



Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal M.I.  
**REGIÓN ESTE**

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# INFORMATIVE MANUAL

PROTOCOLS TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE  
REOPENING OF THE TEMPLES AND  
PLACES OF WORSHIP.

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## **I. Introduction**

The God of all grace bless us abundantly. Let us celebrate the return and the opening of our temples and places of worship.

Ezra 3:11 says, And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, “For He is good, For His mercy endures forever toward Israel.” Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

This passage reveals the attitude and action of the People of Israel on the return from Babylon.

There are 3 important elements in the book of Ezra:

1. **Upon the return:** when the people demonstrated their faith in the promises of God.
2. **The rebuilding:** The people organized the sacrifices and the preparation of the temple.
3. **The opposition and obstacles:** Obstacles presented in the reconstruction. We will always find obstacles in a new beginning.

The purpose of this orientation from the Regional Executive Board is to present to you a protocol that will help in the initial phase of the reopening of our temples and places of worship.

## **II. Planning and Preparing to Reopen Temples and Places of Worship**

The following information is part of the recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- ✓ Make sure to be well informed of the regulations in force in the state and city where your meeting place is located.
- ✓ You should make certain that the temple's insurance is in effect before opening.
- ✓ Verify that the occupancy permit is in effect.
- ✓ Preparation:
  - ✚ Update your Emergency Operations Plan to include planning for COVID-19.
  - ✚ Identify a space or area that can be used to separate those who are sick if necessary.
  - ✚ Develop an emergency communication plan to distribute timely and precise information to leaders and members of the congregation.
  - ✚ Identify steps to take if you would need to postpone or cancel programming, especially for groups with at high risk, such as older adults or people with chronic health conditions.
  - ✚ Promote the practice of daily preventive actions.
  - ✚ Provide supplies for COVID-19 prevention in your organization (for example, antibacterial soap, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, disposable handkerchiefs, trash baskets and disposable masks).
  - ✚ Plan for the absences of staff. Plan for alternate coverage. Monitor and track staff absences related to COVID-19.

### **III. Security and Better Practices Requisites**

We have the duty to correctly and with common sense guide the churchgoers regarding the changes. Adjustments corresponding to times and programming should be made in each congregation depending on the number of members.

- ✓ All the temples and places of worship should limit the occupancy according to the number or percentage approved by the state. The occupancy includes all the people inside the temple or place of worship.
- ✓ The server staff should monitor the attendance at the temple or place of worship to ensure compliance with the requisites of maximum occupancy.
- ✓ Keep an adequate record of attendance at each service.
- ✓ Attendees who are not part of the same household should be seated at a distance of 6 feet from others.
- ✓ All attendees and server staff must use face coverings or masks upon entering and exiting and during the services.
  - Exceptions:
    - A person who cannot use face coverings or masks due to a medical condition or debilitating condition.
    - For children between 2-5 years of age, the use of face coverings and masks is at the discretion of the parents.
    - Children under 2 years of age should not use face coverings or masks.
- ✓ Temples and places of worship should communicate to all members and staff not to attend physical meetings and to isolate themselves for the following reasons:
  - Are feeling sick and exhibiting any of the following symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, chills, body aches, headache, sore throat, and/or recent loss of sense of taste or smell)
  - Had contact or were exposed for a prolonged period of time (more than 10 minutes) to someone that is suspected or confirmed of having COVID-19.
  - People at high risk (due to age or underlying conditions) should stay home

✓ **Operations**

- Prevent group meetings before and after the services (for example, coffee break, or other food service)
- Temples and places of worship that have a pantry or other prepackaged food distribution can continue operations under supervision.
- Any childcare service should remain closed until further notice.
- If the staff or a leader knows of a member or attendee testing positive for COVID-19, they should immediately inform the City Health Board and provide pertinent information to those who were in contact with said person.
- Modify the collection of offerings and contributions within the temple.

✓ **Better Practices:**

- Take the temperature of those entering.
- Permit ventilation to enclosed areas as much as possible. For example, consider opening the doors and Windows to permit airflow.
- The guidelines of protocols to be followed should be identified with legible bilingual signs at the entrances of the temples and the maximum occupancy by row should be identified. 6-foot distancing should be promoted.
- Use the server staff to direct in an orderly manner the traffic of individuals entering and exiting the temple or place of worship.
- Temples and places of worship are in their right to deny entry to any person who refuses to wear a face covering or mask (unless the reason is due to a medical condition or debilitating condition).

#### **IV. Hygiene, Cleaning and Disinfection Requisites and Protocols**

The temple or meeting place should satisfy the necessary conditions of sanitation and cleanliness. Therefore, we should prepare everything necessary for the hygiene of the attendees and establish a continuous protocol upon entering and exiting the meeting place.

##### ✓ Hygiene Protocol

- All temples and places of worship should provide facilities for handwashing, including soap and running water.
- It is recommended to have in addition several areas with hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, disposable handkerchiefs, trash baskets and disposable masks.
- Emphasize the Preventive Measures: Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds, do not touch your face, cover your face when coughing or sneezing and wash your hands after doing so, and limit contact with other people.

##### ✓ Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocol

- The temples and places of worship should be cleaned and disinfected in areas of traffic and high contact surfaces after each meeting.
  - Areas and surfaces to be cleaned and disinfected include pews, entrances, handrails, bathrooms, doorknobs, microphones, instruments, etc.
- If your church offers several services in a day, consider programming services with enough time in between to permit time for cleaning and disinfecting high contact surfaces.

## **V. Resources**

Go to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website (CDC) to obtain relevant signs and promotions to post in your temple or place of worship.

➤ **Provisional Orientation for Communities of Faith**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/faith-based.html>

➤ **Covid-19 Prevention**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html>

➤ **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>

➤ **Communication Resources**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html>

➤ **Verification list for community leaders and religious leaders**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/checklist.html>

➤ **Keep updated of the daily changes offered by each city and state where your temple or place of worship is located.**

➤ **If you should have any doubt or question, contact our Council's Regional Office at 718-792-6722.**



## **VI. General Verification List**

- Limit the occupancy according to the number or percentage approved by the state.
- Keep an adequate record of attendance at each service.
- Individuals who are not part of the same household should keep a 6 foot distance from others.
- All attendees and server staff should use face coverings or masks upon entering and exiting and during services.

### Exceptions:

- A person who cannot wear face coverings or masks due to a medical condition or debilitating condition.
  - For children between 2 and 5 years of age, the use of face coverings or masks is at the parents' discretion.
  - Children under 2 years of age should not use face coverings or masks
- Have a protocol to communicate to all members and staff not to attend physical meeting and to isolate for the following reasons: If they feel sick and exhibit any of the following symptoms (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, chills, body aches, headache, sore throat, and/or recent loss of sense of taste or smell)
- You should identify the guidelines of local protocols to be followed, with legible bilingual signs at the entrances of the temple.
  - Post signs on how to stop the spread of Covid-19
  - Post signs on how to promote daily protection measures, such as handwashing, covering your mouth if you should cough and/or sneeze.
  - Post signs informing on the proper use of face coverings or masks.
- Use the server staff to direct the traffic of individuals entering and exiting the temple or place of worship in an orderly manner.
- Permit ventilation as much as possible to enclosed spaces. For example, consider opening the doors and Windows to permit airflow.
- Provide facilities for handwashing, including soap and running water.
- Have an area where there is hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, disposable handkerchiefs, trash baskets and disposable masks.
- Clean and disinfect areas of traffic and high contact surfaces after each meeting.