

## Religious Services Guidelines to Maximize Public Health and Economic Reactivation

(from Utah Leads Together 2.0 Phased Guidelines Version 4.5)

- Seating arrangements should be made such that a 6-foot distance is maintained between each household group
- Limit the number of people in a confined area to enable adequate 6-foot distancing at all times between each household group.
- See Appendix B for additional considerations.

### Appendix B: Considerations for Faith Groups Returning to In-Person Religious Services

Governor Herbert recognizes the importance of faith groups during these difficult times. Under the Orange (Moderate Risk) and Yellow (Low Risk) Utah COVID-19 Health Risk Status Phased Guidelines, faith groups are able to hold in-person religious services of any size as long as a distance of at least six feet is maintained between household groups. This six-foot distance requirement is the only limit imposed by the Phased Guidelines on the number of people permitted to participate in an in-person religious service.

The following are provided as considerations for faith groups and individuals returning to in-person religious services. These considerations were prepared in consultation with a working group of faith leaders representing the rich diversity of faiths in Utah. These considerations are also consistent with ongoing messaging from the Utah Department of Health and are consistent with the best available medical science.

**These considerations are not binding on any faith group and should not be construed as an attempt to regulate religious practices. They are provided as information so that individuals can make decisions to protect themselves and others from COVID-19. Each faith group will decide for itself when to resume in-person religious services.**

- Consideration for high-risk individuals:
  - Limit participation in any in-person gatherings, including religious services, of any number of people outside your household group.
  - High-risk individuals include those:
    - aged 65 and older;
    - who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility;
    - with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma;
    - who have a serious heart condition;
    - who are immunocompromised, including:
      - individuals who have recently received cancer treatment, bone marrow transplantation, or organ transplantation;
      - individuals living with HIV or AIDS; and
      - individuals who have experienced prolonged use of corticosteroids or other immune weakening medications;
    - with severe obesity (BMI of 40 or higher);
    - with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including diabetes, renal failure, or liver disease;
    - who smoke; or

- with hypertension.
- Considerations for all individuals participating in an in-person religious service:
  - o Wear a face mask when you cannot maintain a distance of six feet from other individuals from a different household.
  - o Do not shake hands with, or otherwise touch, an individual who is not a member of your household group.
  - o Avoid high-touch surfaces.
  - o Disinfect high touch surfaces frequently.
  - o Wash your hands frequently.
  - o Wear a face mask and wear gloves or sanitize hands when preparing food to be consumed by individuals from a different household.
  - o Avoid group meals that are not part of the religious service.
- Considerations for faith group leaders organizing an in-person religious service:
  - o Implement measures to prevent individuals from congregating in lobbies or meeting areas where a 6-foot distance between household groups is difficult to maintain.
  - o Post signage to remind individuals to maintain social distancing when in common areas.
  - o Set an established window of time or provide separate entrances for high-risk individuals to enter and exit without pressure from crowds.
  - o Provide multiple meeting schedules to accommodate smaller gatherings where social distancing guidelines can be followed.
  - o Provide streamed services to households that prefer to participate virtually.