

Protocols for Large Group Building Usage at St. Bede's Episcopal Church

(updated and approved September 19, 2022)

The purpose of these protocols is to define the requirements for large groups to gather in-person at St. Bede's as safely as possible. We remain committed to these practices out of Christ's call to love self and neighbor and the call to care for "the least of these" – the most vulnerable – amongst us.

Note: A large group is considered to be more than 50 people, likely consisting of a combination of parishioners of St. Bede's and the general public. Large group activities might include events such as polling place usage, use by outside organizations, special events sponsored by St. Bede's, or special worship gatherings / pastoral rites (weddings, funerals, baptisms, quinceañera blessings, etc. that are beyond our regular Sunday worship). Guidance for our regular Sunday worship is covered under a different set of guidelines.

A. Health and Safety Considerations

COVID protocols will be based on the current recommendations of the CDC. Those guidelines may change before the event but planning should be based on current recommendations. The following requirements are applicable at the time of this publication (September 2022) and will be revised accordingly based on recommendations as conditions change.

All groups, whether vaccinated or non-vaccinated or not eligible for vaccination (children or others):

- 1. Do not attend if you don't feel well, have a cough, cold, fever, or any symptoms of COVID-19. Do not attend if you know or suspect have been exposed to COVID-19 within the past 10 days.**
2. St. Bede's urges all those who wish to gather at group activities to be vaccinated and fully boosted against COVID-19 as they are eligible and as is medically appropriate.
3. **Masking is a matter of personal choice *for all who are up-to-date with recommended COVID-19 vaccinations*** (this means that folks are vaccinated and boosted as is age and medically appropriate). **Masking will continue to be required for the unvaccinated or those who are not up-to-date with the recommended vaccination schedule from the CDC.** We will not be checking vaccination status – we expect each person to be responsible to these guidelines. Outside groups gathering at St. Bede's must make available good quality masks (e.g.: surgical, N-94/95, KN-94/95) for attendees.
4. Where available, use air purifiers and/or open windows or doors to increase ventilation.
5. We suggest using outside areas for eating and drinking.
6. Hand sanitizing stations are provided at multiple locations in the building.
7. A first aid kit is available from the office. Please return to the office when the event concludes.
8. An AED (Automated External Defibrillator) is located in the Commons. Please notify the Parish Administrator after any emergency requiring the use of the AED device.

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A. Approval Process

1. All events and gatherings must be planned and conducted in accordance with the Health and Safety Considerations listed in Section A above.
2. **For gatherings consisting primarily of St. Bede's parishioners**, the Rector and Senior Warden will review the plan for the event and may refer the plan to the vestry for approval. They may require a written plan to be submitted and/or may require a representative of the event to present the plan at a regularly scheduled vestry meeting for the vestry's approval. At the discretion of the Rector, approval may be granted without approval by the Vestry, so long as the protocols are adhered to.
3. **For gatherings having a majority of general public participants**, the first point of contact is usually the Parish Administrator. In that case, the Parish Administrator will provide the group organizers with a copy of these protocols and notify the Rector and Senior Warden who may require approval of the vestry.
4. **Approval for special worship events and pastoral rites are at the discretion of the Rector and do not require vestry approval.**