



June 2, 2021
corona@rcab.org

Phase 4 Reopening Guidance Pastoral Center Offices

Governor Baker has announced that, effective May 29, 2021, all COVID-19 related occupancy restrictions on businesses will be lifted in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In addition, masking and distancing requirements for fully vaccinated individuals will be lifted, with certain exceptions. This document will provide recommended steps and considerations for the ministries and departments within the Pastoral Center as they begin to return to more normal operations.

In preparing and utilizing this guidance, there are several important factors that supervisors must keep in mind:

- Many individuals are still not fully vaccinated, including some that are unable to be vaccinated due to health issues
- While we strongly recommend that our employees get the vaccine, we do not require it
- While we can inquire as to an individual's vaccination status, we should avoid follow-up questions which might elicit medical information. Employees are not required to advise us of their status
- Many individuals, particularly those in a vulnerable category, will continue to have anxiety over being in close proximity to others, being unmasked or in crowded settings, regardless of their vaccination status
- Having operated remotely, from home for such a long period of time, employees may need additional time to make long term arrangements for childcare, care of elderly relatives, or other needs as they consider changes in their schedules and commutes
- Having experimented with working remotely, for many of our operations and departments, technology has enabled our workforce and volunteers to effectively conduct the necessary business affairs, in some cases, with an increase in productivity, effectiveness and efficiency.

As a result of the overall effectiveness of remote work structures and the potential benefits for employees, studies have shown that many will want to continue to work from home and many employers will offer full or partial remote work opportunities.

This has, again for many but not all employees, also provided some additional benefits, such as:

- a better work-life balance for our employees
- reduced commuting costs and vehicle operation (lower emissions)
- opportunities for Pastoral Center office space efficiencies

In accordance with these considerations, we are entering this phase of reopening (returning to full capacity) in a gradual manner.:

- Ministries and departments may wish to take advantage, where they deem it appropriate, of the period between now and August 1 to evaluate their alternative workplace schedules and structures. Such opportunities and considerations may include transitional “hybrid” structures that enable your offices, staff, and volunteers to increase, again as appropriate, their time in the office while continuing to exploit the opportunities and benefits of a partial remote workplace.
- As we approach the end of that period, they may choose to consider retaining where possible alternative remote workplace structures or a hybrid model beyond August. To aide in this effort, we will be conducting a formal survey of Central Ministries Employees to better evaluate what worked well during this hybrid time, as well as learn what we would need to improve to continue such a model going forward where appropriate.

Effective June 1, 2021

General

- Being mindful of safety concerns, unvaccinated staff and volunteers are expected to continue to wear masks and practice distancing
- Staff and volunteers should be reminded that they should not come into the Pastoral Center if they are feeling sick
- Unvaccinated staff or volunteers that have been exposed to a COVID positive individual are still required to notify their supervisor and quarantine in accordance with CDC guidance.
- Department Heads and Supervisors are encouraged to identify an appropriate hybrid schedule that ensures all ministries and departments have appropriate office coverage to be available to parishes, schools, and other ministries, as well as meet their mission objectives.
- The Café in the Pastoral Center will be open beginning July 1 with limited services. Pre-packaged sandwiches, salads, etc. will be available for carry-out service.
- To accommodate all employees, you are encouraged to continue to host meetings online to allow more full attendance of those not able to be in the building during this extended hybrid period.
- To the greatest extent possible, please keep outside guests and visitors (read: non-Archdiocesan employees) to a minimum.

- **Hours of operations:** The Pastoral Center will be open and available to employees Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. We are not allowing for weekend programs, gatherings, or meetings at this time.
- **Noon Mass:** At this time, we will be holding off restarting the noon Mass to avoid attracting outside visitors into the building. We will revisit in the coming weeks when we get a sense of the traffic flows within the building.

If a staff member is COVID positive or exhibits symptoms

- The individual's work area must be cleaned and disinfected, as noted above
- If on Pastoral Center premises, the individual should be taken to a designated isolation area while awaiting transport home
- Any unvaccinated close contacts of the individual must remain home and self-monitor until they have met the CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation. The CDC criteria can be found by clicking [here](#).

Domestic and International Travel

- Unless fully vaccinated, domestic travel should be limited and carefully considered as many states continue to struggle with the infection rates, lower vaccination rates and have restrictions in place.
- Unless fully vaccinated, international travel is not recommended at this time as the U.S. Department of State continues to advise against international travel if unvaccinated.

Resources

As ministries and departments begin to return to more normal operations, questions may arise regarding employee concerns, requirements, as well as employee or employer rights and legal considerations.

Employee/Employer related questions should be directed to the Human Resources Office at: 617-746-5825 or HR@rcab.org.

General COVID protocol questions should still be directed to corona@rcab.org.