



Guidance for Limited Reopening of Parish Offices

June 2020

As the state progresses to phase 4 of the Restore Illinois plan, more people can congregate in various locations, which means that opportunities for parish staff, volunteers and parishioners to gather for non-liturgical events is permissible. Regarding parish offices and staff, out of an abundance of caution, it is still advisable that employees return to the parish only to perform operations related to the reopening as well as routine tasks such as mail pick-up, security, and maintenance projects to preserve the property. Otherwise, all other parish work should be performed remotely or, not at all, if such work is not able to be performed remotely.

It is advised that work schedules/routines established to perform minimum basis operations and other remote work continue to the extent possible. For example: if phone calls to the parish office have been rerouted to a staff member's cell or home phone, or the receptionist has been accessing parish voicemails remotely and returning calls from his or her cell or home phone, continue with that process; if the business manager has been onsite for a preset number of hours on a certain day each week to collect mail and execute certain activities with all other work performed from home, maintain that schedule.

Just as each parish is determining the pace at which it reopens for Masses and other events, each pastor and reopening leadership team should apply prudence regarding the pace and scope of parish office reopening.

The following guidance applies to only those parish employees who are needed to perform their duties onsite at the parish office to implement or support church reopening.

Limit Onsite Work to Only What is Necessary.

Only employees whose roles require them to be physically onsite to assist with reopening should be onsite, and only for limited periods of time (i.e., onsite for only the time required to complete tasks that cannot be completed remotely).

- Ex.1 If parishioners need to supply documentation related to sacramental celebrations, ask them to email the material, or use a drop-box at the parish office that limits in-person interaction.



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- Ex.2. All pre-scheduled meetings of two or more people should be held via Teams; all impromptu, in-person discussions must be facilitated with proper social distancing requirements of at least six (6) feet between participants.

If the above tasks cannot be performed remotely, parish employees may report to the parish office to conduct in-person meetings with parishioners but must follow all social distancing guidelines.

Employees whose jobs do not require their presence onsite or in the parish office should continue to work remotely for the foreseeable future.

Parish employees who are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms should not report to work.

Implement/maintain social distancing mitigation measures in performance of Phase 1/1A and 2 duties in parish offices.

Please see the [Parish Building Readiness](#) documentation; below are examples of these mitigation measures

- Masks or cloth face coverings must be worn in parish offices by all employees and visitors (post signs with this requirement at all entrances);
- Open office windows to allow for increased air circulation;
- Keep interior doors open to eliminate the need for using door handles;
- Ensure hand sanitizer is available, restrooms are stocked with soap, paper towels, toilet paper and other essentials;
- Landlines should be used by a single designated employee, and the receiver and cradle should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each day with a disinfectant wipe or disinfecting/cleaning solution;
- Close gathering spaces (e.g., break room);
- No food or drink should be open or shared in the office.

Please see the *Physical Space Development Guide* for additional recommendations.



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Employee/Visitor Movement: Place markings on the floor as a guide for employees and visitors showing where to walk and stand to maintain proper social distancing. Please see the *Parishioner Movement Development Guide* for additional recommendations.

Cleaning: Disinfectant wipes and disinfecting/cleaning solution should be readily available for use throughout the day. Common surfaces such as counter tops, doorknobs, copiers, keyboards, telephones, printers, and other flat surfaces should be cleaned multiple times a day. Employees are encouraged to wash their hands regularly. **Please see the *Disinfecting Job Aid* for all applicable guidance.**

Consider installation of portable freestanding sneeze guards for the reception desk or other applicable space. Please contact Chris Kopp in Procurement at ckopp@archchicago.org for assistance with that order.

Limit/eliminate instances in which multiple people are in a parish office at the same time.

- If more than one employee must be in the office, consider using a sign-up system for days/hours requested to be onsite.
- Each parish should designate a single point of contact, such as the pastor, operations director or business manager to coordinate and approve onsite visits and work hours and maintain a schedule that can be shared with staff on a regular basis.

Implement/maintain rules and expectations regarding shared office space and equipment.

- Employees should avoid sharing office space or using another employees' workspace and tools, e.g. computer, pens.
- Social distancing guidelines must be adhered to. Designate six-foot distances with signage, tape on the floor, or by other means.