



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY & CORRECTIONS
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES



H. "BUTCH" BROWNING, JR.
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL



UPDATED May 11, 2020

The Office of State Fire Marshal is providing you with this update in conjunction with the Office of the Governor and the Louisiana Department of Health to keep you up-to-date with additional information and/or changes as it becomes available during our battle with COVID-19. These notifications are issued automatically and immediately to those who register through "OpenSafely" (<https://opensafely.la.gov/>). It is not a requirement to register, however, it is strongly encouraged as changes may occur frequently throughout this phasing plan.

Every attempt is being made to highlight critical changes that have occurred since the previously published notification for your convenience. However, please read through this entire document in context as these changes do not stand on their own and all of the additional general information and clarifications made may not be highlighted.

Preface:

This Phasing Plan applies to those to places of worship that have been affected during COVID-19 stay-at-home order. Essential (critical) infrastructure businesses are not further restricted by these new guidelines and may continue to operate under the current guidelines that are applicable to the specific business. Refer to: https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/covid/Essential-Infrastructure_fact-sheet.pdf for specific information regarding critical infrastructure businesses. See also: <https://gov.louisiana.gov/can-this-business-open/> for additional information.

COVID-19 is a highly contagious and deadly disease. The fundamental concept of this phased opening plan is to slowly open businesses at reduced occupant capacities that will allow for social distancing and circulation without encroaching upon others. Everyone's cooperation is critical to the success towards defeating this disease and revitalizing our economy.

Phase 1 – Places of Worship

START DATE: May 15, 2020

Places of Worship must adhere to strict mitigation standards to prevent the spread of COVID-19. When possible, maintain at least 6 feet of separation from other individuals not within the same household. Measures such as face covering, hand hygiene, cough etiquette, cleanliness, and sanitation should be rigorously practiced. Individuals 65 years or older, especially individuals 65 years or older with medical

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issues like heart disease, cancer, or a weakened immune system, are at a higher risk for getting very sick or dying from COVID-19 and should strictly adhere to all CDC guidelines, as well as all recommendations in this document. The specific requirements and guidelines for places of worship during this Phase are listed below. These requirements and guidelines supplement and do not replace any directives or guidance provided by other state agencies, boards and commissions, or other authorities having jurisdiction. Where conflicts occur, the stricter of the requirements will apply.

Occupant Capacity and Building Safety Rules:

The maximum building capacity during the **Phase 1** period is limited to 25% of the normal established capacity and is limited by the social distancing requirements of 6 feet as outlined below:

- Do not exceed the maximum building capacity of 25% which may be determined as follows:
 - One person per 60 square feet of gross area; or
 - 25% of the posted capacity by order of the State Fire Marshal.
- Seating shall be arranged such that a minimum of 6 feet of distance between persons and small groups is maintained.
- Avoid assigned seating within 6 feet from the center of the main aisle to allow for circulation and egress.
- Limit group seating to persons who are members of the same household.
- Eliminate human contact as part of services.
- Interior gathering spaces, including foyers or lobby, shall not be used. Waiting may be provided outside following distancing guidelines or in cars.
- Eliminate gatherings in the building while entering, exiting, or moving about.
- Refer to OSFM Interpretive Memorandum 2020-24 for guidelines addressing Outdoor Services.

Overseers

- Overseers should be provided to call for emergency evacuation, enforce social distancing requirements, assign seating, and further manage any movement of people at all times that the building is occupied. This function may be performed by church ushers, staff, or leadership;
- One overseer should be provided for every 50 persons in attendance;
- In the event of a fire or other emergency, overseers must call for orderly evacuation and then call 911;

Checklist for Leadership

- Actively enforce the capacity and social distancing requirements and manage church congregations' movements.
- Ensure the exterior waiting areas are not blocked.



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- Maintain social distancing requirements explained in this document.

Checklist for Overseers and Volunteers

- Check for fever or respiratory symptoms daily.
- Keep at least 6 feet from others.
- Wear face coverings.
- Wash your hands often.
- Wear gloves when touching common items.
- If gloves are not available, use hand sanitizer between each task.
- Clean and sanitize items you touch often.
- Clean and sanitize carts and counters.
- Clean and sanitize surfaces that attendees' touch often, like doorknobs, handles, plates, light switches, chairs, benches/pews, etc.
- Clean and disinfect the restrooms regularly.
- Wear gloves when you handle money.
- Do not touch attendees.
- Do not wear the same pair of gloves for long periods of time.

Face Covering Guidance

Refer to Louisiana Department of Health guidance here:

<http://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Coronavirus/resources/CDC-DIY-cloth-face-covering-instructions.pdf>

Steps for Cleaning Areas and Other Items

1. First, clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty.
2. Then, use disinfectant.
 - If possible, use [EPA-registered household disinfectant](#).
 - Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.

Many products recommend:

- Keeping surfaces wet for a period of time (see product label).
- Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface.

- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening, may not be suitable for disinfection.
- Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
- Leave the solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.

To make a bleach solution, mix:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of bleach per gallon of water; or
- 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water.

Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used.



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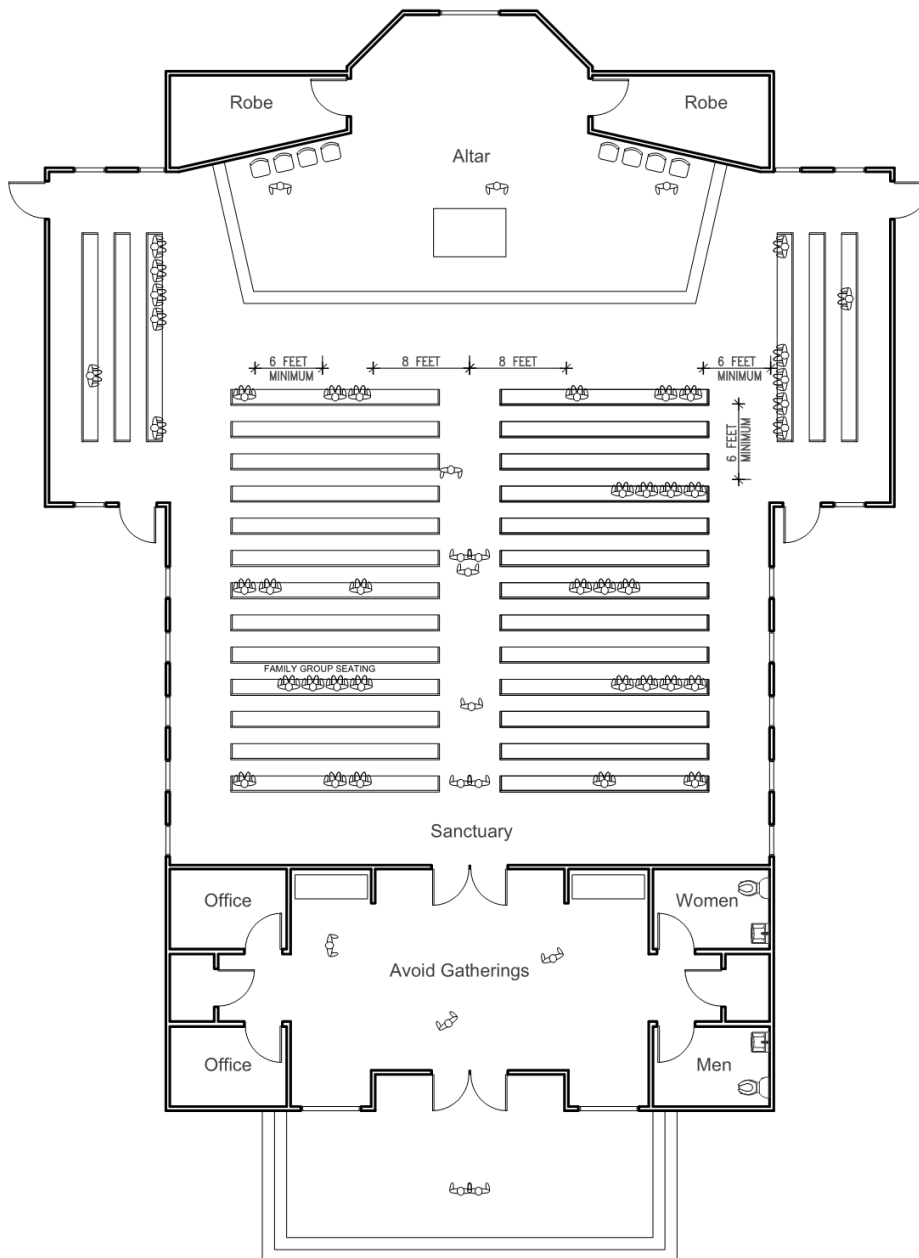


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Sample Seating Layout

Normal maximum capacity = 360, Phase 1 maximum capacity = 90 (25%)



Referenced Documents:

- ❑ Essential (Critical Infrastructure) Services remain operational with guidelines in place. See: https://gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/covid/Essential-Infrastructure_fact-sheet.pdf
- ❑ Restaurant outdoor dining areas – self-serve only - begins May 1st. Refer to OSFM Interpretive Memorandum 2020-23 for outdoor dining limitations and guidance which will remain effective throughout **Phase 1**. See: http://lasfm.org/doc/interpmmemos/im_2020-23_Revised.pdf