



**The Episcopal Diocese  
of Pennsylvania**

**The Plan for Return  
Living with COVID-19**

**May 2020**

**Updated November 16, 2020**

Dear Siblings in Christ,

When Paul was imprisoned, he did not just sit there. He prayed, he discerned, he wrote and he planned, all in preparation for the day when he was set free. Like him we have not simply been lying dormant. The work we have done, the work we are doing, is all going to prepare us for these next steps.

However, getting there will take time and will require a great deal of preparation. We cannot simply re-open in the way that a store or restaurant can. They have paid staff dedicated to cleaning and ensuring safety whereas we rely on volunteers. But I have not the slightest doubt that we can do it and do it well. Think back to where we were, where our world was, just two months ago. So much has changed since then and through hard work and the grace of God, we have managed to change and adapt too. We have found new ways to be the Church. Many of you are seeing engagement increase by 50%, 100% or even more compared to two months ago. We are coming together in prayer and fellowship for the Daily Office and virtual coffee hours. And we are feeding the hungry in the Name of Jesus Christ.

As we prepare to enter this next phase of our common life together, I am filled with excitement. I know you long, as I do, to see one another in person again. To feel the warmth of being in the same room. To see the beauty of our churches, to hear the sound of our organs and to receive the Blessed Sacrament again in physical form. This document is a detailed road map on how we get there.

But as much as there is excitement, I know that there is also reservation. I want to stress that we will not pressure any church to resume in-person worship or other activities until they have determined that they are both called and fully prepared to do so.

Our Governor has been prudent in making plans to release restrictions when the time is right, and when it is safe. His entire reopening plan can be found [here](#) or in Appendix E. The subsequent pages of this document outline how, as a church, we will return to our practices of worship, mission and formation as civic restrictions are lifted.

As I have said before, we cannot think about these phases as a road back to the old “normal”. Instead we must continue to open our hearts to see that the Spirit is at work in our churches and that Jesus is calling us to do something new.

As much as we love and honor our traditions and routines, we cannot seek simply to go back to exactly the way things were before. To do so would be to try to put new wine into an old skin. Instead Jesus calls us, not to look back, but to set our eyes to what lies ahead.

In the same way, we cannot focus solely on our existing members. This crisis has left our communities with an even greater need of what we have to offer. Some are in great need financially. Lost jobs and lost businesses have left them in need of food, help with rent, help in navigating systems of public support and in need of emotional and psychological support to cope with stress and depression. Others need to grieve the loss of loved ones whom they have not been able to mourn as they needed to. Still others feel a spiritual hunger. Amidst the upheaval they are looking for deeper meaning in life or for a community that will truly love, accept and support them.

As we prepare for re-entry, we need to ask ourselves, not how do we get our worship and fellowship back to where it was before but rather, what does our worship and fellowship need to look like in order to meet the needs of the world? In short, at the center of all our deliberations must be the question not of restoration but of evangelism and transformation.

For the past two months we have made adjustments, not out of choice, but out of necessity. But in many cases these changes are proving fruitful. Some of our smaller, less-resourced parishes are experiencing growth in their online attendance at an even greater rate than larger churches. Our online presence is fostering new and renewed engagement in ways that in-person gathering on Sundays was not. This is a sacred opportunity. In having to let go of so much we have also found that new gifts have emerged. Whether it is the resurgence of the Daily Office, the growth of lay leadership or the role our wonderful youth has played in leading services, the gifts of the Spirit abound. We cannot afford to simply abandon them.

Instead, as we enter into this next phase, we need to continue to be bold and innovative. We also need to be prepared to find that no matter how well we plan, not everything will work. You have heard me say many times that if we are not failing, we are not trying. As long as what you do is in line with all health and safety guidelines, follows the traditions and rubrics of our church and the pastoral guidance of this document, I encourage you to go out there and try

new things. Our world is not the same. How can we expect our churches and our worship to be the same? Because we are on this journey together, as one Diocesan family, I also ask that you freely and frequently share your experiences in our weekly check-in meetings, on the DIOPA Clergy Facebook page, in your deanery and by sharing them with me and the with the staff. Let us learn from one another so that together we press on towards the great goal. Above all, as you work through these guidelines, protocols and questions, keep asking yourselves “how will I integrate and apply what I have learned, so that together we may better proclaim the Gospel and share the love of Jesus Christ?”

I wish to thank the Board of Trustees, Diocesan Council, the Standing Committee, the Staff of the Offices of the Diocese, the Clergy Health Committee and all others who have assisted in preparing this document. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the other Dioceses and organizations which have contributed to this document. It is structured on work from the Episcopal Church and numerous other dioceses including, Central Pennsylvania, Texas, West Virginia and the Dioceses of the Great Lakes. Other elements were drawn from the Thomistic Institute, the American Baptist Churches, USA and the Wisconsin Council of Churches. We are grateful for their contributions.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel G. P. Gutierrez'. To the left of the signature is a small cross symbol, and to the right is the Roman numeral 'XVI'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rt. Rev. Daniel G. P. Gutierrez  
XVI Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

## **The Plan for Resuming In-Person Activity in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania**

Much like Governor Wolf's plan for re-opening (see Appendix E), our plan is sequential and will occur in phases. This will allow us to synchronize with the process as it unfolds in our Commonwealth and adapt to the shifting status of COVID-19 infection rates.

It is important to note that this process is not unidirectional. As we hope to move into a less restrictive environment, the course of the disease, possible resurgences and their impact, may cause the need to move back and forth between the stages outlined here over the course of months if not years. These decisions will be made by the Bishop in consultation with the Board of Trustees, Diocesan Council and the Standing Committee and will be in concert with the decisions of the secular authorities and their guidelines and orders.

### **Guiding Principles (all phases)**

- The Diocese places the highest priority on protecting the health of our people. This means adopting acceptable, albeit sometimes suboptimal, liturgical practices.
- We will follow Governor Wolf's process relying on state regional health assessments as modified by local counties and communities. Churches will move from phase to phase at different times depending both on what is legally permitted in their county/municipality as well as on their own capacity and readiness. Any such change may occur only after consultation with the Bishop.
- Parishes may implement stricter standards than those mandated by governmental authorities if circumstances dictate. They may not adopt less strict standards.
- No church should feel pressured to resume in-person worship or other activities until they have determined that they are both called and fully prepared to do so.
- These measures are only temporary.

### **PHASE ONE- Sheltering at Home (Where we are now)**

#### **Health Characteristics in Phase One**

The characteristic health situation in Phase One may look and sound like the following:

- Widespread community spread of the virus
- Overtaxed or ill prepared health system
- Short medical supply
- Lack of availability of vaccine, therapeutics, and counter measures
- Lack of adequate protective supplies for general public

#### **Phase One Church Protocols**

At our Bishop's direction and in compliance with governmental and health authorities, we are participating in efforts to slow the spread of the pandemic by agreeing to "stay at home" protocols as they relate to parishes.

- The only safe group worship is virtual worship. Churches are conducting services on-line. No drive-in services, drive-by services or services with cyber-consecration are authorized.
- Churches are either filming or broadcasting live from their sanctuaries or from homes depending on their capacity and preference. If multiple people gather at the church to stream or record please have the fewest number of people possible with a maximum of 10.
- The Daily Office, bible studies and other formation events are being offered on-line.
- Pastoral care is being offered by telephone and on-line conferencing
- Pastoral care *in extremis* is being offered by clergy according to their own comfort levels and protocols of the facility/residence of the individual.
- 12 Step meetings and other adjunct ministries meet virtually.
- We are limiting service ministries to safe protocols dedicated to essentials: food provision and feeding programs conducted by "take-out" only.
- Weddings and Funerals are extremely limited in size and venue and each request to officiate must be reviewed and approved in consultation with the Bishop.

**NOTE: Some of the protocols in Appendix A, particularly as they relate to the use of masks, singing, touching of common surface and distribution of communion should be applied immediately to the small groups gathering to lead worship for live streaming.**

During this time most of our parishes have moved to virtual worship and gathering. Those who cannot gather on-line are using telephone conferencing or worshipping along with other churches. Diocesan leadership has provided resources for worship, finance, communications, prayer and pastoral care. Diocesan leadership is offering weekly updates for clergy, weekly gatherings on-line for clergy and a weekly video for the entire diocese. The Daily Office and an online bible study are being offered by the Bishop and the Offices of the Diocese. The Canons are offering on-going support to parishes and clergy in technology, communication, finance, organization and mission. At the Bishop's direction the Board of Trustees has earmarked funds to provide emergency assistance to churches which have been adversely affected by this crisis.

## **PHASE TWO- Returning to Church in a Modified Capacity**

### **Health Characteristics in Phase Two**

We can expect state and local officials to move to Phase Two when we are able to: diagnose, treat, and isolate COVID-19 cases and their contacts. In Phase II "stay at home" measures will end. We can expect that "physical distancing" (physical distancing – 6' spacing) will continue to be required. Why? Because asymptomatic people can pass the virus to others. Health and

safety protocols such as, “teleworking (as much as possible), maintaining hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, wearing a mask in public and regularly disinfecting high-touch surfaces, will remain in place for Phase Two.

Not unlike Phase I, this phase is determined by health characteristics. These have to do with both the preventative measures, and guiding principles for returning to measured public life. The Governor’s plan includes these markers for moving into Phase Two (the yellow stage):

To determine when a region is ready to reopen and return to work, (the Commonwealth) will evaluate the incidence rate of COVID-19 cases per capita. Their evaluation will rely upon existing regional health districts used by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. A regional assessment will measure the COVID-19 cases per the population. A county can petition for consideration to open if they, on average for the past 14 days, had 50 or fewer new cases per 100,000 residents per day. The administration will work closely with county and local governments to enable the communities to reopen and transition back to work.

Additionally, to reopen a region, the Commonwealth must ensure there is:

- Enough testing available for individuals with symptoms and target populations such as those at high risk, health care personnel, and first responders.
- Robust case investigation and contact tracing infrastructure in place to facilitate early identification of cluster outbreaks and to issue proper isolation and quarantine orders.
- Identification of area’s high-risk settings including correctional institutions, personal care homes, skilled nursing facilities, and other congregate care settings, and assurance that facilities have adequate safeguards in place such as staff training, employee screening, visitor procedures and screening, and adequate supplies of Personal Protective Equipment such as masks, gloves, etc. (hereafter referred to as PPE ) to support continued operations.

### **Phase Two Church Protocols**

The progression into Phase Two may not take place at the same rate for all in the diocese. We fully expect that southeastern PA will be among the last areas to transition and the City of Philadelphia may shift even later than the surrounding counties. The Bishop, in consultation with the leadership of the diocese will determine the appropriate time for moving to Phase Two on a regional basis, following the enactment of the Commonwealth’s plan.

The Bishop, in consultation with diocesan leadership, and diocesan staff have worked together to create, review and approve this plan. The time to move into Phase Two protocols will depend on the Commonwealth moving our region to “yellow.”

Once the date is announced, all churches should contact the Bishop to notify him of their plans, even if they do not plan to resume in-person activity at that time. It is expected that all churches will be in touch with the Bishop within two weeks of the announcement of a date for

the move to Phase Two. This request for permission will come after church leadership has reviewed the instructions and guidelines contained in this document and then completed the attached self-evaluation checklist. The rector/vicar/PIC and the vestry must be in agreement on both the desire and plan for re-opening. Unanimous agreement is preferred. If, at that point a church feels it is both called and prepared to resume in-person worship and activities as allowed under Phase Two, they should then contact the Bishop for his permission. Ultimately, it is better for a Parish to open a month too late than a day too early.

Phase Two will include the return to in-person worship, fellowship and activities at our churches subject to the following restrictions:

- In-person gatherings are limited in size to 25 or fewer
- All such gatherings must strictly observe all health and safety protocols including, but not limited to physical distancing, wearing of masks and observing new cleaning/disinfecting protocols for implementation between liturgies.
- Chancel parties should be kept to a minimum to allow for more members in the congregation.
- While there is no congregational singing, a maximum of four choir members may sing in accordance with the guidelines found on page 14 of this document.
- Safely-distanced fellowship.
- Limited formation opportunities.
- Churches may celebrate the Holy Eucharist and offer it in one kind for the congregation. If a church feels it cannot offer the Holy Eucharist in accordance with all of the health and safety guidelines outlined in this document, they should offer Morning Prayer.

**Each church's leadership will design the shape of their return in collaboration with the Bishop and implement it after the Bishop has given permission.** Complete details on Phase Two protocols, including notes on the 25-person-limit, are available as Appendix A.

Churches should plan to continue to offer virtual services even when they resume "in person" worship during Phase Two or to record or live-stream the service as it takes place. Pastorally speaking, it is important not to pressure people to return to church, especially when they feel that they are at-risk.

**Note:** Drive-by, drive-in and cyber-consecration services are not authorized.

Church offices may be reopened based on the plan of the Commonwealth. Those in the office will employ the same physical distancing and mask guidelines as recommended for worship.

Pastoral Care may be resumed on a limited basis with home communion (bread only) available for those who desire it. Visitors from the parish will be masked and maintain appropriate distancing.

Special attention will need to be given to those for whom re-gathering is not a safe or viable option. Those at risk of contracting COVID-19 and falling seriously ill will require an extra measure of pastoral sensitivity including the opportunity to offer communion in very small gatherings or through at-home pastoral, sacramental care.

Service within the congregation (12-step groups, feeding programs, e.g.) may be re-opened with the same safe-gathering protocols as used for parish worship (masks, physical distancing, cleaning/disinfecting protocols, etc.). The church reserves the right to stop these programs if participants do not abide by the protocols until such a time as they can and do comply.

Upon the resumption of in-person worship, the parish may want to consider adapting and using the service “A Rite of Welcoming after a Traumatic Absence” found in *The Book of Occasional Services* (2018) or [here](#).

Forewarning: It is possible that after regathering a person may expose worshipers to the COVID-19 virus. If that happens, those gathered will be asked to return to a 14-day quarantine and the church may have to return to offering solely virtual worship during that period. It is also possible that after regathering the community, a resurgence of the disease will require a return to Phase One measures. If that happens, those gathered will be asked to return to a use of virtual worship until their community returns to Phase Two.

Once permission has been given by the Commonwealth for gatherings to resume in Phase Two, then gatherings for 25 people or fewer will be authorized. Prior to their resumption, all in-person worship, bible study, service, and gathering approaches must be designed by the clergy or lay leadership and then approved by the Bishop. Churches will need to be prepared to fulfill the expectations found in the guidelines in Appendices A and B and checklist found in Appendix D prior to return to public worship in the church.

### **Churches of 50 ASA (Average Sunday Attendance) or Smaller**

Churches may wish to hold additional services to accommodate its people but depending upon the size of the congregation this may not be necessary. If multiple services are held then a cleaning/disinfecting protocol implemented between services.

### **Churches of 50 ASA or Larger**

Because they cannot safely accommodate all their parishioners with one service, churches with more than 50 people have choices about resuming worship:

- Continue to worship virtually until permission is given to gather in group sizes that match their own normative ASA. This could mean waiting a long time –into the fall or later for some of our churches.
- Discern how to engage small groups. Congregants could make “reservations” to attend church, be assigned to a small group, or through an alphabetizing system. This may require multiple services on a weekend. If a church is offering more services than usual to accommodate additional people, they may consider adjusting the length and



complexity of the service to better conform to their capacity. For more ideas on how larger churches can creatively accommodate their people see Appendix A.

- If multiple services are held then a cleaning/disinfecting protocol implemented between services.

#### Weddings and Funerals

In Phase Two, these services may resume without getting special permission from the Bishop but must comply with all the same guidelines as outlined for Sunday services, above.

#### Rites of Christian Initiation

Because they require physical contact, all Rites of Christian Initiation (except emergency baptism) shall continue to be postponed until such time as they may be performed safely. As soon as it safely possible the Diocese will look to schedule a service of confirmation, reception and reaffirmation.

Reconciliation of a Penitent may be offered so long as masks are worn and appropriate distances maintained. Physical contact should be avoided.

## **PHASE THREE- Further Loosening of Restrictions**

### **Health Characteristics in Phase Three**

Phase Three is marked by the continued reduction of both deaths and new cases. Combined with a continued emphasis on maintaining practices such as cleaning, masks and distancing, Phase Three allows for a progressive re-opening of businesses and resumption of other in-person activities.

### **Phase Three Church Protocols**

In keeping with the Commonwealth's approach, Phase Three keeps many of the practices and precautions from Phase Two in place but otherwise is marked primarily by an increase in the maximum number of people who can be present in-person. Full details can be found in the Phase Three Protocols document.

## **PHASE FOUR- Release of Restrictions**

### **Health Characteristics in Phase Four**

Phase Three measures can be lifted when safe and effective tools for mitigating the risk of COVID-19 are widely available and have been put into effect. They include the following:

- Negative spread of the virus within the community.
- Ongoing testing on a mass scale and growing levels of immunity.
- Proven and effective treatment that is widely available.

- A proven and effective vaccine that has been administered to a significant percentage of the population.

While Phase Four health characteristics represent a more global return to health and living in a “new normal” that is yet to be defined, it is important to note that there is an expectation of enhanced community life after Phase Two and Phase Three. There will come a time when we will see the lifting of physical distancing. Testing of different types and vaccinations will become part of the narrative.

### **Phase Four Church Protocols**

Phase Four includes the resumption of unrestricted in-person worship and parish activities. It will be important for spiritual leaders to mark, bless and celebrate each of these stages along the way. We are not sure when we will enter Phase Four, but we do know that as we do, we will want to mark this liturgically and pastorally for our communities. We believe that we will emerge from this pandemic not only better prepared for future disasters, but also refocused and reoriented theologically with a commitment to continue to be innovative and creative as we seek to become the Church that Jesus is calling us to be.

- Church services resumed with no restrictions on size or distancing.
- Holy Eucharist offered in both kinds for all.
- Parish offices reopened and all parish life activities resumed.
- Return to service ministries with no restrictions.

### **Looking Ahead**

As noted previously in this document, we cannot frame our recovery as simply a “return to normal”. This crisis has caused us to dig deep and consider critical questions of form, function and identity. What we have been through and what we have learned has been transformative. The laity have been empowered and have taken on expanded roles in pastoral care and other ministries.

The announcement of Phase Three will not mark an end to this critical work, but the start of a new chapter. How we worship, gather and minister will be different. As we prepare for this day, keep asking what you have learned along the way? What new practices should be kept? What past practices need pruning or can be let go? Do job descriptions need to be re-written? Do ministries or committees need to be redesigned? Do meetings need to be restructured? Whatever the case we must continue to be fearless in innovation and experimentation. “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.” (2 Tim 1:7)

So be daring. Be like the early Church. Try new forms of ministry and find new ways to share worship and fellowship. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will proclaim the Gospel both in word and deed and our churches will grow in faithfulness and vitality.

## **Appendix A: Protocols for Worship and Community Life Phase Two**

What follows are guidelines for returning to worship and community life in our parishes under Phase Two. These guidelines offer a mixture of instruction and questions for clergy to consider and discuss with their vestries and ultimately with the Bishop as they plan to re-open. As we gain experience in these procedures across the diocese, these guidelines may change. Likewise, churches may have to adjust their own practices, possibly more than once, depending upon what they experience as they resume in-person activity.

**Note:** We have worked to make these protocols as comprehensive as possible to help mitigate the risks of returning to in-person worship. However, because asymptomatic individuals can still infect those around them, proceed on the assumption that anyone could be a carrier of the virus. Therefore, no precautions, however thorough, can provide 100% protection. Meaning, even if you properly clean/disinfect and use PPE, there is still a risk. Therefore, if you are not comfortable with resuming in-person worship at this time, you should not. Likewise, if parishioners do not feel safe in returning to church yet, because they are in a high-risk category or for any other reason, they should be encouraged to stay at home and be supported in doing so.

**Communication** Church in Phase Two does not look like church when we left it in March. How will you communicate with your parishioners about what to expect and how to live within the guidelines for the safety of the entire worshipping community?

Also be sure to stress that if anyone is in a high-risk category or is not feeling well that they should stay home and join in online.

Ways to communicate before the first in-person worship service might include:

- Reviewing the new procedures at the end of your online services
- Reviewing the new procedures in the parish newsletter;
- Circulating the new procedures via social media or email blasts; and
- Developing a phone-tree to inform all potential congregants.

Ways to communicate during in-person worship services might include:

- Signage
- Including instructions in the bulletin
- Having the celebrant review general principles before the service begins; and then
- Having the celebrant review specific steps (e.g., how to exchange the Peace; how to receive the Eucharist) immediately prior to their occurrence in the liturgy.

After worship you may also wish to report out as to what went well, what could have gone better and what will have to be adjusted.

**25 Person Limit** This size limit for gatherings comes from Governor Wolf. If a space does not allow 25 people to practice the necessary distancing then the maximum occupancy for that gathering should be lowered accordingly. However, just because a space can safely accommodate more people does not mean that the limit can be raised above 25.

**Admission of Worshippers** For those congregations of more than 25 members, a system for ensuring no more than 25 people in the sanctuary will need to be devised. It should also ensure that all parishioners who wish to come are able to attend at the same equitable intervals.

- Will you take reservations? Hand out tickets? Assign family units and individual worshippers to different service times?
- How will you handle “walk-ins” and visitors?
- Will you add additional services? How many services will you need to hold to accommodate your entire parish membership? How many can your clergy, worship leaders and volunteers realistically handle?
- If you have multiple services then doors, pews that were used, bathrooms and other common areas will require cleaning/disinfecting between services. How much time will this require? How many people will be needed to do the work?
- Would it be appropriate to instead simply expand your online worship to include more leaders in the sanctuary?
- We recognize that adding additional Sunday services would be an added strain on clergy and lay worship leaders, especially since many plan to continue the Daily Office and other activities online. The Bishop will therefore continue to lead Sunday worship. Instead of adding additional in-person services, how might you incorporate the Diocesan services into your parish worship schedule?

**Develop Capacity for Alternative Gathering Sites** Another option would be for small groups to gather at someone’s home (as many as can safely be accommodated and not to exceed 25). They could then either watch the stream of the service together, collectively engage in Morning Prayer and then watch the sermon together at an appointed time, or otherwise find a way to worship together as part of the extended parish community which is uniting in worship. The Bishop will continue to lead Sunday worship on a weekly basis at 9 a.m. You may also wish to direct your members who cannot attend in person to join together in watching this service. They may do so individually or gather in small groups to enjoy the benefits of community and fellowship. Such gatherings are subject to the same health and safety requirements as worship in the church including 6 ft. distancing, masks and cleaning/disinfecting protocols.

**Advertising service** Attendant with the limitations of worshippers, how will you advertise that you are resuming limited, in-person worship and communicate your admission protocol? If you make use of them, how will you promote Alternative Gathering Sites?

**Health check Before resuming worship, be sure to communicate to your parishioners the symptoms of COVID-19; and encourage them to refrain from attending in-person, if they display any or are not feeling well.** All clergy and anyone else who will be assisting in leading worship should check their own temperature and display a normal temperature on the day of the service. If they are running a fever, they should refrain from attending, and instead make alternate arrangements. Likewise, if the worship leaders are suffering from any respiratory ailment, they should refrain from attending and instead make alternate arrangements.

**Ingress and Egress** How will you direct people as they come in and leave to avoid “choke points” and ensure that they can maintain safe distancing? What this looks like will vary. Once a plan is created it will need to be communicated in advance and additional signage may be necessary. You may have to adjust the layout of the church including the repositioning or removal of furniture to allow for safer movement.

Hand sanitizer should be placed near the entrances to a church for those entering and exiting.

**Masks** in Phase Two all worshippers and clergy will be expected to wear cloth masks at all times with the exception of the moment when they receive Holy Communion (if it is offered).

Assuming that there is enough space to safely accommodate it, clergy may remove their masks only when preaching and celebrating at the altar. There is not a clear consensus on what this distance should be, but as noted in the section on singing below, projected oration causes the particles to travel distances much greater than 6 feet. Unless such a distance can be assured in a church, it is safer to continue to wear a mask. All other speakers should wear their masks at all times.

Note: Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

(See CDC recommendations on face coverings.)

**Gloves** The church should ensure that ushers and cleaners have gloves. It is not required that they provide them for parishioners or worship leaders. If the church does supply gloves for volunteers or parishioners, they should be nitrile gloves as opposed to latex. Latex gloves carry the risk of serious allergic reaction. If latex gloves are in use at all, this should be clearly communicated to the parish in advance as well as posted outside the door so that anyone with an allergy is made aware prior to entrance.

**Physical Distancing** in Phase Two, all congregants and clergy, who do not live in the same household, must sit at least 6 ft. in all directions from one another. How will you indicate where people may sit while still ensuring safe distancing? Masking tape? Pew signs? Do you wish to do assigned seating?

**Ventilation** When gathering indoors it is important to maximize ventilation. Doors and windows should be open and fans used to increase flow and circulation. Fresh air drawn from the outside and then exhausted out the opposite side of the room is best. If this is not possible, filtration methods such as HEPA or MERV13 are the next most effective option.

**Single use bulletins** Parishes will provide paper single use bulletins (and a wastebasket for recycling on the way out) or screen-projected liturgies. All prayer books, hymnals and bibles will be removed from the pews in Phase Two. Parishes may choose to offer their leaflet online which would enable parishioners to access it on their phones and follow along that way.

**In the pew materials** Hand sanitizer, wipes, tissues and a disposable paper bag will be available in the pews. The bags will be collected by ushers wearing gloves and discarded at the end of the service.

**Ushers** Ushers are essential to our safe return to in person worship. Individuals must have the temperament and ability to enforce absolute standards. Capable ushers will enable clergy persons to concentrate their energies on officiating, preaching and celebrating the holy mysteries. Additionally, ushers may be at a higher level of risk for contracting COVID19 so consideration should be given to selecting individuals who are not already considered high risk. Please see APPENDIX C for specific instructions for Ushers. It is strongly recommended that parish leadership provide Appendix C (as supplemented for each parish) to individuals selected for this responsibility and go over its guidance in detail.

**Attendance-** During this phase a complete record of all attendees at each in-person service must be maintained to facilitate potential contact tracking by cognizant health authorities. Members of the parish will be informed of this requirement before entering the Yellow Phase and periodically thereafter. Visitors will be informed when they provide their contact information as they enter the church. They should also be assured that these records will be kept in a secure location and never viewed unless necessitated for health reasons. You should resume tracking worship attendance in the usual way. You should also continue to track your virtual attendance in the way you have been doing to this point.

**Chancel Party** Physical distancing is required in the chancel (especially if the celebrant removes their mask for the Holy Eucharist). Therefore, the chancel party should be kept to a minimum, allowing for more people in the congregation. The Procession should be modified or eliminated to accord with distancing guidelines. You may have to adjust the layout of the chancel including the repositioning or removal of furniture.

**Singing and Choirs** Since choral singing has been noted as one of the prime methods of spreading respiratory droplets, choirs should not perform or rehearse in-person during this phase. Since singing forcefully expels droplets significantly increasing the distance they can travel (as far as 27 feet), singing by the congregation should also be avoided though humming while masked need not be prohibited. A soloist, or small number of adult section leaders may be considered so long as they utilize a mask that meets fit and filtration standards and maintain at least a 10-foot distance from other singers and participants. Rehearsals should last no longer than 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, a minimum of a 20-minute break from singing must be observed before beginning again in the same space. Alternatively, the rehearsal may move to an entirely separate location. Additional details on masks and other details can be found [here](#). Another option would be for recorded music to be played during the service.

**Readers and Intercessors** Because speaking forcefully expels droplets significantly increasing the risk of contamination lectors and intercessors should continue to wear their masks. In order to minimize movement and contact, you may wish for the speaker to remain in their place and read from there. If you make use of a single lectern, it is recommended that one person read all the lessons as well as offer the prayers. This eliminates the possibility of multiple people touching the same surface.

**Physical Greeting and The Peace** Offering a bow or wave at the time of the Peace is recommended. Parishioners will maintain safe physical distancing. It may be appropriate to post signs instructing parishioners to avoid handshakes, hugs and other physical greeting.

**Collection** It is recommended that a basket at the head of the aisle be used for parishioners to deposit their offering envelopes at the start of the service or as they come up for communion. Has your parish encouraged on-line giving?

**Offertory and Preparation** Elements will not be processed. To minimize contact, the celebrant alone (as opposed to a deacon or acolyte) should touch the elements and prepare the altar. Prior to this the celebrant should wash/sterilize their hands. If a lavabo is used, the celebrant alone should do it for themselves without assistance.

**Communion** Holy Eucharist in Phase Two will be celebrated with cup and paten on the altar and the Celebrant alone will drink from the cup. Others (including the chancel party) will receive communion in one kind (bread) which will be distributed by the Celebrant who has washed/sterilized their hands immediately before the distribution.

In addition:

- The celebrant does not need to wear a mask for the prayer of consecration. If this is the case, the rest of the chancel party must remain more than 6 feet away.
- Because it is difficult to properly clean/disinfect elaborate vestments, the celebrant may remove their chasuble prior to distributing communion. This eliminates an issue should a parishioner inadvertently sneeze or cough on them. They should put the chasuble back on once the distribution of communion is complete.
- When communion is offered, it should be clearly communicated that if anyone has concerns about receiving communion it is perfectly acceptable for them to refrain from doing so.
- The celebrant should wear a mask to distribute the host.
- Communicants should wear their mask and remove it only immediately before receiving the host after which they should put the mask back on.
- Communicants will not kneel but remain standing at an appropriate distance
- Before the communicant reaches the minister to receive, there should be a station equipped with hand sanitizer. Immediately before receiving, the communicant should sanitize their hands. If a church wishes they may also set up a similar station so that the communicant can sanitize their hands on the way back to their pew. But it is important that these stations not be set up in any way that causes a bottleneck or otherwise causes parishioners to come too close to one another.
- The host should be placed in the hands of the communicant in a way that avoids actually touching the communicant's hand. It may not be placed in the mouth. If the minister inadvertently touches the communicant's hand, they should place the paten/ciborium down and re-sterilize their hands before resuming distribution. It is not necessary to use hand sanitizer between each communicant, unless they make actual contact.

- Gloves may be worn but are not required for either the celebrant or communicant.
- If a person wishes a blessing as opposed to receiving communion, they should come forward and indicate this to the priest in the usual manner while remaining standing. The priest should avoid making physical contact and instead simply make the sign of the cross while pronouncing the blessing.

How the distribution is structured will vary from church to church depending on their space and configuration. If people are coming forward, then ushers should direct them to and from the altar in a single line to receive communion maintaining safe distancing including at the altar rail. Again, how this works will vary and it may be necessary to rearrange or remove pews or furniture to create the safest possible arrangement.

Possible strategies for this can include:

- Individuals come forward one at a time
- The celebrant/minister brings the host forward to a location that is more open so that people may approach more safely
- If people will be standing in line waiting to receive, place tape on the floor to indicate proper spacing between persons.

Whatever the practice, it must conform to the accepted rubrics, doctrine and discipline of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Pennsylvania. This would exclude ideas such as, but not limited to:

- Encouraging parishioners to bring their own bread and hold it up at the time of consecration
- Pre-consecrating hosts and placing them in the pews

The Prayer for Spiritual Communion should be added to the bulletin to accommodate those who choose to stay in their pew.

We recognize that many are longing to physically receive the sacrament again. While we encourage innovation and creativity, we must also remember that these restrictions are only temporary. In time they will be lifted. To make significant changes to our sacramentology is therefore neither a proportional nor theologically sound response.

**NOTE If you do not feel that you can offer Holy Communion safely in your context then you are fully authorized and encourage to make use of Morning Prayer. Similarly, if only a small number of parishioners wish communion, Holy Communion could be offered for them at the conclusion of Morning Prayer.**

**Communion for those not in attendance** Clergy and LEM's may resume the practice of bringing communion, in one kind only, to those who are sick, shut in or otherwise not able to attend. During those visits all health and safety precautions should be observed including the wearing of masks which should be worn at all times other than for the moment during which communion is received. Physical contact should be avoided.

No one other than clergy or LEM's should attempt to bring communion back to share with family or friends. The reasons for this are both practical and theological. Bringing the Eucharist



in another vessel or container (a plastic bag, paper cup, etc.) is not warranted from a public health perspective and may even increase risk: CDC guidance suggests that the virus is not easily transmitted by food, whereas passing other containers from person to person involves more contact with surfaces. Theologically, although we recognize people's desire to physically receive the sacrament and although this may seem like an expedient solution, it actually diminishes Eucharist. Moreover, it is also unnecessary since clergy and LEM's can be deployed. If a church finds that, for health or other practical reasons, they are not able to deliver the Eucharist to someone who has requested it, they should contact their dean who will help them make alternate arrangements.

If a church finds that it cannot offer enough services to meet the needs of their parishioners who would otherwise be safely able to attend church in person, they may consider one of the following alternate arrangements:

- A parish might livestream their service and consecrate additional hosts. They could then designate times later in the day when parishioners, who because of attendance limits or other limitations, could come to the church individually to receive Holy Communion
- If parishioners gather at a home, they could be joined by a LEM who has host that was previously consecrated. Then, while observing all health and safety guidelines, including the wearing of masks, which would be removed only at the moment necessary to receive, communion could then be distributed at an appropriate time. Alternatively, immediately following the conclusion of the service, the clergy or LEM could also bring consecrated hosts to the home where parishioners had gathered to watch the service together online.

If a church wishes to engage in either of these practices, they must receive special permission from the Bishop.

**Receiving line** Ushers will help to direct parishioners out of the church at the end of the service and/or to fellowship hour while maintaining safe distancing. There will be no "receiving line" at the door.

**Coffee/Fellowship Hour** If you wish to offer fellowship, first consider if it is possible for people to gather at a safe distance. For example, could they sit in a large circle of chairs, or a couple of smaller circles safely distanced from one another? This applies to both indoor and outdoor gatherings. Because masks must be worn, there is no practical way to also eat and drink without negating their protection. Therefore, no food or beverages should be offered at this point. This also applies to both indoor and outdoor gatherings.

**Bathrooms** Assess the capacity of your bathrooms including access points. You need to ensure that there is sufficient space to allow 6-foot distancing. You may wish to limit occupancy to one person at a time. It is also recommended that you place tape on the floor outside of the restroom to indicate where people should stand in line to wait, while maintaining a 6-foot distance from each other.

**Counters** The collection should be left in its usual secure location for 3 days before being handled again. Moving it will be done with gloves and all other protective techniques.

**Children and Youth** Because children and youth have great difficulty in maintaining physical distancing, there are to be no in person Sunday School or youth group gatherings. This includes all in-person VBS and other camps. Please explore how these groups can gather virtually.

**Adult and Young Adult Formation** In-person education for young adults (18+) and adults may resume so long as all safety precautions detailed above are adhered to.

**Nursery** Because of the difficulty in physically managing toddlers and infants, nursery care is best suspended until at least Phase Two-Plus.

**Worship/Fellowship Out of Doors** There is some evidence to suggest that holding events outside may help lessen the risk. However, while outdoor worship is permitted and may seem preferable, you must also consider how will the ushers/clergy/lay ministers enforce Phase Two protocols in an outdoor setting? In any event outdoor gatherings are still subject to the 25-person limit.

**Cleaning/Disinfecting Between Services and Events** The length of time that COVID-19 remains viable depends on temperature, humidity, and type of surface. Current research for the New England Journal of Medicine suggests that the virus lasts the longest on glass and some metal (such as stainless steel) for up to five days.

If a parish is able to wait for a period of six days or more between services, heavy disinfecting should not be necessary.

Parishes that want to hold a service on Saturday night and again on Sunday morning or multiple services on the same day must allow scheduled time and capacity to clean and disinfect all touched and potentially touched surfaces. Should a parish become aware that one or more parishioners were positive for COVID-19 after attending a service, the meeting space must be cleaned unless it can be left empty for 7 days in accordance with CDC recommendations.

**Office** We advise keeping in-office functions as minimal as possible, only to ensure essential operations. Any staff members working from church-owned buildings must continue to follow physical distancing and sanitary guidelines. How this is manifested will vary from church to church. As you consider how office activity will resume you should consider the following:

- If a staff/volunteer is alone in an office/area they do not have to wear a mask. However, they should always have one with them in case they have to interact with another person, even if they are not expecting such an interaction.
- If you have multiple offices/work areas how will you avoid cross-contamination of common areas and surfaces?
- For larger meetings/activities- can you move them into a larger room? Can you do a combination of in-person and virtual to allow everyone to participate safely?

- If staff/volunteers are members of the same household they are not obliged to follow distancing/mask precautions with one another, but they must do so when anyone else is present.

If an individual employee is in a high-risk category, it is recommended that they work from home as much as possible.

If an office or area is to be used by more than one individual then it must be cleaned between each usage. This cleaning/disinfecting can be done by staff/volunteers charged with this task or by the individual themselves as they exit the office/area. Cleaning/disinfecting should be done in accordance with the guidelines found in Appendix B.

**Ministries** Food ministries continue to operate under the same restrictions as Phase One. If you wish to resume another ministry that could be considered life sustaining, you must first review the specifics with the Bishop and gain his approval before resuming. This would include bringing back ministries that may have temporarily moved to other locations.

**Renters/Community Partner/12 Step Groups** Such adjunct groups and activities may resume provided they adhere to all of the above guidelines including a 25-person limit, distancing and the use of masks. You should meet with leadership from each individual group to review their plan and ensure it can meet safety standards prior to granting permission to resume.

**Contact Tracing** We advise maintaining a visitor log (including phone numbers and email addresses) for all who enter the building in the event that they may have come in contact with someone with the disease and reporting is required. To the extent possible, the log should be managed by a greeter or an office staff-person or volunteer or follow some other no-touch method. In the case of 12-Step Groups, their own leadership may keep the log.

**Polling Places** Some of our churches serve as polling places and there is a primary scheduled for June 2<sup>nd</sup>. If your county/municipality still wishes to hold in person voting at your location it is up to them to ensure that your building can still safely function in that capacity. Likewise, it is also up to them to provide for the cleaning/disinfecting of your space both before and after the voting, as well as safely organize and run the voting. If you have questions you should contact your local county Board of Elections.

#### **ILLNESS:**

**If someone in the Congregation contracts COVID-19 after attending an in-person church event, they are asked to contact the clergy person or lay leader immediately. However, as per Dr. Rachel Levine (PA Secretary of Health), churches are not required to report this to public health officials since the commonwealth will already have been notified by the doctor, hospital or lab.**

**We should then notify our congregations that there is a confirmed case of COVID 19 but we cannot under any circumstances disclose that person's name. We should not report out if there is a suspected case, only confirmed ones. In the event of a confirmed case, all those who were present with the person who had fallen ill will likely be asked to self-quarantine for**

**14 days before returning to worship. The meeting space must then be cleaned unless it can be left empty for 7 days in accordance with CDC recommendations.**

## **Appendix B: Preparing the Building and the Congregation to Return**

### **Deferred Maintenance**

If the campus has been vacant/dormant, then as far in advance as possible make a thorough inspection of all buildings and grounds and make note of items that need attention.

### **Cleaning/Disinfecting protocol**

Before reopening for service, you should ensure that the sanctuary and common areas of the church (parish hall, restrooms, kitchen, sacristy) will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. This includes pews, bathrooms, doorknobs, light switches, stair railings, and microphones. If the church or other part of the campus has been completely vacant for seven days or longer, it does not need to be disinfected but still should be dusted and cleaned so as to be attractive. If you are not sure if someone has been in a room or part of the building you should both clean and disinfect it. We also advise removing all non-essential items from rooms so that there are fewer surfaces to touch.

For specific guidelines please consult the following resources:

[Centers for Disease Control](#) - vast resource for COVID-19 precautions and suggestions

- [Cleaning your Facility](#) - guide for building cleaning/disinfecting
- [Sanitizing Office Spaces](#) - guide for frequently used spaces
- [Preparedness for Sacred Spaces](#) - a set of best practices for religious institutions

Posters are also available from the CDC which detail cleaning protocol at this [LINK](#)

### **Supplies**

Even though your parish may not have a planned opening date established and approved, you should start to acquire necessary supplies today. Due to global shortages of cleaning, disinfection, and personal protection supplies, it may take weeks or even months before you will be able to acquire needed items. The Offices of the Diocese are also working to see what we may be able to acquire to assist you in this process.

You will need the following:

- Paper Towels and/or cleaning rags
- Facial tissues
- Large trash bags
- EPA-registered household disinfectants or diluted household bleach solution (instructions on making it can be found [here](#))
- Dispenser spray bottles – if using household bleach solution
- Boxes of disposable protective gloves – nitrile is preferred (see Appendix A)
- Boxes of disposable masks – non-surgical and not N95 masks (reserved for healthcare)

- Extra disposal containers such as large trash cans that can be placed in several locations
- Multiple containers of hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol content.

### **Office**

Before reopening the office, all common areas and offices will be thoroughly cleaned with disinfectant to ensure a safe environment. This includes door handles, counters, printers, copiers, telephones, etc. If the office has been unoccupied for seven days or more, then it does not need to be disinfected but still should be dusted and cleaned so as to be attractive. If you are not sure if someone has been in a room or part of the building you should both clean and disinfect it. How will the office staff maintain safe distancing (see Appendix A)? How will visitors/delivery persons/service persons be admitted?

### **Classrooms/Nursery/Playground**

Church Nurseries and Sunday Schools will remain closed during Phase Two. Lock doors when possible to prevent children from entering. If adult formation activities are to take place in Phase Two at a safe distance, then all of the tables, chairs, etc. are to be cleaned/disinfected in advance of returning to church. Outdoor playgrounds and play spaces must remain closed during this time. This should be clearly communicated and they should be cordoned off in a way that prevents/discourages use.

### **Protocols for Altar Guild**

Altar Guild members will do their work maintaining safe distancing at all times. This may require limiting the number of people at one time in smaller sacristies. How can you arrange the sacristy as well as needed supplies and equipment in a way that minimizes risk?

### **Setting up pews/chairs for safe-distancing**

In Phase Two, worshipping congregations will be limited to 25 (including chancel party). How will you configure the seating and mark the pews? Can you set up the parish hall in advance with circles of chairs, appropriately distanced to allow for some fellowship?

### **Removal of hymnals/prayer books**

In Phase Two, all hymnals, prayer books and bibles will be removed from the pews

**Secure** any common areas that do not need to be accessed.

### **Signage**

Signs should be posted in prominent locations giving safe distancing guidelines, reminders about greeting each other with bows, wearing masks.

### **Floor Markers**

Place such as tape to help provide distancing guides and traffic flow.

**Doors** Weather permitting, entrance doors should be propped open or have someone assigned to open doors so that parishioners do not need to touch a common surface.

## **Appendix C: The Role of Usher**

In Phase Two there will be need for specially trained ushers to oversee the conduct of the congregation and promote healthy practices. It is essential that these duties be well executed to allow the clergy to concentrate on the liturgy and the congregation. Ushers will demonstrate the standard by being masked and maintaining physical distancing. They may use disposable gloves.

**Greeting** Doors should be propped open when possible to keep people from touching them.

**Masks** All those attending worship including the usher will wear masks. The usher will ask congregants to put on their masks or offer a single use mask from a basket. No one will enter without a mask. Masks will be worn while in the church and while exiting.

**Entry** Ushers will ensure that no more than the authorized number of people enter the church. Initially this is set by the commonwealth at 25. This includes, clergy, and other worship leaders including the ushers. A by name record will be kept and provided to parish leadership at the end of each service. This can be done with an annotated church roster, reservation list if implemented by the parish or any other similar methodology. Visitors will be asked for minimal contact information (name, email, tel.no.) to facilitate contact tracking if needed. This may be done by a simple form including spaces for the data requested and a disclaimer that the information may be only be used for contact tracking. Measures will be taken to limit access to this information. This may be done by providing envelopes for contact information forms.

**Bulletin** The usher will make available a single-use bulletin for the worshippers, direct the worshippers to the screen for projected materials or direct them in accessing an online bulletin.

**Seating** The usher will give instruction to the worshippers about available seating. Family groups from the same household may sit together. Otherwise individuals and family groups must be at least 6 feet away in all directions from each other. It may be necessary to direct individuals and family groups to move from seat to seat to achieve required separation.

**Opening of the Service** The celebrant will make an announcement at the beginning of the worship time about protocol and conduct for safety. The usher will ensure these rules are followed.

**Traffic Flow** At the time of communion, the usher will direct worshippers to the altar and assist in maintaining appropriate physical distancing. Worshippers will stand at the altar rail to receive communion in one kind.

**Dismissal** At the close of the service the usher will direct worshippers out of the church by pew and encourage people to maintain physical distancing. They will indicate to the worshippers the bin for recycling of bulletins. They will replace any paper waste bags that were discarded by members of the congregation.

## **Appendix D: Self Questionnaire for churches to determine readiness to resume in-person worship**

### **Questions for Church Leadership to Consider Prior to Relaunching In-Person Worship**

As you consider what is necessary in order to safely resume in-person worship and other church activities, we offer this list of questions to assist you in making a thorough assessment of your capacity to do so.

1. Do you have a plan for how you are going to continue to offer streaming option once you are back together worshipping in physical space? How will that need to adjust when there is also in-person worship happening?
2. Do you have the necessary supplies and labor to thoroughly clean/disinfect the sanctuary, office and common areas in accordance with the required standards before the first service or other gathering?
3. How many people can your worship space hold if you are worshipping in family groups sitting 6 feet apart? How will you mark this to assist your parishioners in knowing where to sit?
4. Since there will not be choirs or congregational singing in Phase II, how will you provide for music?
5. If you are planning outdoor worship how will you ensure that all participants maintain the necessary 6 feet of physical distance in all directions?
6. How will you communicate to those who may be sick or otherwise at high risk to stay at home? How will you encourage everyone who is considering attending to first screen themselves for possible symptoms through taking their temperature and other possible measures?
7. Since masks are required, how will you communicate and enforce this? Will you be able to have additional masks on hand to give to worshippers who may arrive without one?
8. Do you have access to hand sanitizer, tissues and other PPE as may be required? Will you be able to resupply on an ongoing basis?
9. How will you handle the flow of people coming into church? Will you use one door for entrance and another for exit? Will you be able to prop or otherwise hold your doors open so that people do not have to touch the handles?
10. How will you discourage the receiving line after church and/or congregating after worship services?
11. Since attendance will be limited how will you determine who can come? Will you take reservations? Hand out tickets? Assign family units and individual worshippers to different service times? How will you handle “walk-ins” and visitors? How many services will you need to hold to accommodate your entire parish membership?
12. Given the reality of limited attendance how will you advertise or announce that in-person worship is resuming?
13. How can you encourage and support small group gatherings? This can include prayer, bible study, fellowship and worship, including gathering to watch streamed worship

together. What can you do to organize these groups now? How might you continue these when in person worship resumes?

14. If you are contemplating celebrating the Eucharist, how will you offer the host in a way that minimizes motion, contact and the touching of common surfaces such as the patten or the altar rail? How will you regulate the flow of people to and from the altar in a way that ensures they can maintain safe distancing?
15. How will you communicate that there is no nurse care or Sunday School?
16. How will you correct unsafe practices such as people coming too close together, shaking hands or hugging?
17. Do you have the necessary supplies and labor to clean the sanctuary and other common areas which may come into use (such as bathrooms and hallways) between worship services?
18. Does the Altar Guild have sufficient space, supplies and volunteers to safely clean sacred items between services?
19. How will you ensure proper sanitation and disinfection in regards to communal spaces including:
  - a. Worship bulletin disposal?
  - b. Used masks, tissues or other potentially contaminated items left in the pews?
  - c. Areas where small groups gather during the week?
  - d. Pews or chairs following worship?
  - e. Doorknobs, bathrooms, other areas that people touch when in your building?
20. Will you be able to acquire the necessary PPE, cleaning and disinfecting supplies on an ongoing basis? Who will do the cleaning?
21. Can you reasonably estimate the costs of PPE, cleaning supplies and services? How will these costs affect your budget? Can you afford to continue them for several months and possibly longer?
22. How will you update your building use agreements to reflect the new realities of COVID-19?
23. If someone contracts COVID-19 how will you communicate with your congregation and members who may have come into contact with that individual while maintaining privacy and providing for pastoral care?
24. If someone who has been in your building contracts COVID-19, how will you do a more intensive cleaning/disinfecting prior to its next use?
25. How will you communicate your safety plans and best practices to the congregation?
26. How will you review, evaluate and adjust your safety plans and measures on a regular basis? How can you ensure that this work is distributed and does not fall solely on the priest, warden or other individual?



## Appendix E: Governor Wolf's Plan (As of November 13, 2020)

### Red Phase

#### Work & Congregate Setting Restrictions

- Life Sustaining Businesses Only
- Masks Are Required in Businesses
- Congregate Care and Prison Restrictions in Place
- Schools (for in-person instruction) and Most Child Care Facilities Closed

#### Social Restrictions

- Stay at Home Orders in Place
- Large Gatherings Prohibited
- Masks Are Required in all Public Spaces
- Restaurants and Bars Limited to Carry-Out and Delivery Only
- Only Travel for Life-Sustaining Purposes Encouraged
- Reiterate and reinforce safety guidance for businesses, workers, individuals, facilities, update if necessary
- Monitor public health indicators, adjust orders and restrictions as necessary

As regions or counties move into the yellow phase, some restrictions on work and social interaction will ease while others, such as closures of schools, gyms, and other indoor recreation centers, hair and nail salons, as well as limitations around large gatherings, remain in place. For example, retail locations will be able to open with forthcoming guidance in place that is substantially similar to the worker safety and building safety order. Otherwise retail will be able to allow for curbside pickup. The purpose of this phase is to begin to power back up the economy while keeping a close eye on the public health data to ensure the spread of disease remains contained to the greatest extent possible.

### Yellow Phase

#### Work & Congregate Setting Restrictions

- Telework Must Continue Where Feasible
- Businesses with In-Person Operations Must [Follow Business and Building Safety Orders](#)
- Masks Are Required in Businesses
- Child Care May Open Complying with Guidance
- Congregate Care and Prison Restrictions in Place
- Schools may provide in-person instruction only in accordance with [Department of Education guidance](#).

#### Social Restrictions

- Stay at Home Order Lifted for Aggressive Mitigation
- Large Gatherings of More Than 25 Prohibited
- Masks Are Required in all Public Spaces
- In-Person Retail Allowable, Curbside and Delivery Preferable
- Indoor Recreation, Health and Wellness Facilities and Personal Care Services (such as gyms, spas, hair salons, nail salons and other entities that provide massage therapy), and all Entertainment (such as casinos, theaters) Remain Closed
- Restaurants and Bars May Open Outdoor Dining, in Addition to Carry-Out and Delivery (effective 6/5/2020)
- [All businesses must follow CDC](#) and DOH guidance for social distancing and cleaning
- Monitor public health indicators, adjust orders and restrictions as necessary
- After a county transitions to the yellow phase, we will closely monitor for increased risk, such as significant outbreaks. If overall risk remains mitigated for fourteen days, we will transition the county to the green phase.
- [The green phase eases most restrictions](#) with the continued suspension of the stay at home and business closure orders to allow the economy to strategically reopen while continuing to prioritize public health.
- While this phase will facilitate a return to a "new normal," it will be equally important to continue to monitor public health indicators and adjust orders and restrictions as necessary to ensure the spread of disease remains at a minimum.

## Green Phase

### Work & Congregate Setting Restrictions

- Telework Must Continue Where Feasible
- Businesses with In-Person Operations Must Follow Updated [Business and Building Safety Requirements](#)
- All Businesses Operating at 50% Occupancy in the Yellow Phase May Increase to 75% Occupancy, Except Where Noted for Bars and Restaurants
- Masks Are Required in Businesses
- Child Care May Open Complying with Guidance
- Congregate Care Restrictions in Place
- Prison and Hospital Restrictions Determined by Individual Facilities
- [Schools Subject to CDC](#) and Commonwealth Guidance

### Social Restrictions

- Gathering Limits Determined Using [Maximum Occupancy Calculator](#)
- Masks Are Required in all Public Spaces
- Self-certified Restaurants May Open at 50% Capacity for Indoor Dining
- On-premises Alcohol Consumption Prohibited Unless Part of a Meal; Cocktails-to-go and Carryout Beverages are Allowed
- Serving Alcohol for on-site Consumption Must End at 11:00 PM and All Alcoholic Beverages Must Be Removed From Patrons by Midnight
- Personal Care Services (including hair salons and barbershops) Open at 50% Occupancy and by Appointment Only
- Indoor Recreation and Health and Wellness Facilities (such as gyms and spas) Open at 50% Occupancy with Appointments Strongly Encouraged; Fitness Facilities Are Directed to Prioritize Outdoor Fitness Activities
- All Entertainment (such as casinos, theaters, and shopping malls) Open at 50% Occupancy
- Construction activity May Return to Full Capacity with Continued Implementation of Protocols

## Map as of June 22

PENNSYLVANIA REOPENING MAP

SOUTHEASTERN PA. REOPENING CHART

### Countdown to Green Begins

Southeastern Pennsylvania is now in the "yellow" phase and will move to the least-restrictive "green" phase on June 26, under Gov. Tom Wolf's reopening plan. However, Philadelphia officials will keep some restrictions in place until July 3. Lebanon is the only county remaining in yellow.

- Green
- Green, starting June 26
- Limited green, starting June 26
- Yellow

