



Resource for Churches Preparing to Reopen

Churches have much to consider in order to comply with public health directives regarding public gatherings being issued by governmental authorities. We want you to know Mennonite Mutual does not place any additional requirements on churches beyond the government's guidance for them to safely reopen their doors.

One thing we know for sure though, is that even if churches resume services and public gatherings, things will not be "normal" for some time. This means the policies, procedures, and protections you had in place previously will need to be reviewed and adjusted according to whatever changes your ministry needs to make in this new environment.

First and foremost, remember that your congregation has the expectation that your church has their safety in mind. Churches will now not only have to continue providing the same high standard of care to provide for the physical safety and wellbeing of their attendees as before, but they will now have to do so with different meeting formats, new policies and procedures, staffing, and volunteers. All are expected to be in place when services resume and will likely need to be adjusted as things continue to change.

The experienced and trusted volunteers you have relied upon in the past may not feel comfortable returning to public gatherings yet. Therefore, you may need to recruit and train new volunteers, while at the same time develop and implement new procedures in accordance with state mandates and guidelines.

For example, if your gathering size is limited, you may choose to conduct multiple services. Do you have adequate volunteers to staff the additional services? Childcare, collecting offerings, ushers, hospitality services such as coffee and refreshments, and door greeters are important positions to churches, and yet will require changes and adjustments in order to comply with these new public health guidelines.

There will be an increased expectation of cleaning and sanitation before, during and after services, that will likely require additional staff or volunteers. These staff and volunteers will also need to be kept safe while carrying out their duties (latex gloves, masks, maintaining social distance, etc.).

These are examples of the standards of care that not only existed before and must be maintained, or in some cases are new or increased, that need to be provided in order to safely reopen your church.

Our first recommendation is to follow the public health guidance provided by your state and local authorities. Here are a few additional resources that can be helpful at this time.

[24 Questions Your Church Should Answer Before People Return](#) at kenbraddy.com.

[What Your Church Must Know Before Reopening Your Building](#) at factsandtrends.net.

Please be sure to check with your state or local government for additional resources or guidelines for you to review, implement and follow prior to making this very important decision of how and when it is appropriate to reopen your church's doors.