

Preparing Faith & Spiritual Communities for Coronavirus

Tips to prevent its spread and prepare for possible disruption to your services and activities

Take time now to ensure your community is ready:

Develop a plan.

Plan the strategies you will use to help keep members healthy. How will you share accurate information? How will you provide services—especially for vulnerable populations—if you are short staffed? See our fact sheet for workplaces for more ideas: bit.ly/prepforworkplaces.

Encourage sick people to stay home.

Sick people should not come to services, classes, or other events. Encourage participation with remote options if you offer them. If you typically require attendance for certain classes, implement flexible attendance policies.

Offer options to participate remotely.

Tap or livestream services, classes, and events. Communicate these options to members.

Consider temporarily altering certain customs and rites.

Many communities have a time of greeting one another by shaking hands or embracing. Suggest members nod or smile instead. If your community emphasizes eating or drinking from shared dishes or cups, consider using single serve options instead. Offer hand sanitizer before these types of activities.

Promote everyday prevention measures.

CDC has lots of resources: bit.ly/cdcfluresources. Include reminders in bulletins, programs, and other materials about staying home when sick, covering cough/sneezes with tissues, and washing hands. Reinforce these messages with kids during their lessons, as appropriate.



Work with your cleaning staff to make sure spaces are disinfected frequently and correctly.

The CDC has basic information on cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing: bit.ly/cleaningworkspaces.

Keep a supply of tissues, hand sanitizer, and disinfecting wipes.

Stock these items in seating and gathering areas. Encourage members to use these items often.

Suggest people spread out.

If you have the room, suggest people spread about three feet apart during services, classes, and events.

Make a plan for when you would postpone or cancel services, classes, or events.

At what point would you postpone or cancel services? How would you communicate scheduling changes?

Reinforce food safety practices.

Many communities prepare and serve meals together. Continue to follow the food preparation and handling traditions you already practice and add extra emphasis on cleaning surfaces and washing hands.

Promote the flu shot.

Talk to members about the importance of getting a flu shot. In the future, consider hosting vaccination clinics.

Promote accurate sources of information.

Stay informed through [the CDC](https://www.cdc.gov), [the Wisconsin Department of Health Services](https://www.wisconsin.gov), and [Public Health Madison & Dane County](https://www.publichealthmdc.com).