

SAMPLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE PLAN

It is the desire of [Church or Ministry Name] to meet the spiritual needs of everyone who comes to worship, fellowship and pursue spiritual growth with us.

While we welcome all who wish to participate, we have instituted precautions as established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to minimize the risk of spreading communicable diseases within our church body.

There will be no exceptions to this policy. For those whose diagnosis allows for participation, accommodations will be made with discretion and sensitivity. For those whose diagnosis requires isolation, reasonable accommodations will be attempted.

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

The CDC has established a set of standard precautions to minimize the risk of spreading infectious diseases. Our ministry will adhere to the following precautions:

- Have a supply of alcohol-based (65–95%) hand sanitizer readily available for employees, volunteers and church attendees to use.
- Stay stocked on disposable wipes to clean surfaces daily in our office (e.g., keyboard, desktop, mouse, phone, chair arms, etc.).
- Routinely (at least once every other day, if possible) clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (e.g., toys, doors, handles, water fountains, tables, sinks, check-in stations, touch screens, etc.).
- Post handwashing reminder signs in all bathrooms.
- Post signs in the children's area stating the policy regarding children who show signs of illness.
- Require all individuals involved in food preparation and service to begin by thoroughly washing their hands. Food preparers and servers are also encouraged to use gloves.
- Conduct quarterly training for staff and volunteers on healthy hygiene practices that include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 65% alcohol.
- Require staff to stay at home when sick, even without documentation from doctors.
- Insist that anyone who has a contagious illness or potentially contagious illness refrain from attending services, working or volunteering in any capacity.
- Insist that children with uncovered weeping sores or aggressive biting behaviors be returned to their parents or guardians.
- Insist that adult caregivers with open sores on their hands wear protective gloves.
- Insist that adult caregivers wear gloves when exposed to bodily fluids and follow standard precautions as established.
- Insist that items soiled by bodily fluids be placed in sealed plastic bags.

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CHILDREN'S MINISTRY GUIDELINES

Children's Ministry Worker Policy

These guidelines are to be followed by any workers — whether paid or volunteer — with actual or potential exposure to blood and bodily fluids. Bodily fluids include saliva, spit, urine, feces, nasal discharge, discharge from open skin sores, sweat and tears. Our ministry requires that workers adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1 Gloves must be worn before touching blood and bodily fluids, non-intact skin, cuts and open sores and before handling items and surfaces soiled with blood and bodily fluids.
- 2 Hands and skin surfaces should be washed immediately after exposure to blood and bodily fluids and after gloves are removed. Handwashing with germicidal soap is essential to prevent spread of infection, and germicidal soap must be provided in the church lavatories.
- 3 The cleaning of bodily fluids on surfaces shall be done while wearing gloves. The surface on which a spill occurred shall be cleaned with germicidal disinfectant, which must be available in the children's area. No worker who has a weeping skin sore shall handle any situation involving potential contact with blood or bodily fluids.
- 4 All contaminated cleanup materials, including gloves, shall be disposed of in sealed plastic trash bags placed in a larger trash bag out of reach of children.
- 5 All wounds on workers or children that have not formed a scab must be covered.
- 6 Toys obviously soiled by saliva should be washed in a germicidal solution after each use. All toys used by children should ideally be cleaned at the end of the group usage (for example, nursery toys should be cleaned after each worship service).
- 7 Children who need help while using the restroom should be assisted by an adult who is wearing gloves. Gloves should be disposed of immediately in a covered container.

Children's Ministry Attendance Policy

Parents will be encouraged to voluntarily notify the church if their child has a chronic communicable disease. A decision on attendance shall be based on the following factors:

- 1 The risk of transmission of the disease to others.
- 2 The health risk to the particular individual.
- 3 The ability to make reasonable accommodations to reduce health risks to the person and others.

This decision will be made based on the best medical/public health information available at the time. A summary of the person's health problems and care received, as well as his or her physician's recommendations, must be released to the church to assist in the attendance decision. The church staff — as needed on a case-by-case basis — will seek appropriate medical/public health/legal consultation, including contacting the individual's personal physician. Medical records may be requested if needed.

Children's Ministry Logistics

- 1 Signs will be posted in the nursery and preschool classrooms to guide children's ministry workers, parents and guardians regarding children who show signs of illness. The wording of the signs will read:
PARENTS: Our children's ministry workers consider the well-being of your child to be a sacred trust. In the best interest of both your children and our workers, we request that individuals with contagious illnesses or potentially contagious illnesses — whether they are children or ministry workers — refrain from participating in the children's ministry at the church. Symptoms include:
 - Fever above 100° F taken orally (must be fever-free for 24 hours and not using Tylenol®/Advil® before participating)
 - Discharge from ears or eyes
 - Skin lesions that blister
 - Undiagnosed rashes
 - Vomiting or diarrhea lasting several hours during the past 24 hours
 - Excessive signs of cold, tiredness, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing or coughing — any highly contagious disease such as chicken pox or pink eye
- 2 Children's ministry workers, paid staff, maintenance workers and volunteers will be educated on disease control measures and shall use them routinely — especially when handling blood or other bodily fluids.
- 3 A location will be designated for materials related to cleanup of blood or bodily fluids and will include:
 - A first aid kit
 - A first response kit
 - A caution sign or cone
- 4 Additional supplies that could be needed by ministry workers will be made available throughout the building, including plastic trash bags, twist ties, covered trash cans, gloves, changing table covers, toilet seat covers and other supplies.

MINIMAL TO MODERATE COMMUNITY SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE GUIDELINES

If local health officials report that there is a minimal to moderate level spread of an infectious disease in the community, [Church or Ministry Name] will take proactive steps to operate effectively while maintaining the safety of our staff, volunteers and congregation.

[Church or Ministry Name] is committed to providing official information about the nature and spread of said infectious disease, including symptoms and signs to watch for, as well as required steps to be taken in the event of an illness or outbreak in our ministry.

Preventing the Spread of Infection

The CDC has established a set of standard precautions to minimize the risk of spreading infectious diseases. Our ministry will adhere to the following additional precautions*:

Minimal Spread

- Increase the cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (e.g., toys, doors, handles, water fountains, tables, sinks, check-in stations, touch screens, etc.) to once a day.
- Cancel large gatherings of more than 250 people.
- Encourage staff, volunteers and attendees to implement social distancing measures (e.g., staying six feet apart from one another and wearing masks).
- Educate staff, volunteers and congregation to wave “hi” instead of using handshakes, fist bumps or hugs.
- Suspend greeting/welcome time during service.
- Discontinue passing the offering buckets/plates and move all tithes and giving to be only online.
- Avoid passing out bulletins/programs.
- Suspend offering communion.
- Suspend offering coffee and food during gatherings.

Moderate Spread

- Increase the cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and objects that are frequently touched (e.g., toys, doors, handles, water fountains, tables, sinks, check-in stations, touch screens, etc.) to once a day.
- Cancel gatherings of more than 10 people.
- Move all services, Bible studies and groups online.
- Replace in-person meetings with conference calls, videoconferencing or FaceTime®.

**These precautions may change depending on direction given by federal, state or local authorities.*

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Communication

A committee will be designated to monitor and coordinate events around an infectious disease outbreak, as well as create rules that could be implemented to promote safety through infection control. This committee includes:

| | |
|-------|----------------------|
| Name: | Contact information: |
| Name: | Contact information: |
| Name: | Contact information: |

Confirmed Outbreak

If a person who has a confirmed case of the infectious disease has been in our ministry, we will close temporarily and follow the recommended procedures outlined by the CDC. The CDC recommends we:

- Notify local health officials immediately.
- Communicate with staff, volunteers, members and people we serve that there has been a confirmed case, while maintaining the confidentiality of the person with the confirmed case of the infectious disease.
- Instruct employees to work from home until further notice.
- Implement online services and cancel/postpone any events until further notice.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill person, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces (e.g., bathrooms, doors, handles, water fountains, tables, sinks, check-in stations, touch screens, etc.).

EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES

We ask all employees to cooperate in taking steps to reduce the transmission of infectious disease in the workplace. Unless otherwise notified, our normal attendance and leave policies will remain in place.

Individuals who believe they may face particular challenges reporting to work during an infectious disease outbreak should take steps to develop any necessary contingency plans. For example, employees might want to arrange for alternative sources of childcare should schools close and/or speak with supervisors about the potential to work from home temporarily or follow an alternative work schedule.

Limiting Travel

All non-essential travel should be avoided until further notice. Employees who travel as an essential part of their job should consult with management on appropriate actions. Business-related travel outside the United States will not be authorized until further notice.

Telecommuting

Telework requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. While not all positions will be eligible, all requests for temporary telecommuting should be submitted to your manager for consideration.

Staying Home When Ill

Many times, with the best of intentions, employees report to work even though they feel ill. We provide paid sick time and other benefits to compensate employees who are unable to work due to illness. [Insert any specific policy guidance here.]

During an infectious disease outbreak, it is critical that employees do not report to work while they are ill and/or experiencing the following symptoms: [Enter as warranted. Examples include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue.]

Currently, the CDC recommends that people with an infectious illness such as the flu remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F or 37.8° C) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. Employees who report to work ill will be sent home in accordance with these health guidelines.

Requests for Medical Information and/or Documentation

If you are out sick or show symptoms of being ill, it may become necessary to request information from you and/or your health care provider. In general, we would request medical information to confirm your need to be absent, to show whether and how an absence relates to the infection and to know that it is appropriate for you to return to work. As always, we expect and appreciate your cooperation if and when medical information is sought.

Confidentiality of Medical Information

Our policy is to treat any medical information as a confidential medical record. In furtherance of this policy, any disclosure of medical information is in limited circumstances with supervisors, managers, first aid and safety personnel and government officials as required by law.

Social Distancing Guidelines for the Workplace

In the event of an infectious disease outbreak, [Church or Ministry Name] may implement these social distancing guidelines to minimize the spread of the disease among the staff:

During the workday, employees are requested to:

- Avoid meeting people face-to-face. Employees are encouraged to use the telephone, online conferencing, email or instant messaging to conduct business as much as possible, even when participants are in the same building.
- Minimize the meeting time, choose a large meeting room and sit at least one yard from each other if possible, and avoid person-to-person contact such as shaking hands if a face-to-face meeting is unavoidable.
- Avoid any unnecessary travel and cancel or postpone non-essential meetings, gatherings, workshops and training sessions.

PRIVACY

[Church or Ministry Name] is sensitive to the privacy interests of staff, volunteers, members, and children and their parents. [Church or Ministry Name] will share health information about confirmed cases on a need-to-know basis. [Church or Ministry Name] will also comply with any federal, state or local law that requires reporting of health information to regulatory authorities and will otherwise release information as required by law.

ONGOING ADMINISTRATION

This policy will be reviewed periodically by [Church or Ministry Name] to ensure that it is based on currently reliable information regarding infectious diseases. It may be modified at any time based on new findings from medical and health agencies.

[Name of Person or Committee in Charge] will oversee the implementation of this policy.

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