



# Guide to Reopening a Church Campus in the midst of COVID-19

As Colorado Health and Government guidelines are moving from “stay at home” orders to “safer at home” orders, it is important for churches to consider how to reopen their church facilities when the time is allowed.

It is important to consider:

1. Ministry as usual will not be conducted in the same manner. What needs to be adapted and changed?
2. Church gatherings may be implemented in stages allowing for smaller groups at first and gradually growing over time.
3. If there is an outbreak of virus cases, church gatherings may experience a quick cease, and will need to be prepared at a moments notice.
4. Guidelines may vary among each county, so be aware of and familiar with your church’s county guidelines.

This guide is designed to help you through various points of consideration as your church implements new methods, policies, and procedures.

## Facility

The first step in considering your ministry opportunities is to prepare your facility for ministry in this new era. As you walk your campus with fresh eyes, know that the overall appearance of your campus will speak to guests louder than ever about your focus towards their health. Be mindful of upkeep and cleanliness. Consider:

1. Are there medical professionals you can work with to help develop best practices related to the health of your guests?
2. Who will provide campus “policing” of the protocols? More specifically, who will work under the authority of the pastor/elders to keep an eye on the basic health protocols for the next 2-6 months?

## Cleaning/Sanitizing before guests arrive

Protocols should be implemented to reduce virus spread on campus (remember, the virus is not eradicated.) Consider:

1. What areas of the church need to be deep cleaned before anyone returns to campus?
2. Who can be recruited to do this? (Volunteers, Church Staff, Cleaning Business)
3. What resources do they need? (cleaning materials –do they need to be ordered and stocked?)
4. What ongoing (daily, weekly, monthly) cleaning protocols need to be developed and implemented once you are meeting on campus again?

## Contact protocols while guests are on campus

Procedures and Processes should be developed to minimize personal contact and to frequently sanitize high touch surfaces when guests are on campus. Consider:

1. What resources need to be purchased and stationed throughout the campus for use while people gather (ex. hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray/wipes)? (Availability of these supplies might be limited and prioritized to healthcare facilities. How will you gather them?)
2. What measures could you implement that will mitigate any germ spread while on campus (ex. greeters wiping down doorknobs, bathrooms cleaned at least once during each gathering, sanitizing between services)?
3. What are acceptable greetings instead of handshakes or hugs? Is there required distance for separation?

## Needed Maintenance

As you walk your campus with fresh eyes in preparation for a return to on-campus activities, make note of items that need attention. Consider:

1. What areas of the campus need an additional refresh or tidying to exhibit a better overall cleanliness to your guests?
2. What is the cost of these projects?
3. Who can be recruited to do this? (Volunteers, Church Staff)
4. What resources do they need?
5. What are priorities based on emergent need and availability of resources?

## Leadership

Leading well through this time of uncertainty is essential. Gather prayerfully with your leadership team to navigate this time of transition. Evaluate the mission God has called your church to and identify how you will continue to impact your community. Consider:

1. How can you communicate to your church and community the steps you are taking to maintain clean and safe conditions on campus and a relevant ministry future?
2. What good habits has your church embraced these past months that you need to immediately integrate (ex. care through small groups, digital communication)?
3. What should you stop doing? What should you begin?
4. Do church staff changes need to be made? (ex. change in position responsibilities to address new ministry needs)

## Worship Services

Adapting elements in your service and church programming for “loving distance” will be helpful for the near future. Consider:

1. What adjustments in seating could you instruct or create to foster wise distancing (ex. adding a service, spacing chairs, encouraging “spread”)?
2. What alternatives to passing offering and Lord’s Supper plates (where everyone handles the plate) could be implemented while still highlighting giving as worship and corporate participation in the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper?
3. What alternate pathways of connecting could you implement to limit physical interaction (ex. creating digital welcome cards or sermon response, putting worship guides on table, removing hymnals and using projection only)?
4. Do policies and procedures for celebrating in believer’s baptism need to be adjusted?

## Ministries

Addressing ministry needs will be more complex and unique when people leave their homes. The church must be prepared for the immediate logistical and personal realities. People will not be the same when they return. New opportunities to minister will exist with new hurts that have been created during this time of crisis.

1. How could you create a hybrid between on-campus and on-line platforms for those unable or hesitant to return to campus in the near future or for the broader community wanting to remain connected from afar (ex. Small Groups, Prayer Meeting, Ministry Teams/Committees, Needs request)?
2. Will your church continue to offer childcare during services in the same way it did before? If so, what additional precautions will you take in this area (ex. temperature checks, snack time modification/elimination)?

3. What preparations do you need to begin making now to be ready for adjustments to your Summer programming (ex. VBS, camps, events, activities – on campus, virtual or at home)?
4. How will you address the personal and family struggles that may have surfaced in the last couple of months (ex. marriage or financial strain, emotional or physical abuse, job loss)?

## Financial

Financial planning is critical as you plan to reopen your church campus. Consider:

1. What has the impact on tithes and offerings been? Can you project long-term trends on giving? What is the bottom-line impact of these giving trends?
2. Cleaning and contact efforts will be an ongoing expense that is most likely beyond current budget planning. How will you fund these required resources? (donations of cleaning supplies, budget adjustment, etc.)
3. What new ministry opportunities have you identified and what are the associated costs?
4. Do you need to make immediate church budget adjustments?
5. Have you led the church to consider the missionaries supported through the Cooperative Program, Annie Armstrong Offering for North American Missions, Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions, and others? These are real people called by God and sent by your church to minister in difficult places. They are trusting you and your church to hold the rope even in difficult times.
6. What creative things are you doing to help church members who have lost their jobs?

**Please reach out with questions, concerns, or ideas that you have.  
Colorado Baptists are here to help!**

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