

# CITY LIFE CHURCH COVID SECURE POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

This "COVID secure" coronavirus policy and safety procedures sets out the obligations and requirements of all staff, volunteers and visitors to our building, sets out how they should behave, and the precautions we must adopt during the pandemic to keep everyone safe. This document is required, and ongoing use of our buildings is on the condition that the rules and guidance included herewith are abided by.

This policy will be regularly updated and circulated as the situation develops. This policy should be read alongside current government rules and guidelines. In the event of a conflict, the government rules will apply.

## OUR AIM

The aim of this policy is to facilitate the mission of City Life Church, whilst ensuring that the real risks to staff, volunteers, visitors our families and those around us are minimised. It should be read in conjunction with official guidance, denominational advice, existing church policies and our COVID risk assessment.

No member of staff, volunteer or congregation or group member should feel under any pressure to attend activities at the building – we will at all times support and respect a decision to stay away, and make arrangements to ensure these people are able to participate as fully as possible in our activities

As a condition of access, all users of the building will be required to comply with this policy. A summary version has been produced for all building visitors. All group leaders, team and trustees must have read this full policy and be able to ensure compliance of it by their group members.

## COVID SYMPTOMS

If you suspect you may have COVID you MUST comply with all current legislation and guidelines.

It is VITAL that you do not visit the building if you are displaying, or suspect you are displaying ANY COVID symptoms, anyone in your household has possible or actual COVID-19 or you have been told to isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

If you begin to feel unwell whilst in the building please leave the building immediately along with all members of your household and contact NHS 111 for isolation and testing. Anyone known to have close contact with that person must wash their hands as soon as possible. Any surfaces likely to have been contaminated must be cleaned in line with cleaning guidance. Consideration will be given as to whether the event should be brought to an early conclusion to allow for thorough cleaning and ventilation.

## SUPPORTING THE VULNERABLE AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

Access for those with physical disabilities should not be severely affected by our current policies. However, it is the responsibility of the organiser of an event to ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure disabled people are not discriminated against in their specific context.

Staff, volunteers and congregation or group members in the 'vulnerable' and 'extremely vulnerable' categories are specifically advised NOT to visit the building. Arrangements are, and will be, made to ensure these people are able to participate as fully as possible in our activities. Individuals who are shielding should continue to follow the government's advice on shielding.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

For those working in the building, we require you to maintain a 2m minimum social distancing unless you are using extra mitigations e.g. face masks. All other group and congregation members must maintain a 1 metre plus social distancing and wear a face mask at all times. During times of higher risk (when infection rates are high), 2m should be maintained, even when wearing masks. When tier or lockdown restrictions prohibit it, members of the congregation will not be permitted to interact with others outside of their bubble.

Please note that in an emergency such as a fire or accident, people do not have to stay socially distanced if it would be unsafe. People involved in the provision of assistance to others should pay attention to sanitation measures immediately afterwards, including washing/sanitisation of hands.

Where social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, further risk assessments will be required to consider whether that activity needs to continue. This will need to be carried out in advance - please contact the Administrator for assistance.

## PPE EQUIPMENT

PPE equipment is available for any situation that may arise, and is located in the kitchen. Please use it if required by an individual risk assessment or in response to an incident. If you notice stock levels of any PPE equipment, hand sanitiser or other cleaning products becoming low, please inform administration to ensure we do not run out.

From 8 August 2020, all who are not members of staff or leading the Sunday service will be required to wear a face covering whilst on the premises. Disposable facemasks will be available on entry. If you are in a volunteer role (e.g. tech team) you are not required to wear a mask if you can safely maintain 2m social distancing at all times, but it is strongly recommended that you do whilst any highly contagious virus strain is prevalent. Any volunteers with closer or prolonged contact with the congregation or small group members will need a face covering. Children under 11 and those with certain medical conditions do not have to wear a face covering- please follow government guidelines with this.

Instructions on how to safely use the face coverings are located with the face coverings.

## WORKING FROM HOME

The office may not be open during periods of lockdown or high risk. Our staff and volunteers will work from home as much as is feasible and may be fully or partially furloughed. Use of the church office should be restricted to essential activities (e.g. photocopying, access to finance files) and all hygiene practices adhered to.

## USE OF THE BUILDINGS

Whilst in normal circumstances we always welcome visitors, the current situation means this is not possible.

Pre-booked acts of worship and essential support groups may now take place in the building. Prayer meetings and other groups may meet if allowed by current restrictions, and if approved by the leadership team. Attendees must be invited or pre-booked in to ensure occupancy limits are not exceeded. This includes congregation viewing the livestream on a Sunday morning. Group leaders must be fully aware of this policy. Social interaction before and after any event should be kept to a minimum at all times during the pandemic. National and local restrictions must be followed regarding any permitted interaction – for example following the rule of 6 (or two households), or not socialising outside of household bubbles as restrictions dictate.

Where small groups are permitted to meet away from the church for prayer or Bible study, either outside or in homes, the rule of 6 (or two households) must be followed. Members are reminded that the total number of people in a house must not exceed the limits.

If Higher tier restrictions or lockdown conditions apply, it may be permitted to meet with one person from another household outside, as part of your daily exercise. Prayer walks or pastoral meetings can be included in this, providing 2m social distancing is maintained.

Where allowed by relevant national restrictions, external users will be allowed to use the building, provided that they complete their own full risk assessment and commit to following all of our relevant policies, procedures and risk assessments. External users will be responsible for collecting, storing and destroying their own track and trace information.

## USE OF OFFICE

For any activities that have to be carried out in the church offices (e.g. photocopying, use of specific devices, checking answer phone), you should:

- Maintain a 2m distance from other people
- Work side by side or facing away from one another
- Not exceed maximum occupancy level (see below)
- Sanitise workstations, door handles and shared equipment after use
- Follow guidance below regarding Food and Drink and use of Toilets

## ENTERING THE BUILDING

Please do not enter the church buildings without prior permission. If you plan to come to the building, please make contact with a member of the staff team to make appropriate arrangements.

For scheduled events, including the Sunday livestream, members of the congregation and group members are to enter the building through the front door, to avoid people tripping over cables. Staff and the livestream team will enter through the side door. In the event of an emergency, you can leave the building by the car park entrance or via the fire door that leads onto the decking area.

Upon entering the building, please use the hand sanitiser at the door, and sign in using the sign-in sheet (a data protection statement is provided regarding collecting your contact details for the NHS Track and Trace service), and make sure you are wearing a face covering (if required).

Prior to an event, the organiser of the event should carry out the 'pre-event checklist' (see Appendix 1) to ensure all measures are in place.

Where feasible, please prop internal doors open to avoid the contamination of door knobs etc

Please enter the building in an orderly fashion, maintaining social distancing rules. Wait outside, at least 2m away, if someone is signing in before you.

Please respect social distancing and avoid potential congestion, do not pass anyone in doorways or stairs – please move through quickly to provide clear space for others. When accessing the Powerhouse Room or House of Prayer, please be aware of the single staircase, and ensure that distancing is observed. If in any area you need to use the hand rail or stair lift, please disinfect all surfaces you touch.

Please minimise where possible the touching of any surfaces and equipment in the building. If it is used, it is your responsibility to disinfect after use.

Please do not use bibles, hymnbooks, pens or other items located in the building – if you require them please bring your own. Hand sanitiser is available should you be required to use a pen (e.g. sign in sheet).

Wherever possible, open doors and windows to ensure good ventilation.

## OCCUPANCY

Social distancing dictates that the capacity of spaces be drastically reduced. You must respect the following occupancy limits for static adult groups:

Main Worship Area:	to be determined by layout and household groupings, with 1m+ distancing
Church Office:	4 people
House of Prayer:	8 people (enter through the keypad door, only pass through the office to use the toilet if you can safely maintain social distancing)
Powerhouse Room:	14 people (enter through the toddler door)
Sunny Room:	16 people
Soft Play/Creche Room:	12 people
Toddler Office	5 people

When considering occupancy, please do not forget the requirements of safeguarding, if appropriate, and ensure that the requirements of this important policy are also met. The size of children's groups should be determined by the current applicable government guidance and the City Life Covid Secure Children's Activities policy.

## TOILETS

We would ask that everyone avoid using the toilet more than necessary. In the main building, only the disabled toilet in the lounge and the single toilet out the back are to be used. During Toddler sessions different procedures are followed. Hand sanitiser is provided outside the toilet door –after using the toilet wash your hands for 20 seconds and sanitise your hands upon returning to the main area. During the Sunday livestream, members of the congregation will be asked to use the toilet in the lounge area and the livestream team will use the toilet to the rear of the church.

## SEATING

When seating is required, it must be placed ideally 2m apart or at least 1m+ apart with face masks worn at all times. Members of the same household may sit together. During times of high risk, the distance should be increased.

## CHILDREN IN THE BUILDING

Young children should be supervised by their parent or guardian, remaining with them during services, and should be reminded to sanitise their hands when entering and leaving the building. When government guidance permits children's activities to run, that separate policy will apply.

## SINGING & INSTRUMENTS & USE OF MICROPHONES

Only a small number of musicians may sing at any one time in the central worship area. Whilst singing is taking place everyone else in the building needs to be at least 2 metres distance away. No brass or woodwind instruments should be played. 2 musicians from 2 different households may lead worship together, as long as they are either side of the plexi glass screen. The screen must be cleaned after singing. During times of higher risk, only one musician will be present.

Instruments should not be passed between musicians and sharing of microphones should be avoided where possible. If a microphone (or any other object) does need to be passed to another user it should be sanitised first.

If you have brought an instrument with you, please take it home.

## TAKING COMMUNION

We can take communion together in the building, but food and drink should not be passed from person to person. Instead, individual glasses and pieces of bread should be distributed by someone wearing a mask, and after having washed/ sanitised their hands thoroughly, or wearing gloves. The person distributing the bread and wine should avoid contact with those receiving- for example dropping the bread into the hand, or using an individual plate, rather than touching hands. If contact does occur, both people should wash their hands.

The person leading communion should not speak over the bread or wine that is to be distributed to the congregation.

## FOOD AND DRINK

Use of the kitchens will be allowed only during times of lower risk. During a time of high risk staff or volunteers that have to be in the building should bring their own drinks if required. Only 2 people may be in the main or Toddler kitchens at a time, only one in the office kitchenette.

Please wash your hands using soap and warm water, for 20 seconds, before using the kitchen. If preparing food or drinks for others, you must wear a mask. If serving drinks to a group, drinks must be delivered to seated recipients at their tables to avoid congestion. All cups and utensils used must be washed thoroughly after use, in hot soapy water and rinsed in running hot water, (or washed in the dishwasher), before being left to air dry on a clean rack. Do not use tea towels as these are a contamination risk. After using the kitchen, please wipe down surfaces and any used appliances (e.g. Kettle, microwave, fridge) with anti-bacterial cleaner.

## CASH DONATIONS

Cash donations are discouraged- if possible, people should be encouraged to continue giving online. However, when this is not an option, cash will be collected in the fixed offertory box. One individual should handle the cash, wearing gloves. Ideally, cash should be securely quarantined for 72 hours before handling.

## LEAVING THE BUILDING

In addition to the usual security checks, the organiser or convener of any event taking place in the building is responsible for ensuring the building is properly sanitised (see cleaning guidance below) and all rubbish including used PPE is properly disposed of before leaving. Please also close any windows and internal doors which have been propped open for access purposes, to ensure fire safety and security measures are maintained.

Please ensure that social distancing is maintained when leaving the building, and that paths to and from the doors are kept clear to facilitate this. This may mean staggering exits for larger groups.

When leaving the building please sanitise hands as you leave, and remember to sign out.

## CLEANING

Cleaners should wear suitable PPE, which means disposable or washing up gloves for general cleaning tasks. Hard surfaces are to be cleaned with warm soapy water or anti-bacterial cleaner, paying attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces (e.g. doors, toilets, stair rails). Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning. Any non-disposable cloths must be sterilised after use.

In the event of a confirmed case, or a symptomatic person in the building, additional cleaning measures are required. Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, with one of the following options below:

- A combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine (ppm av.cl.); or
- A household detergent followed by disinfection (1,000 ppm av.cl.). Follow the manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants.

- NB: If an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses.

Any areas of heavy contamination where there may be bodily fluids, such as toilets, will be cleaned as mentioned but with the PPE for protection for the eyes, mouth and nose (e.g. a face shield) as well as gloves and aprons.

In the event of a symptomatic person in the building, any PPE, cleaning waste and disposable cloths are to be double bagged and stored securely for 72 hours before being thrown away in general waste.

Wash hands using warm water and soap for 20 seconds, after removing PPE.

## TRAVEL

If travelling on church business, all staff and volunteers should comply with current government advice and legislation regarding health and travel. Staff and volunteers from different households should not share lifts unless masks are worn, and where possible travel on foot or by bicycle should be the preference.

## References:

UK Government Coronavirus advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of places of worship from 4 July

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship-from-4-july>

Coronavirus: Guidance on re-opening Baptist church buildings

<https://www.baptist.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=257881>

Coronavirus: Guidance on church worship

<https://www.baptist.org.uk/Publisher/File.aspx?ID=257882&redirected=1>

## Change Log

14/09/20: Added consideration of early conclusion of event to [COVID symptoms](#).  
 Updated [Working from Home](#)  
 Updated [Use of Buildings](#) to reflect new social distancing rules and allow external groups in.  
 Updated [Entering the Building](#) and [Occupancy](#) to open up more rooms.  
 Updated [Toilets](#) to include toilet in Toddler area and removed the need to clean the seat after use.  
 Removed 72 hour decontamination policy on chairs from [Seating](#).  
 Updated [Singing](#) to include multiple singers and reflect reduced distancing require by current performing arts guidance.  
 Created procedures allowing the use of the kitchens to prepare drinks in [Food and Drink](#).  
 Clarified [Cleaning](#) to show that additional deep cleaning is required only in the event of a symptomatic person being in the building.  
 Updated [Travel](#) to allow lift sharing if masks are worn.

January 2021: Updated OCCUPANCY to include use of the Toddler office and reflect increased capacity in main church.

**Prepared by:** Mark Harris & Hannah Harris, 4 July 2020

**Last updated:** 11 May 2021 by Ginny Daley

Updated FOOD AND DRINK to allow use of the Toddler kitchenette and allow for variation during times of high risk.

Added a paragraph to [Use of the Buildings](#) to emphasise that the rule of 6 applies to groups meeting in homes and outdoor spaces as well.

Updated to include tier and lockdown differences. Key changes in SOCIAL DISTANCING, PPE EQUIPMENT, WORKING FROM HOME, USE OF THE BUILDINGS, SEATING and SINGING & INSTRUMENTS & USE OF MICROPHONES.

Sentence added to INTRODUCTION to include the precedence of government guidance. SINGING & INSTRUMENTS & USE OF MICROPHONES updated to allow passing of sanitised microphones between users.

April 2021: Updated SOCIAL DISTANCING and USE OF THE BUILDINGS to reflect current guidance on gathering.

Updated OCCUPANCY to allow a flexible limit for the main worship area and recalculated limits for back rooms. Updated TOILETS to remove the requirement to sanitise hands before use.

May 2021 Further updates to OCCUPANCY, using a consistent algorithm across all the back rooms, and clarified the situation regarding children's groups.

## APPENDIX 1: PRE-EVENT CHECKLIST

This checklist is to be used in conjunction with the most up-to-date government guidance during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. It should be completed prior to the event day starting and should be fully communicated to all team members. It is the responsibility of the Church Trustee to ensure that the site is safe to open and that controls are put in place.

Leader name: ..... Date: ...../...../.....

Item	Y or N	Comments	Report to
Has the latest government guidance been checked and followed?			
Have any members of team reported any symptoms of COVID-19?			
Has the Cleaning Checklist been completed and cleaning materials put in place?			
Is there adequate hand soap, paper towels and running water in place?			
Has hand washing facility or sanitiser been provided in all locations needed			
Are bins available for disposal of any rubbish?			
Is the plan for managing traffic flow for social distancing in place and floor/wall signage in place?			
Are stewards briefed on agreed procedures for arrivals, departures and emergencies?			
Have chairs/pews been laid out and marked in line with social distancing requirements?			
Procedures in place to record names and contact details of attendees			
Building ventilation set in line with recommendations to maximise air flow			
Is there any other information to consider?			

After carrying out the above checks, please sign below.

I have carried out the above checks and found the site to be following the current government guidelines in line with COVID-19.

Leader signature:

Date: