



COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan for Fall - Winter 2020-2121

This plan was developed to support implementation of public health activities required to minimize the spread of COVID-19 at Ben Washington Baptist Church (BWBC) and was informed by CDC Guidance.

BWBC is committed to providing a safe and healthy facility for our staff, members, and visitors. This plan was developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure we implement strategies and procedures to preserve public health. It is expected that the entire church will have a role in implementing this plan to mitigate transmission of COVID-19 within our facility and our community that would result in a disruption to our mission. Therefore, all persons in our facility will be expected to comply with all aspects of this plan.

This plan has been developed with church staff and members by soliciting concerns, ideas and monitoring other sister churches in their response. Guidance and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Dallas County Health Department, and local county orders have been incorporated into the plan as appropriate including:

- Hygiene, cleaning, and disinfecting;
- Prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- Controls for social distancing;
- Housekeeping, including cleaning, disinfection and decontamination;
- Communications and training that will be provided to persons on-site; and
- Management and supervision necessary to ensure effective implementation of the plan.

This preparedness and response plan assume the following:

1. BWBC will follow guidance from the State of Texas, the Texas Department of Health, and from the CDC.
2. Our personnel will fall into different disease risk categories and decisions for return to the facility will be made in accordance with medical and public health guidance for risk stratification (e.g. age, health status). BWBC's role is not to determine the risk level of individuals; rather the church leadership should ensure that individuals can make their own informed choices and be supported.
3. BWBC personal and activity resumption will occur in a phased approach and comply with established guidance provided in this plan.
4. The COVID-19 situation will evolve and we will remain adaptable during this unprecedented time. The baseline level of risk for those working and using our facility will change as reopening stages progress requiring a reassessment of what level of resumption and precautions are appropriate.
5. Some church ministries will stay virtual until phased in and large gatherings are approved. It is the church's prerogative to postpone in-person meetings beyond the opening phases of the local and state entities.
6. Social distancing, wearing of masks or other appropriate PPE, hand-washing, and disinfection of

surfaces are key factors to reducing the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.

7. Worship services, ministry meetings and other large gatherings should be carried out with the utmost of caution and may be limited until it is safe to resume full capacity.

8. Personal responsibility is key to safe operations and the avoidance of disease transmission. Educational materials will be developed for staff, members, and visitors to the facility.

COVID-19 Plan Management

Infection control and occupational safety and health plans will apply to anyone working in or visiting the church (e.g., all staff, members, and visitors).

- The church will monitor local, state and federal guidelines and make adjustments to be in accordance with the CDC, local, state or federal mandates.
- The church will follow all applicable regulations and public health agency guidelines.
- Facility assessments to identify COVID-19 risks and prevention strategies should be done periodically as part of sound occupational health and public health practice. This plan will be reviewed every 2 weeks to ensure effectiveness.

Facility Public Health Measures

Infection prevention measures are being implemented at our facility in accordance with public health guidance and best practices.

Handwashing (Appendix A)

Anyone in the facility is instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water frequently throughout the day, but especially at the beginning and end of their time on-site, prior to any mealtimes, and after using the toilet. Hand-sanitizer dispensers (that use sanitizers of greater than 60% alcohol) that can be used for hand hygiene in place of soap and water, as long as hands are not visibly soiled.

- A “Clean Your Hands!” poster are located in all restrooms providing proper hand washing methods. Posters are available from CDC and state departments of health. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
- In occupied areas, staff are checking and replenishing soap dispensers, paper towels, and hand sanitizer stations at a minimum of once per day, and more often in heavily trafficked public spaces

Masks (Appendix B)

- Masks are required among staff, members and visitors when inside the building. Masks are most essential to minimizing the spread of the virus. Recent CDC Studies show that masks and social distancing can prevent the transmission of the virus.

Note: Masks should not be placed on children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, and anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. Masks may help prevent people who have COVID-19 from spreading the virus to others and reduce the risk of spread to the wearer. Masks are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/more/masking-science-sars-cov2.html>

- If church staff or members cannot wear a mask due to a physical condition that prevents it they are encouraged to stay home and use virtual services.

- **Masks are required for all staff and members visiting the facility at all times.**
- **Mask and Face Covering Signs will be posted at all entrances.**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

Social distancing

Everyone entering the facility is asked to practice or maintain social or physical distancing. This means to keep a safe space between yourself and other people who are not from your household. To practice social or physical distancing, stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people in both indoor and outdoor spaces. These measures may be adjusted according to phases of this preparedness and response plan.

Upon Church Entry

We encourage all staff and members to self screen before entering the church by checking their temperature and determining if they have any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Feverish feeling or a measured temperature equal to or greater than 99.6°F
- Known close contact with a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19

Any of the above symptoms are a sign that the staff or church member should stay home and contact a healthcare provider for further guidance.

Upon church entry everyone will have their temperatures checked and must complete a symptom checklist form and waiver. (Appendix C)

Remote Work and Adjusted Onsite Hours

The church has implemented procedures and practices for remote work and adjusted hours. All staff will meet with appropriate church leadership to determine an individual plan for work location based on responsibilities and risk levels.

- Telework is approved and expected for all persons who can accomplish their primary duty functions from home.
- Flexible hours and staggered shifts should be available to minimize the number of persons in the facility at one time.

Onsite Work

Staff, members, and visitors will avoid gathering in groups and in confined areas where six feet separation cannot be maintained. **Staff, members, and visitors are required to wear masks at all times.** Masks may be removed when staff are in their personal offices and when other people are not present.

- Shared staff offices are assessed and where feasible staff are reassigned to other working areas or alternate hours to maintain social distancing.

- In areas where shared workspace is in use, sanitizing wipes are available to clean prior to and after use. Wipes must be immediately disposed of in the trash after use.
 - Air purifiers can be purchased for office staff to help enhance circulation.
 - Staff will avoid using anyone else's personal protective equipment, phones, computer equipment, desks, cubicles, workstations, offices, or other personal work tools and equipment.
 - Common spaces such as break rooms, study spaces, and conference rooms are rearranged to promote social distancing. If social distancing is not possible then the meeting will need to be postponed, done virtually or staggered (divide participants for the meeting into smaller groups) to promote social distancing. Please remember mask usage is required.

Housekeeping (Appendix D)

Regular housekeeping practices are being enhanced by our staff in accordance with [CDC guidance](#). Frequent cleaning and disinfecting will be conducted in shared spaces (e.g. break rooms) and high-touch areas (e.g. door handles, railings).

- Church staff will contact contracted janitorial staff to discuss their cleaning processes and techniques for COVID-19. BWBC will contract with a sanitizing company to provide guidance and cleaning products and proper procedures for the church.
 - All cleaning products meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements.
 - Church Staff will have proper sanitation supplies - sprays, wipes, cleaners and PPE to ensure their ability to clean after leaving an area.
 - The church and offices will be cleaned and sanitized after each usage.
 - Written notice of where supplies can be located will be posted for staff, ministry leaders and members.
- If there is a confirmed positive case reported to the church, the administrators' office will coordinate cleaning and disinfecting of the individual's area.
- Staff will need to be appointed to clean public spaces such as building lobbies, restrooms, door handles, handrails, and elevator buttons at least once daily, and more frequently if deemed necessary.
 - A checklist will be maintained of daily cleaning while the building is in use.

Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation

- [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces at least daily and shared objects in between uses.
- Develop a schedule of increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Avoid use of items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.
- Ensure [safe and correct application](#) of disinfectants and keep them away from children.
- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children or themselves from inhaling toxic fumes.
- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, etc. Do not open windows and doors if they pose a safety risk to children using the facility.
- **Proper ventilation need to be assessed prior to re-entry.**
- If multiple services, consider scheduling services far enough apart to allow time for cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces between services. [Take steps](#) to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, drinking fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#) and other diseases associated with water.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

Screening, Exposure, and Illness Policies

BWBC will notify all staff, members and visitors of screening protocols, self-monitoring guidelines, and policies for staff or members exposed or exhibiting symptoms. Contact tracing is essential to stopping the spread of the virus. Due to this point all persons entering the facility shall be screened and must complete a screening form and waiver. This will allow staff to know who was in the building and possibility exposed if the situation should arise. Persons potentially exposed will contact via phone. All COVID-19 related updates will be relayed to staff via email or through staff meetings (virtual or in-person when this phase is achieved).

BWBC has leave policies that encourage staff to stay at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when they are required by a healthcare provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household. Staff members will need to complete the required forms to establish their sick leave.

Questions on leave policies should be directed to appropriate church leadership (Pastor or BOD depending on staff's position).

Employee or Volunteer Staff Self-Screening for those Working On-Site

Staff members should conduct self-monitoring for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms of the virus often include but are not limited to fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

Information on COVID-19 signs and symptoms are available at the [CDC website](#).

Staff must report symptoms via phone. **Employees or Volunteer Staff exhibiting symptoms should not come into the church.**

- Take your temperature in the morning and when you return home from work. Log those results and report any fever to your supervising church leadership.
- Report any exposure to COVID-19 positive individuals, respiratory symptoms, sore throat, or dry cough to your supervisor.
- If the employee or volunteer indicates any of these conditions, they may be required to stay home, and should seek guidance from their healthcare provider.

If an employee or volunteer begins to exhibit symptoms at work, they should report this to church supervising staff and leave the facility and contact their healthcare provider for further guidance.

Confirmed Cases

If a COVID-19 case is confirmed in a staff member or in a member of their household, the staff member will be asked to remain at home and considered to be in quarantine for no less than 14 days. A facility assessment will begin to determine what additional public health and cleaning measures should be implemented.

BWBC will work with the Dallas County Health Department to inform staff and members if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 in our facility, and the health department will provide instructions regarding staff self-quarantine measures.

Consistent with compliance with the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), staff members health status and health information will be protected.

An incident report will need to be completed and kept on file. An attempt to contact persons that

have come in contact with the member or staff member must be made within 24 hours of their possible exposure.

Communications and Training

This preparedness and response plan is communicated with all staff, ministry leaders, and members using the facility. Communication will increase to the larger membership as more meetings are phased in.

- Return to Work Training will be done prior to returning to the building for work. All staff and volunteers are asked to be flexible in the process and adhere to the guidelines for their personal protection and that of others.
 - Topics should include but not limited to: Personal Protective Equipment, disinfection measures, social distancing protocol, COVID-19 signs and symptoms

Facility Use

BWBC serves as a gathering place for congregation and community members. Gathering purposes in the congregation include: congregational work, support to community outreach, celebration events, community meeting, and social engagements. Use of the facility will be based on the phases of this plan and align with state guidance and policies. Priority will be given to community outreach related activities (ie: food pantry, hospitality ministry, etc).

Any group or ministry that would like to use the facility while this plan is operational must request use using the COVID Facility Request Form (Appendix E). Each request will be reviewed by an internal committee designated by church leadership.

If approved, each group utilizing the facility will be required:

- Review training material provided by the church and sign off on it.
- Share facility rules with participants
 - Conduct appropriate social distancing
 - Wear masks
 - Wash hands
 - Cover your cough
- Complete pre-screening, waiver forms and temperature check upon arrival.
- Completed Forms will be given to the ministry leader or office administrator and/or designee and placed in the designated area prior to leaving. (This will need to be determined and communicated to the ministry prior to entry into the facility).
- Take attendance to include name and contact information and provide to the office administrator.

No member of the congregation or community may use the facility until they have received approval.

Return to Worship

Worship services in the sanctuary are at the heart of our ministry. It is imperative that this is done in phases and with utmost sense of caution to protect our congregation, church staff and visitors. Entry phases are detailed below and are subject to change.

- Cleaning and sanitizing will be done between services with proper sanitizing supplies and techniques. (Proper ventilation is encouraged and allowing for ample time between services will be key).
- The church will look to reduce the number of attendees in order to allow for proper social distancing.
- Masks will be worn while inside the building until it is safe and appropriate to discontinue

based on public health, CDC and county guidelines.

- Procedures will be adopted for proper screening of church members, temperature checks and pre-screening forms prior to worship entry.
- Some ministries may be adjusted due to increased risk of virus transmission as a result of the nature of the ministry and the virus. (For ex: choir rehearsals and the choir ministering in the choir stand during services. The choir may need to resume at less than 25% and masks will be required while singing. Droplet transmission is accelerated when speaking loudly or singing per the CDC.)

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6919e6.htm>

- When at all possible, meeting outside with proper social distancing and masks is optimal.
 - Ministry meetings, church services and other meetings.

Entry Phases

The purpose of this phased approach is to provide guidance and direction for activities at the church. The disease progression is imperfectly known and there may be times where we may need to move back and forth between phases.

External Conditions Church Activities

Phase 0: Stay at Home

External Conditions:

Cases presenting in the state with increased community spread and testing is limited.

Criteria (for phase):

Government and organization leaders are initiating plans for social distancing or stay at home orders.

- Assess risk to staff and congregation
- Meet with church leadership to determine facility hibernation plan
- Cancel or postpone facility onsite activities
- Plan for social distancing activities
- Meet with staff and initiate plan for stay at home activities

Phase 1: Stay at Home

External Conditions:

Government Orders for communities to stay at home. Disease spread is occurring in the community and hospitalizations are increasing. Testing is limited and there are widespread PPE shortages.

Criteria (for phase):

Government issues to stay at home orders or due to the increasing infection rates it is encouraged to reduce activities to only those that are mandatory.

Church Activities

- Worship services move to online delivery.
- Recording in the sanctuary is limited to critical elements of worship, while maintaining at least 6 ft of space between people. Masks are required unless actively ministering (singing or preaching).
- Life celebrations (weddings, funerals, baptism) are postponed and all participants notified.

Activities on-site

- All staff will telework unless specified and permission given with social distancing and masks being worn when inside the facility.
- Staff may return to the facility to acquire equipment and record worship segments.
- Bible studies and small groups will meet online.

Phase 2: Date - TBD

External Conditions:

There are declining case counts and availability of testing is increasing. Contact tracing is in place and PPE is available for social distancing purposes (e.g. cloth masks).

Criteria (for phase):

State and/or CDC provides relaxed guidance for social distancing. Facilities and core services staff have adequately prepared for return to the facility. Adequate cleaning and disinfecting supplies are available.

Church Activities

- Worship is held online.
- Recording in the sanctuary is limited to critical elements of worship, while maintaining at least 6 ft of space between people. Masks are required unless actively ministering (singing or preaching).
- Life celebrations (weddings, funerals, baptisms) should be kept to less than 10 in attendance and be able to maintain social distancing. Approval is required.

Activities on-site

- Bible studies and small groups continue to meet online.
- Office functions are limited to ensure essential operations.
- Church leadership teams of less than 10 might meet in person to prepare supplies for an outreach while wearing masks and maintaining social distancing.
 - All other meetings will continue meeting online.

<https://www.dallascounty.org/departments/dchhs/2019-novel-coronavirus.php>

Phase 3: Date - TBD

External Conditions:

Government leaders and CDC continue relaxation of social distancing measures. Cases of COVID-19 continue to decrease and testing is available. PPE is widely available.

Criteria (for phase):

State and CDC provide relaxed guidance for social distancing. Facilities and core services staff have adequately prepared for return to the facility. Church has the ability to gradually expand the number of people in the church while maintaining social distancing. Adequate cleaning and disinfecting supplies have been properly obtained for disinfection of the facility after church activities.

Church Activities

- Worship is held online and in-person with social distancing measures implemented per local guidance. Multiple services may be considered to spread out participation. Masks are still required.
- Entrance and exit into the church will be designed to avoid gathering. Entrances will have temperature and self-screening procedures.
- Communion may be offered in alignment with public health guidance. Consultation with church associations will occur prior to offering.
- Group singing may be considered based on recommendations by public health authorities.
- No-touch alternatives for offering are provided. Remove Bibles and hymnals. Use screens as an alternative to bulletins.
- No fellowship/social hour will be scheduled during this phase. People are encouraged to leave the building after the service (no mingling).
 - No onsite communal meals. Meals may be prepared and given in a to-go form.

Activities on-site

- Bible studies and small groups meet in person while maintaining some online options for high risk individuals and those who do not feel comfortable being in public. Approval is required.
 - Consider meeting outside. Masks are still required.

- Office functions resume as normal, with attention to cleaning, social distancing and mask are still required.
- Groups, teams, and committees could meet in person. Approval is required. Social distancing, public health practices and masks will be required.

High risk individuals (people over 60 and those with underlying conditions), whether staff, volunteers, or program participants, should continue to shelter in place during Phase 3. Social distancing and public health practices (e.g. wearing masks) will be implemented while at church and in community ministry, as is recommended in public spaces.

Phase 4: Date - TBD

External Conditions:

There are no or minimal state restrictions. Vaccine available. Widespread testing and identification of new COVID-19 cases, with quarantining is occurring. Limited community spread.

Criteria (for phase):

No or minimal state restrictions.

Church Activities - Business as usual

Church Activity Chart

	Phase 0	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4
Worship Service	Online	Online	Online	In-person limited with social distance & masks	Normal
Ministry Meetings	Online	Online	Online	In-person limited with social distance & masks or online	Normal
Office Staff	Remote	Remote	Remote/Onsite with social distance & masks	In-person with social distance & masks or remote	Normal
Community Groups	Online	Postponed Or Online	Postponed In-Person with permission	In-Person with permission	Normal
Celebration Of Life	Postponed or Offsite	Postponed or Offsite	Postponed or Offsite	In-Person limited with social distance, masks & permission	Normal

Guidance for developing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

General

CDC Coronavirus (COVID-19) – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV

Businesses

CDC Resources for businesses and employers – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html

CDC General business frequently asked questions – www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html

Federal OSHA – www.osha.gov

Handwashing

www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html

www.cdc.gov/handwashing

Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html

Social distancing

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html

Housekeeping

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html

www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html

Employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html

Training

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html

www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf

