



Logistics Plan for Opening Masaajid Implementing Social Distancing Practices Related to Covid-19

This document was initially prepared by the Clear Lake center under the review of Sh Waleed Basyouni and modified by NCIC after the new Covid-19 related guidelines issued by California Dept. of Public Health for places of worship on Monday May 25.

This document is intended to provide general guidance, and every masjid should review it on their own to ensure they comply with all local and state regulatory guidelines.

I. Overview

It is the duty of the Imams and administrators of the *masaajid* that they should make every effort possible to facilitate for people the practices of worship prescribed in Islam while at the same time ensuring that we comply with the local public health guidelines and that all steps and precautions are taken to protect the health, safety and well-being of individuals and the community at large.

This document provides logistical details for opening the masjid to *salah* and other religious services as government authorities lighten the current restrictions on large gatherings. This document is organized with following sections:

1. A set of guidelines that can be published to the community
2. Internal logistics details applicable to the facility's administration

II. Community Guidelines

In accordance with the most recent guidelines of federal and state government authorities, the masjid will be available for *salah* including the five regular prayers, *Jumu'ah* and *taraweeh*. Based on the obligatory attendance for *Jumu'ah*, the guidelines will be different for that service as compared to others. For the safety of everyone in our community, the masjid will operate under a very strict set of self-imposed guidelines that have been reviewed and approved by health care professionals in our community. It is noted that the masjid is only open for *salah* services and all other normal activities of the center continue to remain suspended until further notice. Please note that these guidelines do NOT address the Sunday school, or other school services offered by, or at the masjid, since additional rules and guidelines apply for these services.

Guidelines:

1. Establish a written, workplace-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every location, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas, and designate a person at each workplace to implement the plan.
2. Identify contact information for the local health department where the workplace is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among staff and congregants/visitors.
3. Train and communicate with staff and employee representatives on the plan.
4. Regularly evaluate workplaces for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.



5. Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected staff member and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive staff and close contacts.
6. Masjid must limit total attendance to 25% of a building's capacity for the first three weeks of services and stop passing offering plates, in addition to taking other precautions.
7. Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all staff at the beginning of their shift. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with staff to the extent possible. Both screeners and staff should wear face coverings for the screening.
8. Masjid should consider where disposable gloves use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for staff who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items. All workers and volunteers should wear gloves when handling items contaminated by body fluids.
9. Masjid must take reasonable measures, including posting signage in strategic and highly-visible locations, to remind congregants/visitors that they should use face coverings and practice physical distancing whenever possible.
10. IF *Jumu'ah* prayers are to be conducted, only those Islamically obligated to participate are encouraged to attend. It should be noted that if any individual has any excuse to stay home, including the reasons mentioned below or otherwise, then they will be excused from the obligation of *Jumu'ah inshaAllah*. Furthermore, anyone who attempts to attend *Jumu'ah* but is not able to participate due to capacity limitations or other reasons at the discretion of the masjid is similarly excused from the obligation.
11. Under no circumstances are children 12 and under permitted to attend *Jumu'ah*.
12. With the noted exception of *Jumu'ah*, all members of the community are still encouraged to pray at home.
13. For *salah* services other than *Jumu'ah*, no children under the age of 15 are allowed at the facility under any circumstances. This is due only to the inability to enforce social distancing with these age groups.
14. No one experiencing any symptoms known to be symptomatic with the COVID-19 virus (including dry cough, fever, body aches, shortness of breath or any other related symptoms) may enter the facility.
15. No one who has been diagnosed with the virus or for any reason been instructed to stay in quarantine may not enter the facility unless formally cleared by medical professionals.
16. Anyone ages 60 & older and/or with immune compromised systems are recommended to pray at home.
17. Anyone entering the facility must have a mask covering their mouth and nose. Masks do not necessarily have to be medical grade and even cloth coverings are permitted. Masks must be worn for the entire time in the facility and can only be removed for *wudoo'*.
18. Attendees are strongly recommended to bring their own prayer mat.
19. No type of congregating is permitted at any time.
20. At all times, attendees should maintain six (6) foot spacing from all individuals outside of their immediate household. Hugging, handshaking and any other type of physical interaction clearly violates social distancing practices.



21. Attendees are encouraged to come to the masjid in a state of *wudoo'* and should only use the restroom facilities if necessary.
22. In accordance with government guidelines, the masjid will currently operate at 25% of its occupational capacity during *Jumu'ah*. No more than XXX people will be permitted in a designated prayer area at any time. The masjid will arrange multiple *Jumu'ah* services to accommodate the number of community members obligated to pray. *Please note that upon initial opening of the masajid, attendees may be turned away due to capacity or lack of available services. In this case, those attendees are excused from Jumu'ah and shall pray Dhuhur at home. In subsequent weeks, attendees can expect the masjid administration to arrange additional Jumu'ah services as necessary.*
23. Designated prayer areas will be pre-marked in a manner to facilitate six (6) foot spacing. Attendees should only pray in marked designated areas.
24. At the completion of prayer, lines will be dismissed individually to avoid crowding.

III. Internal Logistics

This section contains parts relevant to the facility's administration: facility management, guideline enforcement and cleaning protocols..

Facility Management:

1. The number of maximum attendees to maintain six (6) foot spacing in each designated prayer area should be counted at 25% of the normal capacity.
2. Custodial services should be maintained on a daily basis and should include sanitization of all floors and hard surfaces. Carpeted areas should be vacuumed daily. If contractor services are available, carpets and ventilation systems should be sanitized as well.
3. Custodians should be available during any long duration prayer services, i.e. *Jum'uah* and *Taraweeh*, to immediately clean and sanitize all areas contacted by attendees including bathrooms, *wudoo'* areas, door handles, vending machines, etc.
4. Gathering/community areas other than prayer halls should be closed if possible. Couches should be removed from public access.
5. Water fountains should be shut off and closed for access.
6. Playground should be closed to public access.
7. Masks and gloves should be made available to all volunteers.
8. During high attendance times, doors should be propped open to deter human contact.
9. The *khutbah* and prayer should be made as short as possible to limit contact and facilitate multiple services.

Guideline Enforcement:

1. Six (6) foot spacing marks in designated prayer areas should be checked daily to ensure they are visible and in place.
2. A sufficient number of volunteers should be available inside the facility at peak crowd times to ensure that social distancing is practiced and that anyone exhibiting illness symptoms is kindly asked to leave.



3. Parking volunteers/workers should be available at peak times to ensure that the maximum number of attendees is not exceeded and that no congregation in parking lot is occurring. The number of attendees should be counted at the entrance to the parking lot so that excess crowds can be easily turned away.
4. At least one paid officer should be available during peak crowd times, i.e. *Jumu'ah* and *Taraweeh*, to support the masjid volunteers. Additional officers inside the facility may be added at administration's discretion.

Cleaning Protocols:

- Perform thorough cleaning of high traffic areas such as lobbies, halls, meeting rooms, offices, libraries, and study areas and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, handrails, and elevator controls. Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces including doorknobs, toilets, handwashing facilities, pulpits and podiums, donation boxes or plates, altars, and seating areas.
- Establish frequent cleaning and disinfection of personal work areas such as desks and cubicles and supply the necessary cleaning products.
- Discourage sharing items used in *salah* (such as prayer books, cushions, prayer rugs, *turba* etc.) whenever possible and provide single use or digital copies or ask congregants/visitors to bring personal items instead. Avoid sharing work equipment and supplies, such as phones, office equipment, computers, etc., wherever possible. Never share PPE.
- Where such items must be shared, disinfect between shifts or uses, whichever is more frequent, including the following: shared office equipment (copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones, keyboards, staplers, etc.) and items in shared worship items, etc., with a cleaner appropriate for the surface. • Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed. Consider more frequently cleaning and disinfecting handwashing facilities that are used more often. Use signage to reinforce handwashing.
- Disinfect microphones and stands, music stands, instruments and other items on pulpits and podiums between each use. Consult equipment manufacturers to determine appropriate disinfection steps, particularly for soft, porous surfaces such as foam mufflers.
- Consider using disposable seat covers for congregants/visitors, particularly on porous surfaces or where a facility has multiple daily services. Discard and replace seat covers between each use. Provide disposable or washable covers on pillows used as seating on floors and change/wash them after each use.
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless whenever possible, at entrances and other places of gathering.

For complete review of the guidelines by State of California for places of worship, click [here](#).

<https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-places-of-worship.pdf>