

## **PROTOCOL FOR COMMUNITY AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CFBOs)**

### **LEADERS:**

- Provide appropriate facilities/sanitary measures (inclusive of appropriate disinfectants and instructions) to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), e.g. hand washing stations, equipped with: soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, tissue, toilet facilities, continuous supply of potable water, provision of additional hand sanitizer, provision of disinfecting wiping products, as per the physical distancing and hygiene protocol.
- Prepare a COVID-19 response plan to identify processes for dealing with suspected COVID-19 cases.
  - Establish procedures to separate persons who show up sick or become sick at the institution from others, until they can safely leave and/or seek medical care.
- Document the hygiene, sanitation and physical distancing protocols being followed by the assembly and continuously sensitize members on these protocols.
- Identify services and activities (e.g. meetings and classes) that might need to be limited or temporarily discontinued.
- Identify the vulnerable populations including children, pregnant and nursing women, older adults, persons with underlying health conditions, persons with disabilities and individuals who might not be able to wear the mask for an extended period. Find alternative solutions that will ensure continuity of service for them.

### **Faith-Based Organisation (FBO) OPERATIONS**

- Post several signs at and near the entrance(s) and throughout the FBO venue alerting members of efforts in place regarding COVID-19 and that they must follow the 6 feet distancing rule.
- Number of attendees must be calculated at minimum of 30 square feet per person.
- Announce physical distancing expectations periodically.
- Ensure that 6 feet physical distancing is maintained within aisles/seating rows (use markers on benches or place chairs 6 ft apart within each aisle).
- Ensure alternating rows of occupied and vacant seating (i.e. between two occupied rows of seats should be one aisle of empty chairs or a vacant bench)
- Avoid holding hands during the service/prayers.
- Avoid handshakes as a form of greeting/sign of peace.
- Avoid hugging and greeting with a kiss.
- Modify the method for collecting regular financial contributions; instead of passing a collection tray/basket:

- Use a stationary collection box
  - Use the mail or electronic methods
  - Use extended (poled) collection bags by an usher
- Consider modifying practices that are specific to particular faith traditions. For example:

Congregations that practise Communion could consider modifying or suspending this practice. Modifications could include:

- Ensure that religious leaders always wash their hands or use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol prior to conducting the service and Communion.
  - Place the Communion elements on napkins within the recipient's hand, not on their tongue
  - Avoid the use of a common cup
  - Serve members, rather than self-serving.
- Maintain the requisite number of people in the building according to building size. (30 sq. feet per person)
  - Wash hands after handling financial contributions
  - Clean and sanitize highly touched areas and items twice a day. For FBOs having longer or all-day worship, clean and sanitize three times daily.
    - Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants can be used.
  - Provide sanitizing stations for congregation entering and leaving the building.
  - No gathering outside of FBO venues, before or after church services.
  - All congregational members or visitors should be aware of the following precautionary guidelines:
    - Individuals who have symptoms of acute respiratory illness should stay home.
    - Sick members should not come to the FBO venue until they are free of fever (temperature of 100.4° F [37.8° C] or greater), signs of a fever, and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines.
    - Members who have recently returned from areas with a high number of COVID-19 cases (based on CDC information) should stay at home.
    - Members who have been in close contact with someone infected by SARS-CoV-2 should stay home.

## **FUNERALS AND OTHER CEREMONIES**

- The requisite number of persons at any Funeral Service **shall not** constitute more than **ten (10)** persons.

- The requisite number of persons at any wedding ceremony **shall not** constitute more than **ten (10)** persons.
- The same sanitary and sanitization measures as per regular services, as indicated above must be adhered to.
- All other ceremonies including baptisms should be suspended until further notice is given by the Ministry of Health.

## **CONGREGATION**

### **Regular announcements to the assembly should reiterate:**

- Maintain a 6-feet distance.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Practice proper hygiene protocols.
  - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water is unavailable.
  - Cover your cough and sneeze into tissue and discard after or into your inner elbow. Wash hands after.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wear face mask upon entering, leaving and whilst within the building
- Stay informed and follow the advice given by the Ministry of Health on how to protect yourself and others from SARS-CoV-2

## **REQUIREMENTS**

All Faith-Based Organizations are required to prepare a COVID-19 response plan regarding the new measures stipulated above. This plan must be submitted to and approved by the Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Local Government and Empowerment, at the soonest and should include:

- The size of the building/room and its capacity, taking into consideration the physical distancing requirement.
- Size of the present membership and procedures for managing members to approved numbers.
- Sanitary measures in place
- Service delivery and special protocols regarding vulnerable congregants, e.g. the elderly, pregnant women, children, and immunocompromised persons
- Measures for conducting funeral service
- Service procedures
- Procedure to separate persons who show up sick or become sick at the facility
- Communication plan for the congregation (including strategic placement of signs)

The request to resume operations should be included in a Cover Letter, addressed to the Permanent Secretary and must highlight the intended start date. All requests **must** be submitted at least three (3) working days prior to the start date and should be emailed to [udelaire@gmail.com](mailto:udelaire@gmail.com). Any Faith-Based Organisation found in violation of the above protocol will forfeit the opportunity to continue its operations.