

COVID POLICY

FIRST COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

General: As an inclusive organization, FCUMC considers advice from government agencies and those working in the field of science with experience and/or expertise who may provide relevant information to apply as building policy and protocols to act as preventative measures for COVID transmission and ensure the safety of our church community, those who with suppressed immune conditions, are medically frail and/or are not yet eligible for vaccination who may use our facility as part of the building user groups.

Current Facility Users

- Preschool
- Churches
- Boy Scout Troop
- Cub Scout Pack
- Girl Scouts
- 12-Step Groups

Updates to Policy: Information about COVID continues to evolve and change. As we learn more information about this disease, our policy will be updated and change as well.

Occupancy and Space Usage

- Use of space will be coordinated through the Church Administrator and Trustees.
- In order to reduce the risk of any COVID transmission between organizations, the number of groups in the building at any given time will be approximately one to two (1-2), depending on the ability to isolate the groups and use separate entrance/exits and restrooms.
- At this time, Merri-Go-Round preschool's room is not available for use.
- The church kitchen is currently unavailable for food preparation.

Responsibility for Policy Administration

- Each facility user group's contact and supervisory/management function is responsible for carrying out FCUMC's facility policies.
- FCUMC provides building access to each tenant and facility user, and as users of the building we trust the group's supervisors/management function will follow facility policies.

Attendance Tracking

- Each building user group is responsible for tracking attendance.
- Each tenant/community organization will track attendance each meeting, event, gathering, etc. held at the church and be prepared to provide attendance lists to Church Administrator and Trustees in the event of a positive COVID case.
- Attendance will include attendee's name, email and phone contact information (if individual is a minor, parent/guardian contact info).

Face Coverings

- When inside the building, each individual must wear face covering over nose and mouth.
- Exceptions:
 - When a person is unable to wear a face covering or mask due to a medical or disabling condition. Note: We do not require documentation of conditions.

- During church services/special events held in the larger rooms/spaces and when socially distanced, an individual speaking to a group and when singing, a soloist may remove one's mask.
- Children under the age of 2 should not wear face coverings.
- Entry to building may be refused to a person who chooses not to wear a face covering or mask for non-medical reasons.

Social Distancing

- We ask building users to be aware of safe distancing practices.
- General recommendations are...
 - For those who are not part of the same immediate household to sit at least 6 feet apart.
 - When singing is part of an event, the recommendation is to sit at least 10 feet apart.
 - In educational settings, the recommendation is currently 3 feet.

Group Size and Room Capacity: FCUMC may limit group sizes and room capacities to further support this policy.

Food, Drink and Church Sacraments: Food and beverage packaging and distribution should be modified to reduce shared utensils and handling of containers. We recommend pouring drinks ahead of time or providing individual packaged drinks, designating a server or providing individually prepared or single serving plates/refreshments and spacing out tables and seating. If weather permits, the event should be held outside.

Ventilation: Whenever possible, rooms should be ventilated by opening doors and windows. If the weather is inclement, open window slightly. Turn on room fans to aid in ventilation/circulation. Note: Please remember to close windows and turn off fans when you are finished

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- After use, please wipe down any tables used and high-touch surfaces (e.g., microphones, doorknobs, etc.)
- Our cleaning company is disinfecting the facility twice a week based on previous guidance from the Center for Disease Control.

COVID Self-Testing: While we don't require this, we do understand periodic self-testing is a recommended practice for adults working with unvaccinated youth who are 12 and under in educational and camp environments.

Reporting Positive COVID Cases: If one of your attendees tests positive for COVID, please notify the Church Administrator at office@firstcommunitymedford.org or 781-396-5436 immediately, so we can seek guidance from the City of Medford's Board of Health department and provide information to assist with contact tracing.

Confidentiality: The name(s) of individuals who test positive for COVID will be handled with care and shared on a need-to-know basis with the church staff and leadership, the affected building user group and the local health department.

References include, but are not limited to:

<https://www.aappublications.org/news/2021/07/18/schools-071821>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/guidance.html>

<https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-updates-and-information>

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/2021-0730fall-2021-covid19-guidance.pdf>

Mass.gov sector specific workplace standards for places of worship and religious services May, 18, 2020

<https://www.neumc.org/COVID19>