

COVID – 19

Safety Recommendations for the Masonic Family



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Guidance:

This document has been prepared as a guide to the Masonic family on resumption of activities.

This document does not and should not be used to circumvent the local government directives concerning the COVID-19 outbreak or CDC guidelines.

The procedures the local Masonic lodge adopts must be followed by all building users.

All participants voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19 by attending meetings and activities.

If a group feels uncomfortable about having a meeting or activity, then do not have one. No one should impose a penalty for that decision.

A person's attendance at meetings and other activities is voluntary. All we do must be of our own free will. An absence should not be held against anyone for not attending because of health concerns.

If an immediate family member has symptoms of COVID-19, you should remain home.

Additional information about COVID-19 can be found:

www.cdc.gov

<https://www.cdhd.idaho.gov/dac-coronavirus.php>

<https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/>

What is novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?

COVID-19 is caused by a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

How it spreads

It is thought to spread mainly from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, but we are still learning more about this virus.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading very easily and sustainably between people. Information from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic suggests that this virus is spreading more efficiently than influenza, but not as efficiently as measles, which is highly contagious.

It is our policy to always follow CDC mandated health and sanitation procedures in order to prevent the spread of communicable disease.

Anyone exhibiting the following should be excluded from meeting and events:

- Fever over 100.4 F
- New cough that is not related to other symptoms
- Shortness of breath
- Lethargic, overly tired, unusually calm or quiet
- Mild respiratory illness/issues

COVID-19 symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have coronavirus:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat

- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, they should seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

Health Screening at Entry

Someone should be taking temperatures and checking symptoms of everyone upon entry before each event or meeting. Everyone entering the Lodge building should successfully meet the criteria of the health screening before they enter the building.

Everyone entering the Lodge building should use hand sanitizer after entering. Handwashing is suggested after entry, as well as the use of hand sanitizer during the meetings.

Masks should always be worn where 6 feet social distancing cannot be met successfully.

Social Distancing

In order to keep everyone safe we should adhere to strict social distancing guidelines. Social distancing should be incorporated to the degree possible, aiming for at least six feet between each other and minimizing the amount of time people are in close contact with each other. When proper social distancing cannot be maintained, masks & gloves should be worn.

Cleaning Before and After Meeting Procedures

All Lodge rooms should be sterilized by using a CDC approved sanitizer, such as a solution of at least 70% alcohol in a spray bottle, misting all touchable surfaces such as the doorknobs, hand rails, secretary's desk, seating area and altar. To be effective, the solution should remain wet on the surface for 1 minute then it can be dried off with a single use towel.

Meals and Snacks

Each group's leaders should decide if meals and snacks should be served.

Prepackaged meals and snacks are preferred.

Buffet style or family style meal service is discouraged.

If food is cooked and served, the cook should wear a mask and gloves during preparation.

If food is served to attendees, designated servers, wearing masks and gloves, should handle serving utensils and serve food to guests to reduce spread of germs.

Prepackaged single serving beverages are preferred.

Paper plates, cups and plastic table service are preferred.

Before and After Meeting Check list.

1. All Lodge rooms should be sanitized using a CDC approved sanitizer, such as a solution of at least 70% alcohol in a spray bottle, misting all touchable surfaces such as the doorknobs, hand rails, secretary's desk, and altar. To be effective, the solution should remain wet on the surface for 1 minute and then it can be dried off with a single use towel. (*special handling may be required for vinyl or leather*)
2. Everyone attending should be screened using the questions on the attached form.
Anyone who answers Yes to any of the question should be asked to go home.
3. Everyone attending should have their temperature taken at the door.
Anyone who has a temperature of 100 degrees or more should not attend the meeting and should be asked to go home.
4. Hand sanitizer should be available in convenient locations such as the Secretary's desk, kitchen, dining room and the restrooms.
5. Everyone attending is recommended to wear a facemask which covers the nose and mouth.
6. No shaking of hands.
7. Everyone should maintain 6 foot distancing.
8. No more people can attend a meeting than can safely social distance, given the size of the meeting room.
9. The meeting room should be sanitized again in the manner stated above as the last act before closing and locking the building.

Screening questionnaire:

1. Have you or any household members been, or are currently being, tested for COVID?
2. Are you exhibiting, or have exhibited, any new respiratory symptoms within the past 72 hours?
 - a. Sore throat
 - b. Cough
 - c. Shortness of breath
 - d. Loss of taste or smell
 - e. Chills/shaking
 - f. Muscle Pain
 - g. Headache

3. In the last 14 days, have you had close contact with anyone who is currently sick with respiratory illness or fever or anyone with a confirmed case of COVID-19?

"Close Contact" is defined as contact with a person suspected of or confirmed with COVID-19 at less than 6-foot distance for at least 10 minutes without PPE.

4. Take temperature

"If temperature is 100.0 degrees or greater you should go home."

If an attendee does not have a fever or signs of respiratory illness, they should be reminded to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer throughout their time in the lodge building. They should also be reminded to practice social distancing and not shake hands or hug individuals during their visit.

Supplies to have on hand.

1. Non-invasive Temporal thermometer. Two are suggested in order to provide a back-up. (Must be a no touch thermometer)
2. Facemasks. (Cloth or Paper)
3. Hand Sanitizer
4. Non-permeable Gloves (Avoid latex for allergy reasons)
5. Disinfectant Wipes
6. CDC approved sanitizer
7. Spray bottles or sprayer
8. Appropriate containers to dispose of used gloves and masks

Guidelines for Responding and Reporting

If the Lodge is notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 among our members or other users, consideration will be made to suspend activities temporarily (e.g. for 14 days, or possibly longer if advised by local health officials.)

If the infected individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 spent minimal time (i.e. 10 minutes or less) in close contact with those in the Lodge building, the Temple Board may consider closing for 2-5 days to do a thorough cleaning and disinfecting. The Worshipful Master will continue to monitor for ill individuals through email and text contact.

Reporting illness and COVID-19 symptoms

If anyone in the Masonic family has been tested or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, that person should immediately notify the Worshipful Master of the local lodge for everyone's protection.

After notification is received by the Worshipful Master of a possible COVID-19 exposure, the Worshipful Master should notify the following people within 24 hours:

- Lodge(s) and other Masonic groups that person has attended, regardless if it was a meeting or function, in the past 3 weeks. (Not required if they were not in the lodge.)
- Temple Board or Building Corporation (if any)
- District Deputy Grand Master
- Grand Master of Idaho

Note: For privacy reasons, the individual's name with COVID-19 should not be released, but we should explain that someone they likely have been in contact with has tested positive or has symptoms.

Returning after suspected COVID-19 symptoms

According to the CDC, persons who were not tested for the Coronavirus but who had symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:

- At least three days (72 hours) have passed since recovery, which is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- The improvement of respiratory symptoms, such as coughing and shortness of breath.
- At least seven days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

If the person is tested to determine if they are still contagious, they also can leave home after these three things have happened:

- They no longer have a fever (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers).
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when the cough or shortness of breath have improved).
- They have received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart, when the patient's doctor follows certain CDC guidelines.

“In all cases, follow the guidance of your healthcare provider and local health department,” the CDC stresses. “The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with your healthcare provider and state and local health departments. Local decisions depend on local circumstances.”

If an individual believes they have had close contact to someone with COVID-19 but are not currently sick, they should notify the leader of their organization and monitor their health for fever, cough, and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day they were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19. In all cases, the local Worshipful Master should be notified.

For more complete information see the link:

<https://www.ehstoday.com/covid19/article/21128937/cdc-updates-its-returntowork-standards>

Template to Use for Communication

Leaders of concordant and appendant bodies: You may use the following template as the basis to assist you in communicating to your members regarding reopening your organization for in-person meetings. State and Local requirements vary across Idaho, and so you may customize the template to fit your particular circumstances. **Please communicate with the local Worshipful Master concerning your reopening plans.**

Notice to members of _____ # _____ concerning reopening

Greetings members,

We reach out to you today to express our gratitude for each and every one of you who have stood with us over the last several months, linked arm in arm on a mission to continue the Lodge connection that we all feel and know in our hearts. As Idaho moves forward through the next several months, we have been asking ourselves what we can do to support our Masonic community during these trying times so everyone has clarity.

Our Lodge and concordant and appendant bodies are being called on to greet uncertainty and adversity with wisdom, calm and solidarity. We care about each one of you and want to help each Lodge weather the COVID-19 situation with access to the best possible resources and community support that we have to offer.

The Lodge is here to partner with you and support our Masonic Family as they tackle each new challenge or hurdle. Our hope is that after months of living within this pandemic, you can partner with us in order to keep our members safe, knowing that small inconveniences such as temperature checks and health screenings are a small price to pay for community wellness.

The truth is, we can only reinstate our meetings and events with the support of the entire Masonic Family. We hope you will openly accept and embrace the new standards and policies regarding health and wellness – knowing that community vigilance and alliance are what will keep our entire jurisdiction healthy and well.

Sincerely,

{Leader's name}

Prevent the spread of COVID-19 in **7 STEPS**

- 01** Wash your hands frequently
- 02** Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- 03** Cover your cough using the bend of your elbow or a tissue
- 04** Avoid crowded places and close contact with anyone that has fever or cough
- 05** Stay at home if you feel unwell
- 06** If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early — but call first
- 07** Get information from trusted sources



SOURCE: WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION