



Church Life Reopening

Gallagher's Five-Step Process to Guide
Your Return to Workplace Strategy
With Confidence

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Gallagher

Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting

Guidelines Build Confidence



As states and other government authorities lift the restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses and community nonprofits are starting to prepare for reopening. The decision to reopen is a complex issue. We cannot advise you whether you should or should not reopen your business. If you decide to do so, we have generated this information for your review and consideration. It includes some high-level ideas that you may want to consider as you move through the process, but may not take into account all of the unique and specific issues that may be involved in opening your business. If you have questions about this information or your insurance coverages, please contact your Gallagher representative.

We also encourage you to visit our pandemic site for developing resources for the church.

Gallagher's expertise can help your:

PEOPLE by supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of your workforce

PROPERTY by monitoring and mitigating potential virus rebounds or outbreaks

FINANCIAL STABILITY by reducing your risk and supporting your revenue streams

Reopening the church will require careful planning and consideration for the safety of our employees, volunteers, congregation and the church community we serve. The safety and health of our staff, volunteers and church community is a top priority. An action plan will need to be developed and followed to reduce the possibility of reintroducing the virus. The following guidelines establish action items that should be considered before opening churches for service and after a church service.

The following steps are recommended as the initial phase for opening our facilities as our temporary new normal approach to the complexities of dealing with the safety of our congregation, staff, volunteers and others during church activities. Updates will be provided as we move toward adjustments to normalcy.

Five-Step Process to Returning to the Workplace





STEP
1

Key Actions Safety Checklist

GOAL: Monitor and assess the legal obligations your organization may face when reopening based on state, local and federal government directives. Document the information you're tracking to help inform the development of policies and procedures to reopen. At this time, your employees have not returned to the workplace and should maintain their current work status.

ELIGIBILITY TO REOPEN

It is essential that each church understand all regulatory requirements and what is needed to reopen. The following should be considered:

- Establish a reopening leadership team
- Check of federal/state/county/local regulations for any restrictions or precautions that must be in place
- Designate core personnel needed for day-to-day operations and church services
- Assess facility preparation needs (see below)
- Establish employees/volunteers safety practices (see below)
- Secure necessary equipment/products/personal protective equipment (PPEs)
- Establish communication/education/training for employees/volunteers/parishioners
- Review and understand CDC guidelines

STEP 2

Key Actions Safety Checklist

GOAL: Develop a plan that provides clear, realistic and meaningful guidance to site-specific protocols and procedures that protect your employees. Make sure you have a plan and structure in place to communicate these processes with employees. Share new information as local, state and federal requirements evolve.

EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER SAFETY

A key element to reopening is establishing administrative controls (guidelines, training and communication) to protect employees and volunteers. Guidelines include:

1. Leadership Group

- Determine the workforce and volunteers needed for reopening
- Consider establishing the following requirements:
 - A no return-to-work policy if displaying high temperature or flu-like symptoms
 - A position on travel/travel abroad
 - A position on quarantine for someone in the family in contact with an infected person
 - A position on employee hygiene on-site (i.e., wash hands frequently)
- Provide all employees with hand sanitizer kits and masks.
- Consider temperature checks of all employees.
- Practice social distancing of six feet and wear masks in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- Shut off drinking fountains and close break rooms to limit gathering areas.
- Wipe down desk surfaces and high-touch areas at workstations.

2. General Training Requirements

- All employees/volunteers who return to work shall first receive training for the appropriate work before they can assume their duties.
- All employees and volunteers should be trained in basic requirements, including:
 - Proper use of PPE, including respirators, face masks, eye protection and gloves
 - Basic understanding of how the virus is spread
 - How to decontaminate surfaces
 - Proper procedures for social distancing
 - Proper procedures for social contact with church members and vendors
 - Proper hand sanitation
 - Assisting the disabled

3. Staff Meetings

- When possible, meetings should be held virtually.
- Staff meetings during the opening process should be limited to necessary staff only and require seating that allows for six feet between participants.
- All staff meetings shall require the participants to wear a face mask or respirator.
- Normal social greetings such as shaking of hands, hugging or any other bodily contact should be discontinued.
- If an employee/volunteer feels ill, they should stay home.
- Hand sanitizers shall be made available in the meeting room and offices.

4. Maintenance and Custodial Employees

- All maintenance and custodial employees should be provided with the necessary PPE, gloves, masks and eye protection. In accordance with [CDC guidelines](#), custodians should wear required PPE when cleaning/disinfecting or working less than six feet from others.
- All maintenance and custodial employees should receive additional training in proper cleaning and disinfecting guidelines.
- Follow the cleaning product manufacturer's label instructions for all cleaning and disinfection of product and equipment surfaces for concentration, application method and contact time, etc.
 - Use EPA disinfecting products. Follow label instructions ([see EPA website](#))
 - Establish a cleaning/dusting/vacuum/mopping and disinfection schedule based on site use and conditions (church, narthex, sanctuary/offices/quiet/crying room/meeting rooms/day care/religious education)
 - Develop inspection and monitoring plan for signage rules, hand sanitizer stations restroom cleaning
 - If an outside vendor is used for cleaning/disinfecting, establish a minimum cleaning/disinfecting plan
 - Continuously clean/wipe down common touch areas such as doors, light switches and hard surfaces throughout the day where heavy pedestrian traffic areas exist

STEP 3

Key Actions Safety Checklist

GOAL: Ensure your facilities can safely resume operations. This could include third-party cleaning and disinfection, facility safety checks, assessment of technology, security, and the potential design and installation of new technologies intended to eliminate virus exposures from HVAC systems, etc.

FACILITY PREPARATION

Many of our facilities and churches have not been occupied for an extended period, therefore it is important to make sure they are ready for reoccupancy.

- All critical building systems should be checked for proper operation.**
 - Inspect and test all mechanical systems to ensure their proper operation.
 - Clean heating, ventilation, air conditioning system (HVAC). Consult with your air conditioning contractor for enhancing air filtration system, and determine if the system can increase the number of air exchanges in the church.
 - Test all life safety devices (alarm panel, jockey pump, emergency lights, smoke/heat detectors, etc.) to ensure their proper functioning.
 - Starting with valves closest to the water main, open all domestic water valves (sinks, showers, fountains, etc.) and flush them for at least five minutes.
 - Flush all toilets twice prior to reopening.
 - Remove all ice from ice machines, sanitize, and then restart if applicable.
 - Inspect the property for any existing physical hazards and mitigate them.
 - Sanitize all public spaces with approved disinfecting cleansers.
 - Deep clean and sanitize all common areas and restroom hard surfaces, with emphasis on any surface areas where high contact or touch is likely. Use [CDC guidelines](#) for disinfecting.
 - Clean and disinfect kitchen, refrigeration, cooking equipment, counters and floors.
 - Follow Department of Health guidelines for your state/county/local authorities.
 - Clean and disinfect child care areas, all rooms used for church meetings.
 - Check parking lot, sidewalks and common areas for any tripping or other hazards.
 - Install hand sanitization stations at high-traffic areas, restrooms and common areas.
 - Determine where social distancing will need to be considered for limited crowding (six-foot distancing).
 - Post signage of reopening rules, proper etiquette, social distancing, hand-washing, etc.

STEP
4

Key Actions Safety Checklist

GOAL: A review of your systems and processes to ensure vendor compliance; identification of supply chain needs for increased PPE and sanitizer demands; and evaluation of how your organization's compliance with current pandemic requirements can affect your students, stakeholders and the public.

PRODUCTS, SUPPLIES AND THIRD-PARTY VENDORS

- With the current demands on PPE, hand sanitizer and cleaning chemicals, it is important to check with your suppliers for these items and get your orders placed as there may be delayed times to get these products/supplies.
- Third-party vendors for your building systems such as fire protection/alarms, HVAC system, kitchen equipment and other building system vendors need to be contacted for services in preparation of reopening the building/facilities.
- If a third-party vendor is used for cleaning and disinfecting, contact them to review their cleaning protocols and make sure they follow CDC guidelines and use EPA-approved disinfecting chemicals in their cleaning/disinfecting. Consider contract review with legal representatives.
- On-site vendors should follow social distancing protocols. In addition, vendors should only have limited access to the building where their jobs are performed.

STEP 5

Key Actions Safety Checklist

GOAL: Reaffirm your relationships with students, other stakeholders and the general public with ongoing communication. Make it clear what policies, procedures and protection methodologies you've implemented, and how you're properly using physical barriers, management controls, and procedures to maintain safety and an optimal workplace environment.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH/EDUCATION

Direction and monitoring by church employees, ushers and/or volunteers will be essential to maintain observance of guidelines during church service, communion celebration, meetings and events. Most teams will be able to perform well depending on the size of your church and community. Additional individuals may be added to help team leaders carry out their responsibilities. Continue to communicate your plan (as it changes) to church staff and members, while partnering with other churches and governmental agencies.

Services

- Continue/consider virtual online worship services and bible study. Consider outdoor presentations weather permitting and drive-in church services.
- Accept limited attendees and apply a first come, first enter system according to building capacity and following social/physical distancing guidelines. Social distancing of 6 feet should be maintained upon entering the building. Based on the needs assessment, formation of an entrance line and spacing may need to be considered.
- Rearrange or identify/block areas/seats to promote social distancing.
- Mark pew spaces and/or chair separation, and rearrange seating 6 feet apart side-by-side and to the front and back. Families arriving together can sit together as they prefer.
- Provide hand sanitization stations at entrances of the building.
- Require those in attendance to wear a facemask while inside the building. (Have supply for backup).
- Encourage online offering if available. For those without online capabilities and/or parishioners without internet at home, modify the offertory and have church members place their offering in the collection basket by the exit door or central drop area to minimize usher contact.
- Handshakes, holding hands, hugs and cheek kisses should be suspended.
- Congregation should accept the communion body on the hand, if a part of the service.
- Ministers and other religious service personnel should follow [CDC guidelines](#) for hand washing prior to dispensing the communion elements, if a part of the service.
- Ministers and other religious service personnel should wear a face mask when dispensing communion, if a part of the service.
- Maintain physical distance while walking to receive communion. Ushers should guide congregation as necessary and install step markings on the floor for proper distancing.
- Ensure proper separation at the altar rail.
- Recommend suspension of gatherings before/after service, both indoors and outdoors.
- Remove all prayer books and hymnals from the pews/seating areas.
- Suspend large choir functions. Only have instrumental or reduce choir with proper social distancing.

- Disinfect entire area before and after services or events including but not limited to the altar, seats, kneelers, chairs, tables, doorknobs, microphones, instruments. [CDC guidelines](#) should be followed for cleaning.
- Disinfect restrooms, stalls, doorknobs.
- Consider temporary closing of water fountains.
- Educate and encourage those that are not feeling well such as parishioners, employees and/or volunteers, to stay home.
- Educate the congregation about new policies/protocols.
- Post infection control and social distancing guidelines throughout the facility.
- Provide ministries, volunteers and employees with the adequate PPE.
- Following the Service:** All meetings/events should follow social/physical distancing guidelines at all times. Limit attendance to provide necessary space.
 - Children's and Student Ministries
 - Next Steps Growth Groups
 - Caring Ministries
 - Volunteers
 - Baptisms
 - Confirmation
 - Weddings
 - Funerals
- Religious Education:** All Religious Education should follow social distancing guidelines. Consider/continue offering virtual education.
 - Confirmation
 - Counseling
 - Children and Youth
 - Preschool Ministries
- Church Meetings/Events:**
 - Consider/continue offering virtual meetings and/or events. All meetings/events must follow social/physical distancing guidelines at all times.
 - Church retreats, conferences, finance and building meetings, special events and any other ministry meetings/events not mentioned.

Consider temporarily eliminating any transportation. If you must transport, contact the church office for additional guidelines.

- Food services should follow health department guidelines.
 - Food bank
 - Food pantry distribution
 - Home meal deliveries
 - Kitchen or food preparation

Gallagher will continue to provide easy-to-understand, meaningful guidance you can use today and in the future as pandemic conditions change. If you are reopening your operation after being closed for an extended period, modifying your current workplace strategy or having to conduct temporary closures in the future. Gallagher is here to provide guidance to assist you in making your own critical business decisions.

Gallagher continues to monitor the potential risks related to returning to the workplace through OSHA, the CDC, the WHO, and state and federal regulatory authorities. Please visit ajg.com/us/pandemic-preparedness for the latest information.



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