

Presbytery of Philadelphia – 11/19/2020
Summary and Links - Pennsylvania State Update on COVID-19

Section 1: Statewide Mandate – The following two links are from the Pennsylvania Government page

a. Frequently asked questions:

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Guidance/Targeted-Mitigation-FAQ.aspx>

If you scroll down you will find this question and answer – which directly impacts our congregations in Bucks, Delaware and Montgomery Counties. As already stated, Philadelphia County has issued a stricter mandate which will be highlighted in Section 2.

Does this Order, as amended, restrict religious gatherings?

No. Religious gatherings are not affected by the Order and have not previously been restricted throughout the response. The Department of Health continues to encourage places of worship to find alternative ways to hold services, including virtual and outdoors, and to employ social distancing and mask wearing during services.

b. Coronavirus FAQs: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/FAQs.aspx>

Section 2: Philadelphia “Safer at Home” Mandate – this link includes guidelines for religious institutions located in the county of Philadelphia. These restrictions go into effect this Friday, November 20th through January 1st.

“Safer at Home” restrictions:

<https://www.phila.gov/2020-11-16-philadelphia-announces-new-safer-at-home-restrictions-in-response-to-rising-covid-19-cases/>

We’ve highlighted the section that speaks directly to religious institutions:

Changes to events and gatherings include:

- All indoor gatherings and events involving people from more than one household are prohibited, in public or private spaces. This includes private events such as weddings and showers, listed as “celebrations” in previous guidance, as well as funerals.
- Religious institutions are permitted to have people indoors, but density must be capped at 5 people per 1,000 sq. ft. or 5 percent of maximum occupancy.
- Outdoor gatherings and events are limited to 10 percent of maximum capacity of the space, or 10 people per 1,000 sq. ft. for venues with an undefined maximum capacity—not to exceed 2,000 people in any outdoor space. In addition, all individuals at outdoor gatherings must wear masks at all times, and—to reinforce mask use—neither food nor beverages may be served.