



# COVID-19 Policies

King of Kings Lutheran Church

*Last modified August 2020*

*The guidance document has been designed for use in conjunction with the overall policy of King of Kings Lutheran Church and public health directives. Advice of the local public health units must be followed, even if it contradicts this document. This document will be reviewed and modified as applicable when COVID-19 restrictions can be lifted and/or amended to reflect new advice as it is given.*

*While the focus of this policy is on maintaining healthy operational measures for ministry at King of Kings, please note that every effort will be made to uphold a welcoming and caring environment for our congregation's children, students, families, lay leaders and staff.*

*Though we will attempt to take proactive preventative measures to ensure safety and cleanliness, we acknowledge that risk of exposure is possible and may result in temporary dismissal or omission from ministry events. All public activities, including participation here at King of Kings, remain at your own risk. We strive to work closely with our members, local government, and national government to safeguard and protect all who desire to participate in ministry opportunities, trusting ultimately in the Almighty God who guards our steps. We know that the Lord is our refuge and strength, an "ever present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).*

**Face-coverings are required by all who attend ministry events, including worship.**

## **ARRIVAL, PARTICIPATION, AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**

Our leadership teams will work together to develop procedures that support physical distancing and separate groups as best as possible (i.e. staggered entrance and exit times, single-door entry).

All entrances will have hand sanitizer and PPE available for those who access our facility.

Our staff will be available to explain safety measures to inquiring individuals, though we will encourage those conversations to be held when they are not disrupting ministry events.

We will strive to use signage and markings to help direct individuals through new entry steps.

We encourage individuals to minimize the usage of personal belongings while attending ministry events. Individuals must be sure to take all items with them when they depart.

## **ON-SITE MINISTRY STAFF AND VOLUNTEER LEADERS**

**All King of Kings Staff and volunteer leaders will wear face-coverings during ministry events EXCEPT while leading Worship when proper distancing guidelines can be observed. (i.e. Pastors and music leaders)**

Staff and volunteer leaders will conduct in-person inspection of classrooms and other facilities. They will follow protocols requested by the congregation and/or local government to ensure safety of others, including wearing personal protective equipment and/or being screened prior to entering the premises.

Staff and volunteer screenings consist of an on-site temperature scan and assessment utilizing question scripts provided by the AMA.

Staff and volunteer leaders will be reminded regularly to remain home if they demonstrate any indication of illness.

Children's & Student Ministry leaders will be reminded to look for indications of illness in children and students and follow protocol for isolation and reporting, if necessary.

We will encourage our ministry activities to stay in their designated spaces and use only the rooms assigned to them, even if other rooms appear available. This ensures that sanitation can be thorough and efficient.

## **SIZING OF GROUPS**

Every attempt will be made to remain consistent with local school district guidelines for group sizes. While grouped in smaller clusters, students will generally be expected to stay together with their class group and not mingle with other students.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOL**

We will make every effort to closely follow local public health officials when establishing our health and safety protocols to keep children and families safe in their communities.

**As a staff, we have developed and implemented plans for the following:**

- Sanitation of space, toys, and equipment
- How we report and communicate illnesses
- How we will encourage physical distancing
- How we will handle arrival and departure procedures

## SCREENING FOR SYMPTOMS

Our **Well Person Policy** will be posted on the announcement screens and publicly in ministry spaces. We encourage individuals and families to read it and evaluate themselves for participation in all ministry activities, including on-site Worship.

Our **staff and volunteer leaders** will self-assess their health and, per ministry directives, be subject to screening protocol before entering our facility.

If children and/or students participate in screening protocol, we will take precautions to maintain 6 feet between individuals and to wear personal protective equipment. We will follow current advice from public health officials regarding these practices.

We will have alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol content) placed at each screening station. Dispensers will not be in locations that are easily accessible by small children.

## PROTOCOLS WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL BECOMES SICK

Staff, volunteer leaders and individuals must not attend ministry events if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold. Please check with the CDC for an exhaustive list of symptoms.

### **Symptoms to look for include, but are not limited to:**

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Nasal congestion
- Headache
- General feeling of unwellness
- Unexplained rashes
- Vomiting or diarrhea currently or within the last 24 hours
- Skin or eye infections
- Chicken pox, mumps, measles, etc.

If a student or staff/leader becomes sick while at a ministry event, they should be isolated and family members contacted for immediate pick up.

If a separate room is not available, the sick individual should be kept a minimum of six feet from others. The sick individual should be provided with tissues and reminded of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and proper disposal of tissues.

## PROTOCOLS WHEN AN INDIVIDUAL BECOMES SICK (CONTINUED)

If the sick individual is a child or student, a staff member/leader should remain with them until a parent or guardian arrives. If tolerated, the individual should wear a mask. The staff/leader should wear a mask and not interact with other students upon return to the group. The staff/leader should avoid contact with the sick individual, not handling their tissues or personal belongings.

All items used by the sick individual should be cleaned and disinfected as soon as possible, including chairs that have been used. All items that cannot be cleaned (i.e. paper, books, puzzles) should be removed and stored in a sealed container for a minimum of 7 days.

If necessary, public health organizations should be notified and their advice followed. Per CDC guidelines, **individuals who were within 6 feet or less of a sick individual for longer than 15 minutes are considered close contact** and grouped together until they can be picked up by parents/guardians to self-isolate at home. They must be encouraged to connect with necessary local public health organizations for clarification and direction on further testing and isolation.

## COMMUNICATION

Open communication between individuals, families, and staff regarding the enhancement and seriousness of health and safety measures will be encouraged. New policies will be shared for everyone's information and so that all are aware of expectations. Our goal is to keep everyone as safe and healthy as possible.

We will make attempts to publicly display helpful reminders in our facility so everyone understands that wellness and safety is our ultimate goal.

## STAFF TRAINING

We will continue to assess our ministries in collaboration with local and national health directives. We will ensure that our leaders are trained and equipped to serve confidently, with joy and excitement, while still maintaining our high standards of health, safety, and other operational measures.

Training will focus on how and when to properly clean spaces and equipment, how to safely conduct health screenings, how to minimize and manage physical distancing challenges, and what to do in the case that someone becomes sick.

## CHILDREN'S AND STUDENT MINISTRY SPACE & PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Non-essential visitors will be kept to a minimum in spaces used by children's and student ministry events.

We recognize that physical distancing between students is often difficult. Our primary goal is safety, but we also strive to provide a welcoming, caring, Christ-centered environment for our students.

When setting up spaces, we will attempt to provide spaces where students can be at least 6 feet apart. We will also assess our activities to minimize physical contact and shared objects or toys.

We will attempt to use toys and supplies which are made of materials that can be cleaned and disinfected (i.e. avoiding plush toys). We will clean and disinfect supplies between events.

If sensory materials (i.e. playdoh, water, sand, etc.) are offered, we will provide them for single use and label with the student's name, if applicable.

We will attempt to use designated toys and equipment (i.e. balls, toys) for each group or classroom and keep them separate from other groups.

## FOOD

In general, we will minimize shared snacks (i.e. a large bag of chips) and opt instead for individually packaged servings of food.

We will strongly encourage proper hand cleansing practices and discourage individuals from sharing utensils, snacks, or water bottles.

## SIGNAGE

We will strive to use signage and markings to provide helpful reminders for practicing social distancing, hygiene, and new methods of operation, including publicly sharing our **Well Person Policy** (see below).

## **EVENT STRUCTURE**

We will diligently assess each ministry event and consider ways to maintain high levels of safety. The nature of our varied ministry means that an exact blueprint is not possible, but the general principals we will adhere to include the following:

- Minimize touching between individuals (no hand-holding for group prayers, no games where students touch each other, no mixing/mingling games)
- Suspend the supplies and resources. (i.e. hymnals and attendance cards)
- Clean high-touch areas frequently
- Avoiding singing or yelling in close proximity to others
- Consider staggered entrance/exit times
- Use visual and verbal reminders to practice good hygiene
- Affirm students, parents, and leaders that we are making every effort to care for each other

*We welcome conversation about how we are structuring our ministries during this unprecedented time and are available to answer questions that anyone may have about why we're doing what we do. We encourage these conversations during times when ministry events will not be disrupted.*

# WELL PERSON POLICY

*For the protection of all individuals and leaders in our ministries, we ask that you please adhere to these guidelines when considering if you or your family members should attend events (Children's Ministry, Student Ministry, Worship or otherwise).*

A healthy person **does not** display any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Nasal congestion
- Headache
- General feeling of unwell
- Unexplained rashes
- Vomiting or diarrhea currently or within the last 24 hours
- Skin or eye infections
- Chicken pox, mumps, measles, etc.

## **If you or one of your family members have any of the above symptoms:**

Please do not attend the ministry event. Instead, we encourage you and your family to join us online, via our website or social media outlets.

## **If a child/student develops any of the above symptoms while in our care:**

We will ask you to pick your child/student up immediately. We will not administer medication of any kind. We may ask you to follow up with us and report any possible infectious illnesses so that we can inform other families or staff about possible risk exposure. We will follow our own protocol regarding sanitation and communication of possible infection to involved individuals and local health care organizations, if necessary.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and ensures the safety of our Church family here at King of Kings!