

Archdiocese of Cincinnati Recommendations for the Resumption of Youth Evangelization

June 2, 2021

NEW - UPDATED - (Slightly) CONDENSED

Opening Prayer:

Lord, you have made us for a time such as this, and you do not abandon us in this time. Be with us now. Allow us to know and perhaps even feel the comfort of your presence. Let our feet walk only in the way of your holy will. Shepherd us, O Lord, that we may in turn shepherd those you've entrusted to our care.

Opening Remarks:

Youth Ministers, DREs, CRE's, Catechetical Leaders, and all who serve youth in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati,

As things transition forward with Stay-Safe-Ohio, we want to help you stay up to date with youth-related activities at your parish. We know that this time has been incredibly hard on all of you, not to mention the parishioners, families, and youth you serve. Thank you for your service and dedication amidst these times! May the Lord abundantly bless your efforts! Below, you will find all the relevant Ohio Department of Health Orders alongside our Archdiocesan recommendations. This document is intended as a reference for Youth Evangelists in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. We hope this will help you to follow the ODH Orders in youth evangelization activities with greater ease and clarity. We'd love to make ourselves available to you during this time! Please contact Shane Legg with questions or inquiries (email: slegg@catholicaoc.org) (phone: 513-421-3131).

This document does not serve as a replacement or substitute for the below documents or the requirements of the Ohio Department of Health. This document serves as a supplement and reference for Youth Evangelists in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati who have already read, are familiar with, and follow the Ohio Department of Health Orders.

The following document references and is guided by:

- Director of Ohio Department of Health Orders:
 - [Director's Order for Facial Coverings throughout the State of Ohio- May 17, 2021 \(June 2, 2021- UPDATED FACIAL COVERINGS MANDATE\)](#)
 - [Religious Services \(05-24-2021\)](#)
 - [Responsible Restart Ohio Webpage \(Most up to date access to all Ohio Guidelines\)](#)
 - [Sector Specific Operating Requirements \(Quick Link to "Sector Specific"\) \(03-15-2021\)](#)
 - [Addendum to Director's Second Amended Order that Provides Mandatory Requirements for Youth, Collegiate, Amateur, Club and Professional Sports and Extracurricular Activities](#)

Must I resume in-person Youth Evangelization?

- [Youth Evangelists are encouraged to restart in-person gathering, teaching, or meeting of youth.](#) All youth evangelists and their pastors remain free to decide, at their discretion and at the discretion of their pastor and/or local superior, whether restarting their in-person youth programs is prudent and safe for themselves, their youth, and their organization at this time.
- Parents of youth continue to have the right to choose what is best for their children. Those who wish to have their child participate in person may; however, no in-person gatherings should be required. For the benefit of the families and youth, parishes should try to accommodate families unable to attend in-person events. Online options for youth evangelization should continue to be available where possible and practical.
- In all circumstances, appropriate social distancing and the regulations put forth by public health authorities must be observed. Youth Evangelists should creatively comply with the guidelines below.
- Those who prudentially decide not to resume in-person youth gatherings may find this list of ideas to be helpful: [50 Creative Ideas for Parishes During Covid-19](#)

Guidelines for the Resumption of Youth Evangelization in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati:

1. Liability Waivers

- a. [July 7, 2020](#) is the most current version of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati liability waiver to be used from now on. It includes the question of legal liability with regard to Covid-19.

2. All Updated State Orders for Facial Coverings and Social Distancing Should be Followed:

a. Facial Coverings (Masks)

- i. **NOTE:** Employers and businesses will likely be unable to determine whether or not employees and customers/patrons have been vaccinated. As such, they may choose to continue to require masking, social distancing, and/or other mitigation measures among all employees and customers/patrons, both vaccinated and unvaccinated.
- ii. **All fully vaccinated** people can resume activities without wearing a mask. (*fully vaccinated refers to a person who is ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine, per the CDC Public Health Recommendations for Vaccinated Persons*)
 1. However, vaccinated individuals must continue to wear masks on all planes, trains, buses and other forms of public transportation.
- iii. All individuals that are **not fully vaccinated** in the State of Ohio shall wear facial coverings at all times when:
 1. In any indoor location that is not a residence;
 2. Outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their family/household; or
 3. Waiting for, riding, driving, or operating public transportation, a taxi, car service, or a ride sharing vehicle. This does not apply to private or rental vehicles where members of a family/household are sharing a vehicle.

- iv. Regardless of vaccination status, the requirement to wear a facial covering **does not apply** when ([list of all exemptions](#)):
 - 1. The individual is under ten years of age, except as required by school guidance;
- b. **6 Foot Safe Distancing**
 - i. **All fully vaccinated** people can resume activities without socially distancing.
 - ii. For individuals **not fully vaccinated**, Social Distancing Requirements include maintaining at least six-foot social distancing from other individuals
- c. **Sanitation**
 - i. Hand washing or sanitizing upon entry to facility
 - ii. Have sanitizer available throughout businesses and organized events for employees and patrons.
 - iii. Routine disinfection of high-contact surfaces, desk workstations, restrooms, and equipment
- d. **Coughs and Sneezes**
 - i. Should be covered at all times. It is recommended to sneeze or cough into your elbow.
- e. **Personal Assessment**
 - i. Individuals must conduct daily symptom assessments. Anyone experiencing symptoms, including 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, runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea, must stay home (Ohio Department of Health Order)
 - ii. Youth Evangelists are encouraged to have thermometers on hand, if need be. Youth Evangelists are also empowered to send youth home, if need be. Any individual with the symptoms above should be sent home immediately.
 - 1. However, safety should be performed with love. Plans should be made in advance for what will be done if a youth is sent home or denied access all together. What will be said? What will the youth be given? How can we get them back home? How soon can they return to ministry events after being sent home?
 - 2. Youth Evangelists are encouraged to: think through a response in advance, provide a handout to the youth, follow up with the youth, connect the youth to recordings of the

event, and to future events. Youth Evangelists may wish to safely pray with this child keeping in compliance with all Virtus requirements.

f. Signage

- i. All businesses and organized gatherings, where possible, shall post clearly visible signage at all entrances to each of their grounds or premises requiring all persons not fully vaccinated entering to wear a facial covering.
 1. The text shall state that, unless the individual is fully vaccinated, all persons are required to wear a facial covering and engage in social distancing at all times in or on the grounds or premises. Such signage is available for download from <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/responsible-restartohio/Posters-and-Signs/>
 2. Any entity requiring assistance printing signage should contact the Ohio Department of Health Call Center at 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833- 427-5634)

3. Gathering Size

a. Large gatherings.

- Organizers and managers should conduct the event in a manner that discourages individuals that are not fully vaccinated from standing or sitting close together in buildings or on other parts of the grounds or premises. Where possible, the organizers and managers should provide one-way traffic in buildings or other areas, where doing so will help people maintain social distancing.
- **Clarification on Protected Activity.**
 - Other than the Facial Coverings (Masks) requirements of this Order, the Social Distancing, Congregating and capacity requirements of this Order do not apply to religious observances and First Amendment Activity, including activity of the media, as has been the case in Ohio since the beginning of the pandemic.
- b. As such, our religious gatherings are not subject to the 10 person limit for those who are not fully vaccinated.
- c. We do not and should not take this religious liberty lightly. Though the State has rightfully recognized religious freedom and allowed our youth evangelization events to occur at the size of our discretion, we must perform our civic and moral duty by complying with all social distancing guidelines. We may not abuse the liberties

we've been given by hosting events in excessive numbers for the present time.

- d. Our recommendations:
 - i. It is advised but not required that all youth, regardless of whether or not they are fully vaccinated, should wear a face covering and maintain a 6ft distance when possible.
 - ii. Larger groups should meet outside, if at all possible.
 - iii. Larger groups meeting indoors should meet in a large space and should break up into smaller groups of 10 or less in either separate rooms or a larger room divided by barriers.
 - 1. Ohio Department of Health Barrier Guidelines can be accessed on page 11 of the [Director's Order that Reopens Youth Day Camps and Residential Camps, with Exceptions](#).
 - iv. The indoor adult to child ratio for a group of 10 individuals is 2 adults to 8 youth (VIRTUS).

4. Serving Food

- a. The following guidelines and requirements are taken from [Responsible RestartOhio Restaurants, Bars, and Banquet & Catering Facilities/Services](#).
- b. We recommend food distributed at youth events be distributed according to the following guidelines:
 - i. All individuals must wash their hands before handling, serving, preparing, receiving, or eating food.
 - ii. If offering buffet service, serving utensils should be replaced or cleaned/sanitized at least hourly. Make disposable napkins or wax paper available for customers to use to grip utensils in a buffet line or salad bar line.
 - 1. Place hand sanitizing stations at beginning and end of serving line.
 - 2. Place a trash can nearby.
 - iii. Remove non-essential objects from eating tables such as vases, salt and pepper shakers, and condiment bottles.
 - iv. It is recommended that salad bars and buffets are served by staff or volunteers wearing facial coverings and having sanitized hands.

- v. Food must be prepared while wearing a mask and having sanitized hands.
- b. No person exhibiting any of the following symptoms may handle, prepare, or serve food:
 1. Cough, Fever, Shortness of Breath, Difficulty Breathing, Chills, Muscle Pain, Sore Throat, and New Loss of Taste or Smell

5. Playing Sports and Physical Activities at Youth Evangelization Events

- a. Youth Evangelists should recognize that most sports, as we know them, will not be playable under social distancing guidelines. While this is a frustration for all of us, it is also an opportunity for trying new things and for creativity to triumph.
 - i. [Here are some creative ideas to get you started.](#)
- b. Sports at youth evangelization events are permitted if the following guidelines are observed:
 - i. Extra caution should be taken during sports as the risk of physical contact is heightened. Bodily fluids such as phlegm, spit, saliva, etc... are more likely to contaminate surfaces during physical activity as well as while yelling.
 - ii. No touch rule is in effect.
 - iii. No spitting at any time.
 - iv. Equipment and items related to any activity must be sanitized before, during, and after every event.
 - v. No one can share water bottles or other beverages during an event.
 - vi. No team water coolers or shared drinking stations are allowed.
 1. Water or drinks should be brought by the youth or distributed by a staff member or volunteer following social distancing.
 2. Teens bringing their own is preferred for less confusion of whether a certain water bottle is theirs or someone else's.
 3. Writing names on distributed common things, like bottled water, is advised.
 - vii. Rules of the new sports should be explained clearly and thoroughly to youth as these types of sports will likely be different from what they're normally used to.

6. Overnight Accommodations

- a. The Ohio Department of Health allows for youth camps to host youth overnight. As such, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, following the guidance

of the State, also permits overnight youth events. The option remains open for a parish, school, or organization until further notice under the following guidelines, at their prudential discretion:

- b. [Director's Order that Reopens Youth Day Camps and Residential Camps, with Exceptions](#), p. 9:
 - i. All VIRTUS requirements must be followed.
 - ii. There should be no more than 10 individuals per sleeping area.
 - iii. Physical barriers may be needed to break up larger areas (see page 11 of the [Director's Order that Reopens Youth Day Camps and Residential Camps, with Exceptions](#) for more details on barriers).
 - iv. 6 feet is recommended between beds.
 - v. If possible, the overnight guest should provide all bedding, clothing, personal hygiene items, etc...
 - vi. Sleep quarters should be sanitized once per day.
 - vii. Showers should be cleaned once per day at least and use of them should be staggered if needed for proper cleaning.
 - viii. It is recommended that staff or volunteers should not rotate among sleeping quarters, but be in charge of checking on one group of youth.
 - ix. Extra thought and consideration should be taken with youth during the night. Youth Evangelists, chaperones, volunteers, etc... should monitor sleeping areas to the best of their ability to make sure youth are not sneaking out to meet other youth at the event.

7. Other Guidelines

- a. Greetings
 - i. Individuals cannot hug, shake hands, high five, etc...
 1. Youth Evangelists should consider creating a culture of a new type of greeting for the time being.
 2. While not explicitly restricted by ODH orders, fist bumps and elbow touches also pose health risks. Fist bumps involve the touching of hands. Elbows are what individuals are encouraged to sneeze or cough in. Both fist bumps and elbow touches often violate 6 foot requirements. As such, both are strongly discouraged.
- b. Carpooling

- i. Youth coming are strongly encouraged to be dropped off by members of their household or to drive themselves (if they are able).
- ii. Caution is advised as youth arrive and leave. Such opportunities afford a wonderful space for conversation and catching up. This is encouraged, but not if social distancing requirements are being broken. Special caution is advised during such times.
- iii. For more drop off and pick up guidelines and ideas, view [Director's Order that Reopens Youth Day Camps PDF](#).
- iv. Recommendations for Field trips and events where youth are carpooled from one location to another
 - 1. Recommendation is that parents transporting their own children in the front, and if the back seat is empty, transporting one non-family child in the back seat. If a third seat exists, one non-family child could be in the third seat.
 - 2. Masks should be worn by all persons, regardless of vaccination, when carpooling.
 - a. [Director's Order for Facial Coverings throughout the State of Ohio- May 17, 2021 \(June 2, 2021- UPDATED FACIAL COVERINGS MANDATE\)](#)
 - b. [Bus Operators and Transit Authorities COVID-19 Guidance](#)
- v. Clear Communication & Registration
 - 1. Parents and youth must be clearly notified well in advance (preferably a week or more in advance) of all the parish, school, or organization's new policies and procedures to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
 - 2. This also serves as a great opportunity to prepare youth for the changes. Youth will handle changed events significantly better if they know what to expect versus if they are unaware until arrival.
- vi. Registration for an event is strongly encouraged, but not required, especially if the expected attendance of an event is not known.

8. What if a youth, family, or parish member contracts Covid-19 and was present at an event?

- a. [Report Confirmed and Probable Cases of COVID-19 within 24 hours](#) (10-20-2020) “*Second Amended Reporting Requirements for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Under Ohio Revised Code 3701.14 and 3701.23*”
- b. We will follow the guidelines and requirements set up by the [Director’s Order that Reopens Youth Day Camps and Residential Camps, with Exceptions](#), pps. 7 & 11.
 - i. Youth Evangelists must immediately notify their local health department or the Ohio Department of Health (1-833-427-5634) if a child or employee tests positive for COVID-19.
 1. <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/find-local-health-districts>
 - ii. Immediately isolate and seek medical care for any individual who develops symptoms while at the facility.
 - iii. Shutdown area for deep sanitation, if possible.
 - iv. Notify all attendees that someone has tested positive for Covid-19. The name of the sick attendee CANNOT be mentioned.
 1. For an example of a letter of notification, see “School” “Letter Templates” on [Ohio Education and Sector Requirements webpage](#)
 - v. Notifications should be sent out to anyone who attended an event with the sick individual up to two weeks before the individual tested positive for Covid-19.
 1. For this reason, Youth Evangelists are to maintain a thorough list of all those present, youth and volunteers, and their contact information, in case it will be needed later.

Concerning Questions:

Please contact Shane Legg for questions,

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