



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY & CORRECTIONS  
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES



H. "BUTCH" BROWNING, JR.  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL



## Phase 1 – Places of Worship

**TENTATIVE START DATE: May 15, 2020 (Subject to change)**

Places of Worship must adhere to strict mitigation standards to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The general operating matrix will require spacing of individuals and small groups, limiting concentration of people, strict use of PPE, and frequent sanitizing. Higher risk individuals (as determined by CDC) should remain vigilant and should continue to shelter at home. The specific requirements and guidelines for this service industry during this Phase are listed below. These requirements and guidelines supplement and do not replace any directives or guidance provided by other state agencies, boards and commissions, or other authorities having jurisdiction. Where conflicts occur, the stricter of the requirements will apply.

### **Occupant Capacity and Building Safety:**

Existing buildings must maintain the life safety, egress, and fire protection features as required for the current approved occupancy classification (NFPA 101 Life Safety Code). The maximum capacity during the **Phase 1** period is limited to 25% of the normal code established capacity and is subject to the social distancing requirements of 6 feet as outlined below. The stricter of these two factors will apply. Specifically:

- Maximum capacity to achieve 25% will be based upon 1 person per 60 square feet of net useable seating area, or 25% of the posted capacity by order of State Fire Marshal;
- Seating shall be arranged such that a minimum of 6 feet of distance between persons and small groups is maintained;
- Avoid assigned seating within 8 feet from the center of the main aisle to allow for circulation and egress;
- Limit group seating to persons who are members of the same household;
- Human contact as part of services shall be eliminated;
- Interior gathering spaces shall not be used. Waiting may be provided outside following distancing guidelines or in cars;
- Eliminate gatherings in the building while entering, exiting, or moving about;
- Refer to IM 2020-24 for guidelines addressing Outdoor Services.

### **Crowd Management:**

- Crowd Managers shall be provided to call for emergency evacuation, enforce the maximum capacity and social distancing requirements, assign seating, and further manage any movement of people at all times that the building is occupied. This function may be performed by church ushers, staff or leadership;
- One Crowd Manager shall be provided for every 50 persons in attendance;

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- In the event of a fire or other emergency, they must call for orderly evacuation and then call 911;
- Crowd managers shall prevent the building from exceeding 25% of the normal building capacity as outlined above;
- Seating of persons or members of a household shall be assigned in a manner that allows spacing of at least 6-feet from all others.

**Louisiana Department of Health Guidance:**

Places of Worship leadership shall:

- Be screened for fever or respiratory symptoms and shall be sent home if symptoms exist;
- Maintain minimum 6 feet distance between each other and attendees;
- Wash hands frequently;
- Not touch attendee's hands;
- Use gloves for contact with common items. Gloves must be replaced between services. If gloves are not available, then hand sanitizer between each interaction is acceptable;
- Clean and sanitize all frequently touched items in service areas;
- Clean and sanitize tables, chairs, benches, pews, and high touch surfaces in service areas after every service. High touch surfaces include doorknobs/handles/plates, light switches, chair/bench arms, countertops, etc.;
- Clean and disinfect restrooms regularly;
- Wear gloves to handle any money.

Personal Protective Equipment:

- Crowd Managers and leaders are required to wear cloth face coverings while assisting others. Refer to guidance offered by LDH here: <http://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Coronavirus/resources/CDC-DIY-cloth-face-covering-instructions.pdf> ;
- Leadership should wear gloves for preparing and serving food or drink, if provided, and should change gloves between services;
- Crowd Managers and leadership should wear gloves when handling chairs and other items as part of their duties.

Cleaning of Areas and Other Items:

- Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty. Then, use disinfectant;
- Recommend use of [EPA-registered household disinfectant](#). Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.

Many products recommend:

- Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
- Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface.
  - Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening, may not be suitable for disinfection.
  - Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.
- To make a bleach solution, mix:



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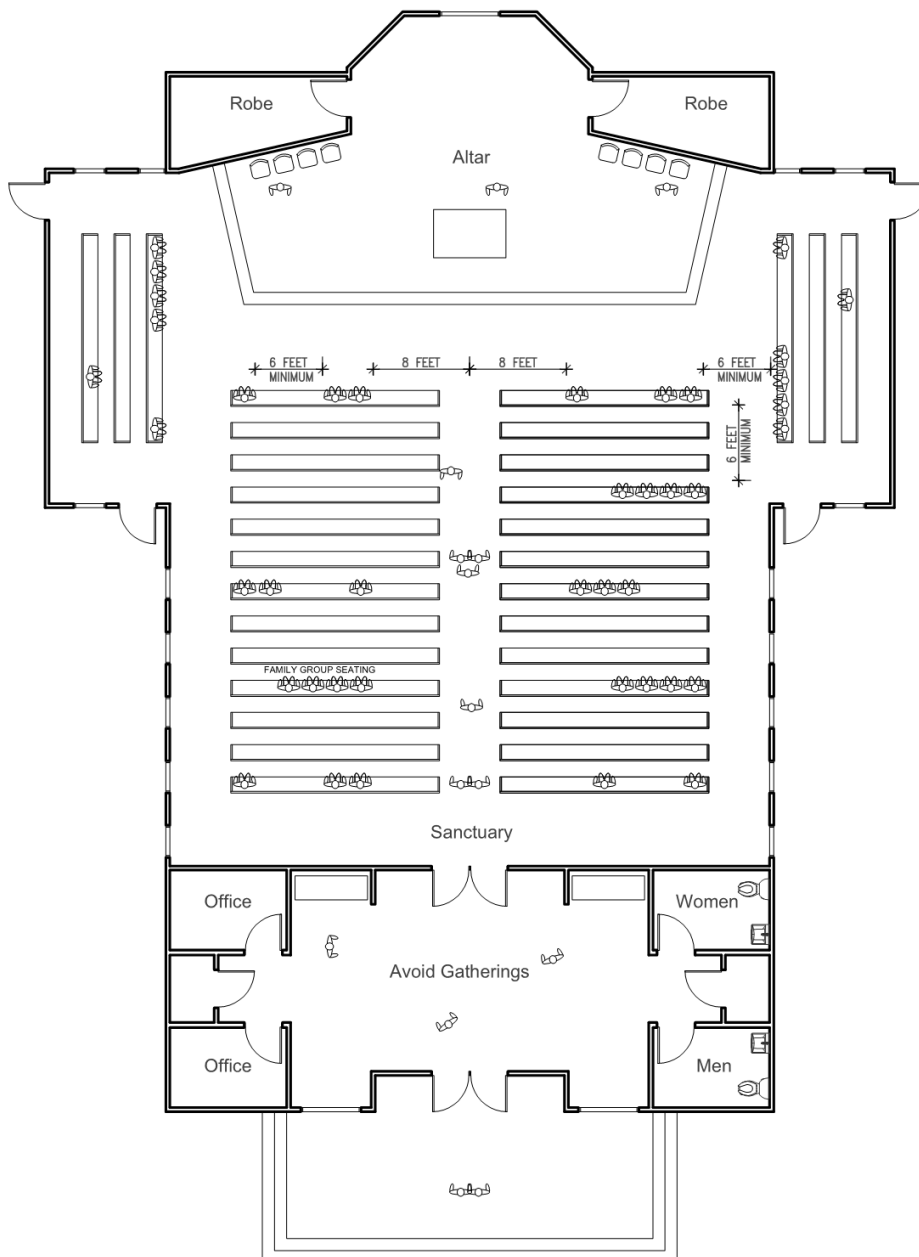
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- 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water, or
- 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.
- Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used.

### Sample Seating Layout

Normal maximum capacity = 360, Phase 1 maximum capacity = 90 (25%)



### **Current Phasing Plan:**

Louisiana's phased opening plan is based upon the federal model. This section outlines the phasing process.

#### **PHASE 0: Current – Stay at Home**

##### **Essential Services Only**

- Essential (Critical Infrastructure) Services remain operational with guidelines in place. See: [https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/covid/Essential-Infrastructure\\_fact-sheet.pdf](https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/covid/Essential-Infrastructure_fact-sheet.pdf)
- Restaurant outdoor dining areas – self-serve only - begins May 1<sup>st</sup>. Refer to OSFM Interpretive Memorandum 2020-23 for outdoor dining limitations and guidance which will remain effective throughout **Phase 1**. See: [http://lasfm.org/doc/interpmmemos/im\\_2020-23\\_Revised.pdf](http://lasfm.org/doc/interpmmemos/im_2020-23_Revised.pdf)
- Outdoor religious services begin May 1<sup>st</sup>. Refer to OSFM Interpretive Memorandum 2020-24 for outdoor service limitations and guidance which will remain effective throughout **Phase 1**.

#### **PHASE 1: TENTATIVE START DATE: May 15, 2020 (Subject to change)**

- Higher risk individuals should remain home (as determined by CDC);
- Avoid congregating in groups;
- To remain closed: Public Amusement (indoor and outdoor), rides, carnivals, amusement parks, water parks, trampoline parks, aquariums, museums, arcades, fairs, pool halls, play centers, playgrounds, theme parks, theaters, concert and music halls, adult entertainment, racetracks, casinos, video poker, movie theaters, bowling alleys, bars, spas, massage parlors, tattoo parlors, fitness centers, gyms, and other similar businesses;
- Follow guidance from LDH regarding sanitation and disinfecting and for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

#### **Move to PHASE 2 Criteria: TBD (minimum number of days from Phase 1 without relapse)**

- All Phase 1 gates maintained and successfully completed w/o reverting to previous phase (Revert to Phase 0 if evidence of rapidly increase in CLI, cases, or Med Services become unstable);
- Additional occupancy types TBD.

#### **PHASE 3: TBD (minimum number of days from Phase 2 without relapse)**

- All Phase 1 and 2 gates maintained and successfully completed w/o reverting to previous phase (Revert to Phase 1 or 0 if evidence of rapidly increase in CLI, cases, or Med Services become unstable);
- Current recommendation (TBD): All remaining sectors resume normal activity, bars reopen, and restaurants return to pre-COVID capacity limits, large public gatherings, indoor and outdoor resume, unrestricted staffing of most businesses, and visitation at long-term care facilities resumes for individuals with evidence of immunity.

**PHASING PERIOD ENDS** once a vaccine is discovered and is made widely available.