

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## COVID-19 IN HOUSE GUIDELINES

The goal of this document is to provide guidance to support a safe, clean environment for the staff, volunteers, congregants, worshippers, and visitors participating in religious services and other activities at the First Presbyterian Church (FPC) campus. Session adopted the guidelines in this document as the policy of First Presbyterian Church on June 15, 2020.

### FPC Campus Specific Plan

- Establish a written COVID-19 prevention plan and perform a comprehensive risk assessment of the campus. Designate a team to implement the plan.
- Identify contact information for the local health department where the workplace is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among staff and congregants/visitors.
- Communicate the plan to staff, volunteers, and congregants.
- Train staff and volunteers on the implementation of the plan.
- Regularly evaluate the campus facilities for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
- Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected staff member and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive staff and close contacts.
- Adhere to the guidelines below.

### Staff, Employee and Volunteer Training

- Train all staff, and volunteers in COVID-19 prevention policies. Training will include but not be limited to the following topics:
  - Provide information on COVID-19, how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
  - Self-screening at home, work, and church services, including temperature and/or symptom checks using CDC guidelines.
  - The importance of not coming to work or participating in church activities if they have symptoms of COVID-19 as described by the CDC, such as a **frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell**, or if they or someone they live with have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - The importance of seeking medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face.
  - The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, **including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol** when they cannot get to a sink or handwashing station.

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- The importance of physical distancing, both on campus and off (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
  - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
  - Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
  - Employees should wash or sanitize their hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
  - Avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth.
  - Cloth or similar face coverings should be washed after each shift.
- Ensure all staff, employees, and volunteers have necessary PPE while on FPC property.
- Volunteers will be trained to conduct the following activities prior to and during church services:
  - Temperature screenings for all attendees.
  - General wellness check of all attendees.
  - Hand sanitizing for all attendees.
  - Enforcing the wearing of masks by anyone over the age of 2.
  - Ushering attendees to appropriate seating.
  - Enforcing physical distancing.
  - Addressing individuals reluctant to follow the FPC policy.
  - Generally encouraging attendees to take care of their health and the health of others.

### Topics for Congregants

All individuals attending activities at the FPC campus are expected to follow the practices outlined below:

- Self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms prior to attending any activities on campus.
- Use hand sanitizer before joining any church services or meetings.
- Wearing a face mask is required before joining any church services or meetings.
- When a face mask is not practical the use of a face shield is allowed when presenting to the congregation as long as the required physical distancing can be maintained.
- When a face mask cannot be utilized due to a individuals respiratory condition the use of a face shield will be allowed as long as the required physical distancing can be maintained.

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- Proper use of face coverings, include:
  - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
  - Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
  - Avoid touching their face when wearing a mask.
  - Before and after using or adjusting face coverings your hands should be washed or sanitized.
  - Follow physical distancing protocols.

### Individual Control Measures and Screening

- Trained staff will conduct temperature and/or symptom screenings for all staff and volunteers at the first opportunity upon arriving on church property. The temperature/symptom screener will avoid close contact with individuals being screened to the extent possible. Both screeners and staff will wear face coverings for the screening. A record will be kept in the church office of all persons screened.
- All staff, employees and congregants/visitors who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, or who have family members who are ill will be encouraged to stay home.
- FPC will provide workers and volunteers all required protective equipment, including masks, face shields, eye protection and gloves, where necessary and ensure that they are used according to this policy.
- FPC staff will evaluate where using disposable gloves may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for staff and volunteers who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items. All workers and volunteers should wear gloves when handling items contaminated by body fluids.
- Face coverings are required when staff, volunteers, or visitors are in the vicinity of others. Face coverings are required when making home visits as part of providing services, or in a vehicle during church-related travel with others. Face coverings must not be shared. FPC will make face coverings available to all staff, volunteers, visitors, and congregants.
- Staff and volunteers should not enter the home or visit someone who has tested positive for, exhibited symptoms of, or has been in contact with someone infected with COVID-19 until an appropriate waiting period as described by CDC guidelines has occurred.
- FPC will take reasonable measures, including posting signage in strategic and highly visible locations, to remind staff/volunteers/congregants/visitors that they should use face coverings and practice physical distancing whenever possible. Babies and children under age two are not required and should not wear face coverings, in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- FPC will communicate to congregants, visitors and staff the steps being taken so that they are familiar with the policies (including to stay home if experiencing symptoms or are at increased risk of becoming sick, use of face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing and/or sanitizing, and cough etiquette) before reopening the campus and arriving at the facility. Staff and volunteers will remind congregants/visitors of FPC practices when welcoming them to church services and with announcements during the services.

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- Congregants/visitors will be screened by trained volunteers for temperature and/or symptoms prior to attending church services or meetings and asked to use hand sanitizer and to wear face coverings.

### Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- High traffic areas such as lobbies, halls, meeting rooms, offices, libraries, and kitchen areas will be thoroughly cleaned. Commonly used surfaces such as doorknobs, toilets, cabinet/drawer handles, handwashing facilities, pulpits, and donation boxes will be disinfected frequently.
- Sharing work equipment and supplies, such as phones, office equipment, computers, etc., will be avoided wherever possible. Personal protective equipment and masks are not to be shared.
- Where items must be shared, they will be disinfected between uses with a cleaner appropriate for the surface. Items include but are not limited to the following: shared office equipment (copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones, keyboards, staplers, etc.) and shared worship items, etc. Whenever possible, a specific individual will be assigned the duty of operating communal equipment such as copiers.
- Personal work areas such as desks and cubicles are to be cleaned and disinfected frequently by staff or volunteers.
- Items used in worship services such as bibles, hymnals, or printed material will not be shared. Church service informational material will be presented through the use of the overhead screens or other devices.
- Sanitary material (e.g. soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer) will be kept stocked and available. Signage will be used to reinforce handwashing and hand sanitizing.
- Microphones and stands, music stands, instruments and other items on pulpits and podiums will be disinfected between each use. Whenever possible individual equipment will be provided for each person requiring such equipment for the event.
- Appropriate steps will be taken to prevent contamination of seats and/or to disinfect seats after each event or meeting.
- A touchless hand sanitizer station will be provided prior to entering the sanctuary. Individual bottles of hand sanitizer will be provided whenever possible at entrances and contact areas such as the office and meeting rooms.
- Signage will be placed informing congregants/visitors that public drinking water fountains are inoperable.

### Physical Distancing Guidelines

- In addition to in-person worship services FPC will continue to provide services through alternative methods (such as via internet live and/or recorded streaming, telephone, drive-in, etc.) whenever possible.
- Whenever practical FPC will hold in-person services outside.
- Volunteers and/or staff will ask congregants/visitors to arrive and leave in a single group to minimize crossflow of people.
- For worship services volunteers and/or staff will supervise and direct congregants/visitors to help people find places to sit and stand that are at least six feet apart from other guests/household groups.

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- To the extent possible, congregants/visitors will be welcomed and dismissed in an orderly way to maintain physical distancing and minimize crossflow of traffic.
- Reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that physical distancing of at least six feet is maintained between staff, congregants/visitors, etc. This will include use of visual cues on the floor or signs to indicate where people should sit and stand. Members of the same household may be seated together but should maintain at least six feet of distance from other households.
- Congregants/visitors will be encouraged to physically distance themselves from others outside their household, avoid touching surfaces, and to leave the facility if they do not feel well.
- Designated volunteers or staff will assist people in maintaining distances during activities.
- Face coverings are required for congregants/visitors and staff especially when a physical distance of at least six feet cannot be maintained or is not possible.
- Walking paths will be highlighted between spaces designated for congregants/visitors to sit.
- The passing of offering plates will be discontinued. An open container will be placed at a designated location to be used as congregants enter or depart the area of worship.
- Children will remain in the care of those in their household unit and not interact with children of other parties at any time while on the campus. Use of Sunday school and play areas will be discontinued for children where physical distancing of at least six feet cannot be maintained.
- Touching for religious and/or cultural purposes, such as holding hands or laying on of hands, will be limited even between members of the same household.
- Other commonly used areas such as podiums, speaker areas, communion, choir and band space, meeting rooms, conference rooms, etc., will be configured to allow for at least six feet between people.
- Where possible separate routing will be designated for entry and exit into meeting rooms to help maintain physical distancing and lessen the instances of people closely passing each other.
- Exterior doors will be propped open during peak periods when congregants/visitors are entering and exiting facilities, if possible and in accordance with security and safety protocols.
- The restrooms will be limited to one person at a time to allow for physical distancing except when a family member is required to assist another family member.
- Staff, congregants, visitors, etc., will be discouraged from engaging in handshakes, hugs, and similar greetings that break physical distance. Reasonable measures will be taken to remind people to wave or use other greetings.
- Reconfigure parking lots to every other space to ensure proper separation between the sides of cars. Initially volunteers will be posted in the parking lot to facilitate this change.
- The FPC campus will be closed for visitation outside of scheduled services or meetings. Arrangements must be made through the pastor or a designated representative for access to the campus at any other time.
- Staff will determine areas where people are likely to congregate and interact, such as the Koinonia Hall, Fireside room, Christian Education, Nursery and Kitchen, for which access will be closed or limited. Consider installing signage or increase physical distance between tables/seating when there is continued

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use of these areas

- For areas that are available for gatherings Staff will post signs stating the maximum occupancy allowed to comply with the physical distancing requirements.

### **Other Considerations for Activities at FPC**

- Self-service food and beverages will not be provided on the campus.
- Potlucks or similar family-style eating and drinking events that increase the risk of cross contamination are highly discouraged. If food and beverages must be served, they should be provided in single-serve, disposable containers whenever possible. Employees or volunteers serving food must wash hands frequently and wear disposable gloves and face coverings.
- Group singing, group recitation, and other practices and performances where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets are discontinued during church services until further notice.
- A physical distance greater than six feet must be maintained between singers and between the singers and the audience.
- Modification to other practices that might encourage the spread of COVID-19 will be evaluated, as necessary. Examples are allowing activities to be performed by fewer people, avoiding the use of a common implements, offering communion by providing pre-packed communion items on chairs prior to service, etc., in accordance with CDC guidelines.

### **Considerations for Funerals Services**

Specific policies for funeral services will be determined, as necessary. All of the above guidelines will be followed to the extent possible. Additional issues that should be considered when arranging a funeral service are:

- Reduced visitor capacity and staggered visitation times. Follow all cleaning and disinfection measures as described in this guidance. Whenever possible, remind visitors to maintain physical distance from each other, from staff and volunteers, and from the deceased.
- Consult and comply with local guidance regarding limits on gathering sizes, travel, holding funerals for those who died from COVID-19, etc.

