employees who are not able to maintain a minimum 6-foot social distance at all times and, to the extent possible, make disposable face coverings available for all students.

Notwithstanding the above, the following additional safety practices are recommended be instituted by the church and/or school shared space user:

1. Should staff or a student have a fever or feel ill, they should be instructed to stay home.
2. PPE required of everyone.
3. Hand sanitizer placed in key entry and activity areas.
4. Temperature checks administered prior to entrance to the building. Staff required to check students' temperature prior to their shift.
5. Social distancing practices enforced during all lessons and assembly.
6. No more than 10 students with adult instructors should be in class room/group setting at any given time.
7. During snack/meal breaks ensure social distancing is performed.
8. Mask may be removed for eat/drink/conversation.
9. Formation of lines to assemble/move to areas throughout the building should entail 6-foot distance by each student

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10. Bathroom breaks monitored ~ 1 student per bathroom at a time.
11. Room(s) clean prior and after every program by staff. Wipe down areas touched by students and staff. Clean rooms/play areas throughout the day.
12. Use open space areas to assemble/convene over use of playground area.

Proof of Insurance

Schools that occupy the church building as “shared space users” are required to submit a Certificate of Liability Insurance indicating combined single limits for property and general liability with minimum policy limits of \$1,000,000. Statutory limits are also required for workers’ compensation.

The Certificate of Liability Insurance should state “(name of church), its pastor, board of trustees and the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church are additional insured under the policy.”

7. Can in-person meetings, Bible studies or even choir practices be held?

In-person meetings of groups not to exceed 50 persons may be held. However, online forums such as Google Hangouts/Zoom/WebEx/Facebook continue to serve as the preferred communication method.

As for choir practices and performances, the CDC’s stance is to "promote social distancing at services and other gatherings, ensuring that clergy, staff, choir, volunteers and attendees at the services follow social distancing, as circumstances and faith traditions allow, to lessen their risk."

To further promote the safety and well-being of all persons, choir practices and performances are not recommended regardless of the number of performers. Musical audio recordings serve as the preferred communication method.

8. Can repairs be perform throughout the church building in light of the recent allowance for 50 or less persons assembling?

Repairs/improvements of any nature (e.g. carpet cleaning, painting, electrical, plumbing, HVAC servicing, etc.) may be performed on an “exceptions” basis. Please contact Dwayne Jackson, Director of Risk Management Services, at 312.783.5945 or djackson@umcnic.org for more information and approval.

If an exception is granted, social distancing should be maintained. Limits on how many workers/volunteers can be on the premises as the work takes place should also be established.

Should outside contractors be engaged, all employees are required to wear facemasks and practice social distancing.

A Certificate of Liability Insurance indicating minimum combined single limits of \$1,000,000 for property, liability and commercial auto, inclusive of statutory limits for workers' compensation, is required.

The Certificate of Liability Insurance should state:

“(Name of church), its pastor, board of trustees and the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church are additional insured under the policy.”

9. We have a food pantry. Can we open and service clients?

Food pantry operations may continue at the church's discretion. Cautionary steps should be implemented restricting and/or limiting clients to no more than three clients within the building premises at any one time.

Persons assembling food items within the food pantry should wear PPE (e.g. face masks and disposable gloves).

Social distancing that entails limiting face-to-face contact and keeping a distance of 6 feet apart should be practice continuously.

10. How does COVID-19 affect the operations of a food pantry housed at the church facility if it is operated by outside agency or organization?

The outside agency or organization must provide a summary to the church of the food pantry's processes, including details about servicing clients while incorporating safe health practices including the use of PPE and social distancing.

A Share Space Agreement should be in place. The organization should also provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance showing the food pantry maintains required insurance that indicates minimum combined single limits of \$1,000,000 for property, general liability and auto (if own) inclusive of statutory limits for workers' compensation.

The Certificate of Liability Insurance should state:

“(Name of church), its pastor, board of trustees and the Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church are additional insured under the policy.”

11. PADS...we cannot turn away clients!

Participation in PADS is not permitted at this time due to the concern for the health and safety of clients, volunteers, and congregations. Please contact Dwayne Jackson via email at djackson@umcnic.org or via phone @ 312.783.5945 to discuss any plans to participate in PADS.

12. The church was instructed by local governmental agency to conduct a deep cleaning of the area used for PADS. Is the cost of deep cleaning covered under insurance?

No, any cost to perform deep cleaning stemming from the pandemic is not covered under insurance.

13. A person visiting the food pantry shows signs of illness associated with COVID-19...what should we do?

If you identify and/or suspect any client is showing signs/symptoms of COVID-19, instruct the client to seek immediate medical care. **Access to facilities located at the church by the client is prohibited.**

According to the CDC, systems of COVID-19 range from mild symptoms to severe illness, which may appear 2 - 14 days after exposure to the virus. Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

[Click here](#) for additional information via the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) website.

Please notify your District Superintendent and Dwayne Jackson @ 312-783-5945 or djackson@umcnic.org of any incident.

14. What is "Deep Cleaning?"

The coronavirus is known to spread mostly person to person via respiratory droplets (like mucus or saliva). There are also studies that suggest the virus thrives on plastic or steel surfaces for days. There is also evidence that transmission can happen by touching infected surfaces that include, but are not limited to:

- Doorknobs, handles, light switches, remote controls
- Smartphone screens
- Hard surfaces (e.g., computer displays, keyboard & mouse, desk surfaces)
- Conference tables and chairs
- Porous surfaces and carpets

The CDC recommends a two-step preventive measure that entails “cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection.”

Disinfecting ~ works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces and objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or germs, but by killing germs on a surface, which can further lower the risk of spread.

Sanitizing ~ lowers the number of germs on surfaces and objects to safe levels, as judged by public health standards. This process works by cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects.

15. What is the cost of deep cleaning performed by professional cleaning services?

The number of professional cleaning services available in the marketplace grows each day as government mandated stay-at-home orders expire.

In an effort to gauge pricing for deep cleaning services, the approximate cost for an Illinois local vendor that performs preventive, pre-exposure sanitization cleaning of high touch surfaces on an hourly basis is approximately \$145, with minimum requirements for number of workers and hours.

The pricing for “**pre-exposure**” sanitizing cleaning includes labor, products, chemicals, and any necessary PPE.

Pricing charged by the same Illinois vendor for “**post-exposure**” sanitization cleaning is charged per square foot, depending on the size of the property, on a scale ranging from \$2.85 per square foot to \$0.75 per square foot. An estimate should be obtained to calculate the actual cost based on the specific scope of work.

There is concern that there are vendors/firms in the marketplace that falsely represent their services...so buyer beware!

16. Will the Conference look into obtaining “volume” pricing when/if “deep cleaning” becomes a mandated task required by the government and/or the church is interested in having deep cleaning performed?

As the issue of “deep cleaning” develops in concert with receiving guidance/instructions from governmental leadership, the Conference will respond accordingly.

17. Should the church perform deep cleaning?

Over the course of the past couple of months, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has developed and released guidelines on various subjects relating to COVID-19. Please refer to the CDC link on page 11 for insightful information.

18. The pastor was called to perform ministry services at a member's residence. Should the pastor go to the member's residence and perform ministry services?

No, ministry services are not recommended to be performed at a member's residence.

Conversely, should the pastor be contacted to perform ministry services at a hospital, long-term nursing facility, and/or assisted living facility, PPE attire should be obtained from the facility and worn.

19. A church member's family is requesting funeral services be held at the church. Should the church host funeral services?

Funerals may be performed while ensuring cautionary steps restricting attendance to 50 persons in line with the recommended "six (6) feet" safe distance between persons.

20. Does the Conference maintain Business Interruption insurance to cover lost revenue streams (e.g., including tithes, offerings, employee wages, preschool/daycare, camps usage/enrollment, etc.)?

The Business Interruption coverage provided under the Conference's "Property" policy does not cover financial losses where the cause of loss is other than direct physical damage of the property.

The commercial insurance marketplace is extremely restrictive in offering a coverage extension, which would pertain to such losses and the cost for such coverage is prohibitive.

That said, as there is some uncertainty as of this date regarding the possibility of Congressionally mandated coverage, each church should maintain detailed accounting records documenting lost revenue and/or costs incurred stemming from the pandemic, as follows:

- For the period starting January 2020 through August 2020
- Record lost revenue by church / ministry / preschool / daycare / camp
- Record all expenses incurred pertaining to deep cleaning
- Maintain year-end financial statements for 2018 & 2019

What should the church do with the financial data?

Hold onto the financial data/records until when it may be requested by the Conference.

21. A church employee states he/she contracted COVID-19 at his/her workplace and wants to file a workers' compensation claim.

Assemble the employee's information, circumstances wherein the employee was exposed to COVID-19, the name and address of all medical providers, and dates of treatment.

Report the claim to:

Insurance Company: Hartford Insurance
Phone #: 800.327.3636
Policy #: 83-WEBT-9716

Hartford Insurance will initiate an investigation and adjudicate the claim.

22. Should steps be performed to inspect the church premises in light of the recent allowance of 50 or less persons assembling?

Yes, a walk-around/ walk-through inspection of the exterior and interior of the church premises should be performed. The inspection of the church premises should address the following:

Exterior Walk-Around

- All doors and windows are secure/locked.
- No sign of break-in. *If there are signs of break-in, immediately call the police. DO NOT enter the church premises.*

Interior Walk-Through

- Minimum usage of electrical equipment (unplug “non-used” appliances, computer equipment, music equipment, etc.)
- Minimum usage of lights left turned on
- Check floors and ceilings for visible signs of leakage
- Heating/HVAC temperatures set to low/medium setting
- Garbage removed for pickup by city services

When conducting the walk-around/walk-through, a minimum of two (2) persons should attend. Both persons should wear PPE and perform social distancing.

Flushing Water System ~ Legionella

The following should be performed to flush the water system (hot and cold):

1. Flush the entire system (hot and cold for 10 – 15 minutes)
2. Turn the hot water temperature to 140 degrees F and run the system until the water passes through.
3. Clean any decorative water fountains using disinfectant cleaning products.

Additional information regarding reopening buildings after prolonged shutdown or reduced operation is available at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>

23. Upon performing inspection of the church premises, damage was observed to the church roof, siding and possible water damage. Don't know if the damage was caused by the recent storm or vandalism. Whom should we notify of the damages?

A property claim should be reported to Travelers Insurance as follows:

Phone: 800.238.6225

Policy #: KTK-CMB-0J08847-A-20 (*note, the "0" are zeros*)

Named Insured: Northern Illinois Conference of The United Methodist Church

Upon notifying Travelers Insurance, please provide the full name and address of the church.

Notice should also be communicated to Dwayne Jackson at 312-783-5945.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

- State of Illinois “Restore Illinois” Plan
<https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/sfc/servlet.shepherd/document/download/069t000000BadS0AAJ?operationContext=S1>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- White House - 15 Days to Slow the Spread
https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf
- CDC Guidance for Community and Faith-Based Organizations
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>
- Symptoms
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/symptoms.html>
- Illinois Department of Health
<http://www.dph.illinois.gov>
<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus/preventing-spread-communities/homeless-shelters>
- Guidance for Community and Faith-based Organizations
(As prepared by the Chicago Department of Public Health)
<https://www.umcnic.org/media/files/Bishop/COVID-19%20Guidance%20for%20Community-%20and%20Faith-based%20Organizations%2002.28.2020.pdf>
- Faith-Based Community Preparedness Checklist
<https://www.umcnic.org/media/files/coronavirus/faithbasedcommunitychecklist.pdf>
- How the Rural Church Can Help During COVID-19
<https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/10178/how-the-rural-church-can-help-during-covid-19>

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- World Health Organization (WHO)
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- Coronavirus Information for Individuals and Organizations
<https://www.phly.com/rms/blog/Coronavirus.aspx>
- Keeping Your Workplace Safe
<https://www.umcnic.org/media/files/coronavirus/workplace-school-and-home-guidance.pdf>
- OSHA Quick Reference Card
<https://www.umcnic.org/media/files/coronavirus/Corona%20OSHA%20Card2.pdf>
- What to do if you're sick
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID19-symptoms.pdf>
- “Stop the Spread of Germs” Poster
English Version
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>
Spanish Version
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs-sp.pdf>
- JOURNEYS | The Road Home (PADs) and COVID-19
<https://www.journeystheroadhome.org/covid-19.html>

FAQs will be updated as new questions are received. The information listed herein is also available on the NICUMC webpage at <https://www.umcnic.org/riskmanagement>

Questions & Contact Information

If you have additional questions, contact Dwayne Jackson at 312-783-5945 or via email at djackson@umcnic.org.