



COVID-19 Guidance on the Re-opening of Churches

North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists | September 2020

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Introduction

With the UK experiencing ongoing public health emergencies as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as a church organisation, we must therefore protect individuals from potential harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect our members and others from coronavirus. This is called a COVID-19 Risk Assessment and it will help your church to manage and permit activities in a manner that is safe and in line with social distancing guidelines. As a standard, each church (including church plants and companies) must:

1. Identify activities or services which might cause transmission of the virus, acting to remove or control the risk;
2. Consider and note who could be at risk. Official details from the NHS of those considered at higher risk to COVID-19 [can be found here](#);
3. Decide how likely it is that someone could be exposed, and steps to take in that event;
4. Make necessary changes to services and activities to minimise transmission of the virus;
5. Ensure plans are clearly communicated to anyone who may attend the church; and
6. Ensuring compliance with the law and any statutory guidelines at all times.

Places of worship play an important role in providing spiritual leadership for many individuals, and in bringing communities and generations together. However, their communal nature also makes them places that are particularly vulnerable to the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

The risk assessment of buildings owned by the North England Conference (NEC), should be completed by the local Health and Safety representative(s) with the support of the Pastor and Elders, and approved and signed off (voted) by the local church board as part of their duty of care to all who attend the church.

The need for risk assessments applies to all services, events and ceremonies including baby dedications, baptisms, weddings and funerals. Government guidance strongly advises that only essential aspects of such ceremonies take place at this time. Where baptism (full immersion in water) for example is being considered, this should be very carefully planned and follow particular social distancing rules.

Those operating within buildings which are rented from a landlord should immediately review the content of their lease which will confirm the duty of the landlord to make sure that the building is safe for the church and anybody else using their building. The church should request a copy of the landlord's risk assessment, and use this to complete their own (this) risk assessment following the same process as above and referring to the information provided by the landlord.

Risk assessments should always be carried out by persons who are experienced and competent to do so. Competence does not, however, mean having to know everything about everything. Competence also means knowing when enough is known, or when to ask for assistance from more experienced individuals or external professionals. We would therefore encourage churches to work collaboratively (sharing knowledge, awareness, training, skills, experience and potential solutions) when completing their risk assessment. Churches are encouraged to use photographs and video footage to capture evidence useful for the sign off process. Members should understand clearly the measures being put in place. A clear and timely communication strategy will benefit everyone.

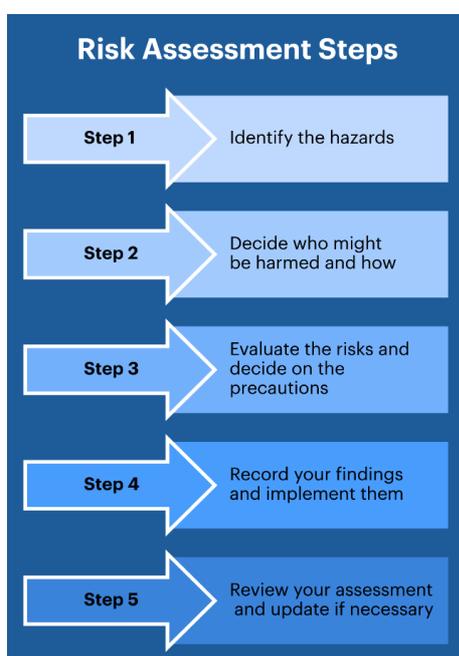
All completed risk assessments should be sent to the NEC Executive Secretary. Churches renting buildings should also provide a copy of the landlord's risk assessment when submitting their completed

risk assessment. **No church meetings should take place until authorised to do so by the NEC Executive Committee.** Details regarding the arrangements for doing this will follow.

Churches operating in an area that is experiencing a local COVID-19 outbreak where local restrictions have been imposed, should also be directed by the different guidance and legislation that will apply. Churches should consult the [local restrictions guidance](#) to see if any restrictions are in place in their area.

Completed risk assessments should be reviewed weekly, and the activities monitored to make sure plans are working as expected. Reviews should be made following any significant change to Government and Public Health guidelines, which would therefore also require a change to NEC guidelines. Where major changes are required, the approval process above must be similarly followed.

Assessing Risk



In order to rate the risk of any identified issue (High, Medium and Low), churches must consider the probability of the identified risk occurring in their individual building.

Because of the serious nature of COVID-19, we taken the position of assessing the potential severity of infection as serious in all cases, whilst accepting this will be differently experienced by individuals and groups who may be ‘at risk’ or in a vulnerable group. Risks which may be differently experienced by individuals and groups should be recorded accordingly (see Guidance below). Where risks are suitably controlled, these should be recorded as ‘Low’ to confirm the measures (controls) in place or planned.

Very Likely	Risk most certain to occur	High Risk
Likely	Risk frequently occurs	Medium Risk
Unlikely	Risk seldom occurs	Low Risk

Completing risk assessments will assist churches to ensure all essential steps have been taken to anyone attending the church safe. Failure to complete a risk assessment which accounts for COVID-19 could constitute a breach of [Health & Safety legislation](#), as could having a risk assessment where the measures set out are insufficient. We would encourage that churches work collaboratively to share resources, knowledge and skills to assist each other in completing their risk assessments.

Guidance

[Who's at higher risk from coronavirus](#) - Coronavirus (COVID-19) can make anyone seriously ill. But for some people, the risk is higher.

Ensuring Social Distancing

Key Considerations

1. Where in the building will social distancing be more difficult?
2. What areas or tasks are more likely to increase the risk?
3. Has consideration been given to keeping numbers as minimal as possible to further minimise risk?
4. What changes to services or activities need to be made to ensure individuals maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable) to reduce the risk of transmission?
5. How will the changes be implemented?
6. Can the building be rearranged to reduce the likelihood that coronavirus will spread?
7. What changes and/or additions may need to be made to items within the building to reduce the likelihood of spreading coronavirus?
8. If the building is listed, has consideration been made to ensure any changes are sensitive and reversible as well as reasonable and practicable? The Local Authority Conservation department must be consulted before any alterations are made, and their approval obtained.

Churches must organise their building to ensure members and others maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable), taking the following measures as appropriate:

1. Ensure any socialising outside but within church grounds is done observing at least 2 metres or 1 metre with actions taken to reduce the risk of transmission (where 2 metres is not viable) apart. This risk assessment includes surrounding grounds (including churchyards, car parks and courtyards).
2. Physically arrange all communal areas to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable) to reduce the risk of transmission.
3. Mark areas using tape, floor paint, or tape barriers to help individuals keep 1m plus apart.
4. Provide signage to remind individuals to maintain social distancing guidelines.
5. Using screens to create a physical barrier between individuals.
6. Arrange the use of more than one exit or entry. Introducing a one-way flow in and out of the premises with appropriate floor markings or signage, with restrictions on accessing non-essential areas.
7. Set up a register to track who and how many individuals enter and exit the building.
8. Display notices / posters throughout the church to remind individuals of the social distancing rules.
9. Use social distancing marking in toilet areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with one in, one out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks).
10. Permit only essential trips within the building to maintain social distancing as much as possible.
11. Where social distancing cannot be maintained, extra attention needs to be paid to cleaning and hygiene to reduce the risk of transmission.
12. Churches must state the occupancy of their building under these restrictions at the entrance and exits of the church. This should be communicated to known individuals expected to attend in advance using communication methods at their disposal.

Although the existing government guidance states that “Limits for communal worship should be decided on the basis of the capacity of the place of worship...”, due to the risks presented to a significant number of our existing membership (e.g. mature in age, varying visible and invisible disabilities, from ‘at risk’,

vulnerable and particular ethnic groups), the Executive Committee has at this time taken the decision that all churches should follow the advice in relation to 'life cycle ceremonies', and **"...restrict numbers to 30 within a place of worship for public health reasons."**

Churches should be mindful that the capacity of 30 includes those responsible for organising and running the service or event (e.g. speakers, presenters), those tending to individuals who attend (e.g. greeters, deacons), and those deemed essential to the safety of all persons (e.g. first aiders, health and safety management).

Guidance

[Staying alert and safe \(social distancing\)](#) - The most important thing we can do is to stay alert, control the virus, and in doing so, save lives.

High Standards of Cleaning

Churches need to consider how to keep the areas being used in the building clean and prevent transmission by touching contaminated surfaces. Government guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings can be found [here](#). If the building is listed, the church should review Historic England's [How to Clean Historic Surfaces](#) and speak to the Conservation Officer before cleaning historic items such as stained glass. Churches should consider the following:

1. What areas or items of the building are regularly touched and would need cleaning and sanitising?
2. What steps need to be taken to reduce the need to clean or to make cleaning easier and more effective?
3. Who will complete the scheduled, required cleaning?

What areas and objects need cleaning and sanitising?

1. Common areas of the building that are likely to have areas that need cleaning such as door handles, light switches and reception areas.
2. Identify objects and surfaces that are touched regularly and decide how frequently they need cleaning.
3. When receiving or handling goods, churches will need to determine the level of cleaning required, and make informed decisions using HSE and PHE guidance regarding how this takes place.

Making cleaning easier and reducing the need to clean

1. Keeping surfaces clear of objects makes it easier to clean and reduces the number of items that can become contaminated.
2. Put in place 'clean as you use systems' for areas such as meeting rooms, areas and items used by children, audio visual / P.A. areas and equipment, IT devices and printers etc., to maintain cleaning requirements.
3. If customers or others need to come to the church to perform work, measures must be put in place for the areas they visit to be cleaned to a standard that returns the church to a safe state.

Who will do the cleaning and when?

1. Church environments will need to be deep cleaned at least 24 - 48 hours before reopening any service or event.
2. Decide if the current cleaning arrangements are enough to ensure adequate cleaning. You may choose different levels of cleaning for different areas. Deep cleaning once a day and then supplementary cleaning, e.g. wiping high contact surfaces throughout the day.
3. Professional certification of cleaning services is not required, however, the church should satisfy themselves of the effectiveness of how the environment is being cleaned.
4. Providing information and instruction to those doing the cleaning to ensure they know what to clean and how to make it effective.
5. Signs around the interior of the church building can be a good way of letting individuals know what they need to do to keep it clean and sanitised.
6. If individuals cannot wash their hands straight after touching surfaces, then hand sanitiser should be provided.
7. For higher-risk cleaning areas (e.g. toilets), the church must ensure individuals know what to do to protect themselves, and provide disposable PPE for the cleaning to take place.

Guidance

[COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings outside the home](#) - This guidance covers the cleaning and disinfection of environments outside the home.

[Control of Substances Hazardous to Health \(COSHH\)](#) – Outlines the requirements that need to be in place to protect individuals from substances that are hazardous to health.

Maintaining Good Hygiene

Key Considerations

1. Ensuring that the church has handwashing facilities that provide running hot water, soap and paper towels and reminding to wash regularly for 20 seconds.
2. Replace hand dryers with paper towels and bins that are emptied frequently to safely dispose of waste. Where hand dryers are not removed, they should be immobilised from operating.
3. Churches must provide and replenish handwashing or hand sanitising (where washing is not possible) facilities **for use** at entry and exit points. Individuals should be able to wash their hands when they arrive and leave. Hand sanitisers should contain a minimum 70% alcohol.
4. Legionnaires' disease is a lung infection caught by inhaling droplets of water containing bacteria. Harmful Pathogens can live (grow in used water tanks), so it is imperative that churches ensure that their water system is made safer prior to re-opening. Legionnaire advice regarding issues in buildings closed for long periods of time [can be found here](#).
5. The church must provide hand sanitiser in multiple areas in addition to washing facilities, and tissues throughout the building.
6. Use signs and posters to increase awareness of good handwashing technique – reminding those in the building to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues and to avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Recommendations include:
 - [Public health matters - how to protect yourself and your community](#)
 - [Latest NHS information and advice about coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

- [The 7 Steps of Hand Washing \(including free poster\)](#)

7. Setting clear guidance for the cleaning of toilets, showers and changing facilities to make sure they are kept clean.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

1. Face coverings and gloves are not a replacement for social distancing and regular handwashing, which remain the most important actions.
2. The government has advised individuals to consider wearing face coverings in enclosed public spaces, which would include churches, to help reduce the spread.
3. Members are urged not to buy medical grade masks so they can be saved for frontline health and care workers.

In general terms, the wearing of gloves is recommended during cleaning activities and should there be the need for serving of food. In most other situations, wearing gloves is not necessary. Instead, practice every day preventative actions (social distancing, washing of hands/using hand sanitiser, consider wearing a face covering).

Use of Toilet Areas

Toilets inside or linked to places of worship should be kept open and carefully managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Steps that will usually be needed to make the use of toilets as safe as possible:

1. Display signs and posters directing individuals safely and directly to facilities.
2. Use social distancing marking in areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with one in, one out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks).
3. To enable good hand hygiene, make hand sanitiser available on entry to toilets where safe and practical, and ensure suitable handwashing facilities. Communal towels should be removed and replaced with single use paper towels.
4. Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets, with increased frequency of cleaning in line with usage. Use normal cleaning products, paying attention to frequently hand touched surfaces, and consider the use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces.
5. Keep the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate and safe to do so.
6. Provide more waste facilities and more frequent collection and safe disposal of waste.

Food and Drink ('consumables')

1. Consumables used for communion services are permitted providing expected safety guidelines are strictly observed. Foot washing is not permitted for any communion service, or in any part of the church building.
2. The serving of food during or at the end of any church service or event is not permitted, including 'pot luck' lunches, the serving of snacks and hot drinks etc.
3. If it is necessary to handle consumables as a part of a community service (e.g. food distribution), those giving and receiving food items should wash their hands thoroughly, or wear gloves.

4. The person distributing the consumable should release it, into the hand only, in such a way to avoid any contact between them and those receiving it, or wear gloves. If accidental contact does occur, both individuals should cleanse their hands immediately.
5. Other actions taken to reduce the risk of transmission should also be considered, for example, consumables should be prewrapped, and a system should be in place to prevent individuals from coming into contact with consumables, and any dishes and/ or cutlery other than their own.
6. In the serving of all consumables, social distancing should be observed, and with minimal staff and 'customer' contact in line with the government guidance (see below).

Guidance

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): disposing of waste](#) - How to dispose of waste, including face coverings and personal protective equipment (PPE), during the coronavirus pandemic.

[Working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) - This document is to help you understand how to work safely and keep your customers safe during this pandemic

Keeping People Safe (All Attendees)

Key Considerations

Churches need to give significant consideration regarding the practical support that will be provided to members and visitors who are mature in age, vulnerable (underlying health conditions), or have disabilities should they choose to attend your church. It is recommended that, where possible, places of worship continue to stream worship or other events to avoid large gatherings and to continue to reach those individuals who are self-isolating or particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Those individuals who are self-isolating or particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.

In preparation of and to effectively manage this, churches should adopt the following approaches:

1. Individuals showing symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. a new persistent continuous cough, a high temperature, loss of smell or taste) should stay at home, and/or politely asked to leave if presenting symptoms due to the risk that they pose to others. The church should apply its procedures for [if someone becomes unwell](#).
2. Individuals with symptoms should self-isolate at home immediately with other members of their household, and contact the NHS on 111 or to arrange a [coronavirus test](#) via the government website.
3. Those leading the worship should make regular reminders of the importance of social distancing and hygiene.
4. Create a list of all vulnerable individuals, and assess what their needs would be (in advance). Actively discourage their non-attendance, although attendance remains their rightful decision.
5. Continue to stream services to avoid large gatherings and to continue to reach those individuals who are self-isolating or particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.
6. Staggering arrival and departure times will reduce the flow at exits and entrances as well as reduce any impacts on public transport.
7. Recording contact details of those attending church services / events (including entry and exit times) to enable contact with them should transmission of the virus be identified. Information should be destroyed after 21 days, and individuals informed of this.

8. Reminding those who are accompanied by children that they are responsible for supervising them at all times and should follow social distancing guidelines.
9. Using screens, barriers or alternative rooms and spaces to separate worshippers.
10. Any changes to entrances, exits and queues should take into account reasonable adjustments to accommodate those who need them, such as those with physical disabilities.
11. Consider how prioritisation could be given to people who may have a specific need or requirement, and preparing for such occasions in advance.
12. Consider how well ventilated the church is and improve this where possible, for example by fixing doors open when and where appropriate.
13. Ensure any measures (controls) keep all fire doors closed at all times.
14. Check whether the church water, gas and electric supplies can be operated safely (certificated where required) following months of being dormant.
15. Ensure the church heating arrangements do not contribute to unsafe conditions (e.g. all areas are adequately heated during periods of cold weather, temporary heating is safely positioned within the building).
16. Once services have completed, encouraging individuals to move on promptly, to minimise the risk of contact and reduce the risk of transmission.

The Use of Shared Items

1. Individuals should be prevented from touching objects that are handled communally. Barriers and/or clear signage should be put in place where necessary to avoid this taking place.
2. Individuals should also avoid touching property belonging to others which, should be placed and collected by their owner while adhering to social distancing principles.
3. Reusable and communal resources such as collection plates/baskets, hymnals or devotional material should be removed from use, and safe alternatives should be provided.
4. Any communal items that are used during a service or event should be quarantined for 48 hours before their re-use. since their previous use and should be immediately cleaned after use. Items which are difficult to clean should be cleaned and quarantined for a minimum of 48 hours before being used.
5. Deacons and Deaconesses should be provided with PPE if involved in the counting of money.

Face Coverings

1. As of 22 August 2020, the wearing of face coverings is a mandatory requirement covered by law in a number of places including, places of worship. Churches should take reasonable steps to promote compliance with the law.
2. Face coverings are largely intended to protect others, not the wearer, against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of virus that causes coronavirus infection (COVID-19).
3. Churches MUST therefore ensure that face coverings are worn by all individuals entering their building, and consider providing disposable face masks to assist this to take place.
4. Those attending a church are expected to wear a face covering before entering the building and must keep it on until they leave unless there is a reasonable excuse for removing it. This includes but is not limited to:
 - children under the age of 11;
 - people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability;

- where putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress;
 - if you are speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate; and
 - to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others.
5. Individuals are permitted to remove a face covering if they are leading services or events in a place of worship, and/or also those who assist them (e.g. delivering a sermon or prayer), those needing take medication or if they are one of the persons getting married in a wedding service.
 6. Those who have an age, health or disability reason for not wearing a face covering should not be routinely asked to give any written evidence of this, this includes exemption cards. No person needs to seek advice or request a letter from a medical professional about their reason for not wearing a face covering.
 7. Individuals may feel more comfortable showing something that says they do not have to wear a face covering. This could be in the form of an exemption card, badge or even a home-made sign.
 8. Face coverings are not classified as [PPE \(personal protective equipment\)](#), which is used in a limited number of settings to protect wearers against hazards and risks.
 9. Churches are reminded that face coverings are not a replacement for the other ways of managing risks - social distancing, minimising time spent in contact, and increasing hand washing and surface cleaning. These measures remain the best ways of managing risk in a place of worship, and should be clearly promoted in that way.

Guidance

[Face Coverings](#) - Explanation of what face coverings are and the settings in which they are recommended.

Singing, and the use of musical instruments

1. Small groups of professional or non-professional singers will be able to sing in front of worshippers both outdoors and indoors from 15 August 2020.
2. Singing in groups should be limited to a small, set group of people and should not include participation by congregations.
3. Measures, however, must be put in place to ensure the transmission of the virus is mitigated (e.g. the use of plexi-glass screens).
4. Consideration should be made of the use of musical recordings as an alternative to live singing to mitigate risks.
5. Any instrument played during a worship service should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use.
6. Individuals should avoid singing, shouting and raising voices. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission from aerosol and droplets.
7. Activities such as singing, shouting and/or playing of instruments that are blown into should be specifically avoided by congregations. This is because there is a possible additional risk of transmission in environments where individuals are singing as a group, and this applies even if social distancing is being observed or face coverings are used.
8. Spoken responses during worship should also not be in a raised voice.

Procedures if someone becomes unwell with COVID-19 symptoms

A space should be designated into which anyone who becomes unwell with suspected COVID-19 symptoms will be moved until transport home or to hospital is available. Tissues, a bowl of warm soapy water for handwashing, paper towels, and disposable PPE equipment including gloves should be provided

(see Appendix B). Any items used during the isolation of the individual should be disposed of into a sealed, labelled or marked plastic bag, and placed in a secure place for 72 hours before being placed into the general waste disposal.

Any individual who attended to the person that became unwell should launder all personal clothing worn on arrival home. The contact details of any individuals that attended the church on that occasion should be used to inform both them and the NHS Test and Trace if requested. Provision of contact details is not, however, compulsory.

A decontamination deep clean will need to be carried out in those parts of the premises where the individual may have occupied, in accordance with PHE guidance, and the church remain closed for a minimum of 72 hours.

Guidance

[Coronavirus Test](#) - use this service to direct individuals to a free test to check if they have coronavirus.

[Guidance for cleaning premises during COVID-19 pandemic](#) – General cleaning advice, including principles of cleaning when COVID-19 is suspected.

Keeping People Safe (Workers)

Key Considerations

All of the guidance provided above applies to all workers (Pastors, Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses, church leaders, volunteers). Workers, however, need to give sufficient consideration to their own wellbeing during the provision of services. The church must ensure there are arrangements in place to ensure the absolute safeguarding of all workers, at all times. The following should be considered by workers:

1. If in contact with anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, a high temperature, loss of smell or taste), the worker should assume an immediate safe distance from the individual(s), and consider whether refraining from their duties and self-isolation at home is appropriate. Details of what has taken place should be communicated to colleagues within the setting where the incident took place, and to other members of their household who may also need to consider their own self-isolation.
2. Workers must be aware of the created list of all vulnerable individuals, and what their needs have been assessed as.
3. Essentially, all workers should be notified of individuals who are self-isolating due to contracting COVID-19 to avoid any unnecessary contact with them.
4. Attention should be given to target those who are isolated and vulnerable to minimise social isolation and loneliness but equally to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus by unnecessary attendance at churches.
5. When conducting funeral services, PPE (including overalls and protective aprons, safety glasses / goggles, visors, gloves, respirators and masks) must be strictly worn at all times. Workers should refrain from involvement in any funeral services without the use of PPE.
6. Workers, leaders and other lay people all have different health needs that impact church plans. The availability of individuals in the wider church who might help, for example with cleaning the church, should be considered. Particular care must, however, be given to ensure that individuals selected are

not placed at risk of transmission due to being from or living with someone from an 'at risk' or vulnerable group.

7. Workers who may themselves be in or living with someone in an 'at risk' or vulnerable group should discuss their situation with their employer / leader with regard to the type of work or activities they are able / unable to perform.
8. Employers / leaders should conduct personal risk assessments of all workers to formally determine and record whether any planned duties place them at particular risks; and seek to remove or manage any identified risks under their duty of care to workers.

Evangelistic Activities

Churches must review the focus of their evangelistic programmes in light of COVID-19, and whether activities can be safely conducted. Workers should review the arrangements with their church board and consider:

1. What different approaches might now need to be in place to evangelise safely within the local community?
2. What particular groups in the community is the church intending to reach? What are their 'needs'?
3. What partnership opportunities might exist that make evangelistic programmes more viable?

Additional Considerations

Where appropriate, churches may consider networking and partnering with local service providers, as well as sister churches within the district or area to provide a more holistic range of services. This should, however, only be done with the necessary safeguards put in place.

APPENDIX A. Summary Checklist

Please review the list below (in no particular order), and ensure the church has considered ALL of the controls and potential changes that need to be in place before considering reopening legally and safely.

1. Has the existing lease for use of the building been reviewed, and a landlord risk assessment been obtained? (rented buildings only)
2. Where in the building will social distancing be more difficult?
3. What areas or tasks are more likely to increase the risk?
4. Can the building be rearranged to reduce the likelihood that coronavirus will spread?
5. What changes and/or additions may need to be made to items within the building to reduce the likelihood of spreading coronavirus?
6. If the building is listed, has consideration been made to ensure any changes are sensitive and reversible as well as reasonable and practicable, and the Local Authority Conservation Department been informed?
7. Do those appointed to roles have a full understanding of the expectations? Is there a need for additional training in any capacity?
8. How will the plans be effectively communicated to all who may attend the church?
9. Have physical arrangements been made to all communal areas to maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable) to reduce the risk of transmission?
10. Have measures been put in place to ensure all individuals entering the building wear face coverings
11. Are there markings in areas using tape, floor paint, or tape barriers to help individuals maintain social distancing guidelines?
12. Are there notices / posters displayed throughout the church to remind individuals of the general hygiene advice and social distancing rules?
13. Does the church require the use of screens to create a physical barrier between individuals at certain points in the building?
14. Have arrangements been made for the use of more than one exit or entry?
15. Does the church have a register to track who and how many individuals enter and exit the building?
16. Has the church provided easily accessible hand sanitiser and paper towels at clearly marked points in the building?
17. Does the church have a sufficient supply of PPE (hand sanitisers, paper towels, tissues, disposable masks and gloves)?
18. Are arrangements in place for surfaces and objects likely to be frequently touched to be cleaned and disinfected as per government guidance?
19. Does the church have sufficient, well stocked First Aid Kits, and will trained first aiders who are COVID-19 aware be available at all church meetings?
20. How will the church ensure only essential trips are made within the building to maintain social distancing as much as possible?
21. Have arrangements been made to enable doors to be left open (that can be left open) to reduce the need for individuals to touch door handles?
20. What considerations has the church made regarding ventilation during services and events? e.g. fixing doors and windows open when and where appropriate.
21. Have arrangements been made to enable staggering entry times to the church and avoiding queues building up in the surrounding areas?
22. Do instructions for safe distancing also cover issues such as collecting tithes/offerings, getting in/out of vehicles, socialising in communal areas and car parks?

23. Have the church water, gas and electric supplies been checked for their safe use after potentially being dormant for months?

Trusted Sources of Information

- COVID-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic (updated 27 July)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july>
- Coronavirus outbreak FAQs: what you can and can't do
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>
- Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>
- Guidance on how to comply with the health and safety law
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>
- Guidance on how to stay alert, control the virus, and in doing so, save lives
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>
- Government guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>
- How to dispose of waste safely during COVID-19
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-disposing-of-waste>
- Legionella and Legionnaires' Disease
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/>
- Meeting people from outside your household
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/meeting-people-from-outside-your-household-from-4-july>
- NHS defined list of people at high risk from coronavirus
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk/whos-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/>
- Special religious services and gatherings COVID-19 checklist
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-during-the-pandemic-from-4-july/special-religious-services-and-gatherings-covid-19-checklist>

APPENDIX B. Suspected COVID-19 Response Plan

In the event of someone becoming unwell with suspected COVID-19 symptoms, the church should:

- a) Send or make arrangements for the transportation of the individual home as immediately as possible
- b) Ask for their contact details to be provided
- c) If you do not have them:
 - Ask those in attendance to leave the church safely, observing the usual hand sanitising and social distancing precautions
 - Advise all individuals to launder their clothes when they arrive home
 - Inform insert name and contact number
- d) If the unwell individual needs to wait for transportation:
 - Remove them to the designated safe (isolation) area, which should be identified in the insert details – a chair and washing bowl should already be there
 - The worker attending to the individual MUST put on a mask, face shield, gloves and apron to protect them self
 - Provide the worker with tissues, a plastic rubbish bag, a bowl of warm water and soap for handwashing, and paper towels
 - Once the unwell individual has been collected, the worker should:
 - (1) Remove gloves, apron and face mask to the rubbish bag*
 - (2) Leave face shield for disinfection
 - (3) Wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with warm soapy water
 - (4) Once home - launder all of the clothes they were wearing and wipe down / disinfect any vehicle they have travelled in

*Note that the waste should be double bagged and kept for 72 hours before being placed in general waste disposal.

COVID-19 First Aid Kit

The following should be included and made available to an appointed first aider at every service or event:

- Face mask (covering) and pair of plastic gloves x 2 – each set in separate plastic bags (for responder and patient)
- Plastic face shield – for the responder
- Pocket pack of tissues
- Hand soap in pump dispenser
- Small hand sanitiser gel
- Disposable apron e.g. plastic sleeveless or cheap overalls
- Small packet anti-bacterial wipes
- Disposable waste bags x 2 (so disposables can be double-bagged). The outer one marked e.g. “COVID-19 Waste”
- Washing up bowl for handwashing
- A wipe able, plastic chair placed in the isolation area with a notice of its restricted use.
- Laminated instructions for how to respond, attached to the first aid box and a laminated copy of instructions in the box.

APPENDIX C. Further Contact

For questions and points of clarification regarding this COVID-19 Risk Assessment, please contact:

North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
22 Zulla Road
Mapperley
Nottingham NG3 5DB

Pastor Alan Hush, NEC Executive Secretary
ahush@necadventist.org.uk

Elder Clive Palmer, Chair NEC COVID-19 Committee
cpalmer@necadventist.org.uk