

CHECK LIST FOR DIFFERENT STAGES OF REENTRY **revised June 12, 2020**

Each church is required to have Reentry Plans in place, approved by session, and submitted to the presbytery office before any gatherings may take place on your church's campus. Your plans may require amendment as we receive more information from the State of New Jersey and move through these stages. It may be advisable to submit your plans in stages as the requirements change, however, each version of your plans must be approved by the session.

Each stage should include:

- Plans for worship (including weddings and funerals)
- Detailed plans for your context that meet requirements of social distancing for small groups and/or worship
- Sanitation Procedures
- Communications to congregation and those who use the building

Stage 1

New Jersey Stage 1

- Effective June 9 inside gatherings of up 25% capacity or 50 of gathering space whichever is lower. Face coverings and 6 ft distancing required.
- Allows for some staff use of building as needed.
- Permits "drive in" option with regulations
 - Windows closed if cars are not 6 feet apart
 - Masks are worn by everyone outside of cars
 - Exiting cars only for emergencies or bathroom use
- outside gathering (see Stage 2)

Congregation Stage 1 check list

- Hold online worship services only. No services should take place inside the building(s) until Governor's orders are lifted or changed. (see Stage 2)
- If recording online worship service in sanctuary, maintain 6 ft of space between people who are participating in the worship service. Recommended that only those who need to be there for the recording be present. Social distancing for all present. Face coverings when not speaking or leading worship.
- Bible Studies and small group continue to meet online.
- Keep office functions as limited as possible to ensure essential operations. All those in the office should be wearing masks. Surfaces should be sanitized regularly.

- Session meetings/Deacon meetings should continue to meet online.
- Food pantry/soup kitchens/feeding programs should continue with masks, social distancing and sanitizing. Work in shifts to keep the groups to 10 or less.
- High risks individuals (people over 60 and those with underlying conditions) whether staff or volunteers should continue to shelter in place/isolation/work from home.
- Building users and Renters should continue to not use the building unless a plan is developed with the session
- Consider worship outside if there is space to social distance.
- Consider "drive in" style worship if there is space, sound equipment or FM service, and can continue to keep vehicles 6 feet apart. All NJ guidelines must be followed.
- Limit entrances and exits to keep areas of building clean of virus.
- Begin plans for stage two which may mean obtaining needed equipment, social distancing, hand washing, sanitizing and masks.

Stage 2

New Jersey Stage 2 includes:

- Effective June 10 **religious** outside gatherings are permitted. No size limit. Social distancing and face coverings are required.
- Some use of the building for small groups or staff.
- Day Cares can be open following state instructions.
- Day Camp programs, that are outside may begin in July but must follow state guidelines.
- Guidelines by state change regularly please check NJ coronavirus website.

Congregation Stage 2 check list

- Continue to hold online worship.
- Plan for in sanctuary worship at 25% capacity or 50 which ever is lower and/or Worship with 50 or less after submitting reentry plan to Presbytery trustees.
- Record from home or sanctuary with participation from small groups of people.
- No Singing

Requirements for all Worship outside

- Outside Worship Services shall follow the NJ government guidelines for size of group. Must follow all social distancing including 6 feet apart, face coverings, hand sanitizer/handwashing, and other regulations or requirements by NJ Government orders.
- Mark spaces where people can sit as single/couples or family units.

- Make provisions for restroom use or not. Let people know before they arrive.

General Recommendations for Worship

- Continue sharing worship online so that those who are at high risk and cannot or should not join at the face to face gathering will not be excluded.
- Participants should not share microphones
- Communion should be for online worship.
- No congregational singing.
- Use “no-touch” alternatives for passing the peace, collecting the offering and other liturgical rituals.
- Do not use paper bulletins. Consider using screens as alternatives. For indoor worship consider removing Bibles and Hymnals from the pews.
- Inside Distancing: Keep 6 feet apart in the pews. This may mean meeting in a larger location such as the fellowship hall.
- Plans for staff who are unable to participate in groups because of underlying health concerns for the staff person or persons within their home.
- Do not offer fellowship/coffee hour following worship, inside or outside. Too hard to keep social distance.
- Weddings could take place in a more traditional way with careful attention to the guest list that reflects the state rules and social distancing. Face Coverings should always be worn.
- Funerals should follow state rules for attendants. Face Coverings should always be worn.
- Plan for memorial services at a time when more people can participate and be together.
- Confirmation – Find creative ways to celebrate confirmation.
- Baptism can be inside or outside. Use social distancing, wear face coverings (not children under 2) and sanitize hands. Parents should hold the child.

Small Group Faith Formation

- Church School should continue online.
- Offer opportunities for Bible Studies, Faith formation groups to meet online.
- If you don’t have small groups, use this opportunity to start small groups within your congregation. As the situation shifts, these small groups can provide spiritual and emotional support to one another.
- Think creatively about VBS. Consider doing it online or have a VBS Box or Drop off Activity. VBS could be considered a “day camp” under NJ stage 2 guidelines. You must follow the regulations for a Day Camp.
- Mission Trips would be unwise at this time. Look for local activities such as food pantries, or community services that need volunteers for different projects. Work with other congregations to do local mission projects.

Church office functions

- Continue to follow the Governor's orders and/or recommendations on allowing staff to work from home.
- At the office space continue to follow social distancing. Mask should be worn if there is more than one person in the office or anticipate people coming to the office.
- Sanitize the workspaces daily. Pay attention to high touch surfaces. Provide for sanitizing wipes and hand washing for those who will be counting the offering.
- Offering online giving. Have information in the bulletin or on the screen on how to access the online giving.
- Committee meetings, session meetings, deacon meetings should continue to meet online.

Other Building users

- Continue to follow the Governor's orders for other uses of the building for each stage.
- Require other groups who use the building on a regular basis to present a plan that addresses cleaning needs, masks and social distancing, to the session prior to being allowed back into the building.
- Require all groups to maintain records of who attends the gathering in case contact tracking is required.

Stage 3

At this time we do not have clear guidelines from the state on larger gatherings. We will update this information as soon as the information is available.

We will publish recommendations and check list as soon as we have information from the State of New Jersey.

Questions to consider at all stages of plans.

How are we going to continue to connect with those who have “found us” online or have health concerns and cannot come back or live away from the local community?

What do we need to do to continue to connect online? Do we need better wifi? Cameras? Screens? Long term ZOOM account? Tech support?

How are things going to be different as we move through the pandemic and come to the other side? What are we bringing with us? What can we leave behind? How are we going to discern where God is leading us now?

How will these guidelines, new procedures affect our budget? What does that say to our stewardship?

What is needed for an outside worship? Restrooms? How many volunteers will be needed to maintain the guidelines? What if someone (s) doesn't follow procedures, social distancing, hand sanitizing, or face coverings? Do you mark the “six feet”? What about bad weather? How to stay connected to those who are unable to participate?

Where is God calling us into this new reality? How are we going to get there?