

REOPENING GUIDANCE

Funerals

Gatherings of over 250 are prohibited by the state during the Green Phase. **The Philadelphia Department of Public Health recommends that that indoor gatherings be limited to 25 people and outdoor gatherings be limited to 150 people.**

The following is intended as a plain language summary of rules for reopening in the Green Phase and does not replace the need to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

See also:

[PA guidance for funeral directors.](#)

Protections Needed

Masks

- Provide masks for employees and require them to mask when on site except only:
 - As necessary for the employee to eat or drink during break times. The employee should be seated at least 6 feet from others when taking off mask.
 - When seated alone in a private office or in a cubicle whose sides extend above the head of the employee.
- Require attendees to mask while on-site.

Isolate

- Screen every employee for symptoms before every shift and prevent them from remaining on site if they have cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, muscle pain, or new loss of taste or smell.
- It is not necessary to conduct on-site temperature measurement for staff or attendees. If you measure temperatures, use a no-touch thermometer, and do not allow anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or higher to remain on-site.
- Have sick leave policies in place so that employees excluded from the workplace do not lose earnings.
- If an employee develops COVID-19 infection or has a positive test, businesses and other organizations must take additional precautions to stop the virus from spreading further, as described in [Guidance for Essential Businesses and Organizations During COVID-19](#). Required precautions include calling PDPH at 215-685-5488 to report positive cases.

Distance

- Officiant should stand at least 10 feet from attendees during service; rope off seats as necessary to achieve this.

- Maintain at least 6 feet of distance between attendees: rope off rows and use signage to encourage distancing.
- Encourage attendees to express support and greet each other from at least 6 feet apart rather than by hugging or shaking hands.
- Do not allow attendees to touch the decedent.
- Consider outdoor (graveside) services.
- If services are held indoors, consider use of larger spaces than usual to allow space for physical distancing.
- Food service is discouraged at this time, but if food is served, avoid buffet lines, use prepackaged options and disposable dishes/utensils.
- Suspend limousine and valet parking services by funeral home employees.

Reduce crowds

- Limit attendees to 25 or fewer inside and 150 or fewer outside.
- Offer virtual option to those for whom attendance would be riskier and to maintain small group in attendance.
- If condolence calls or home services (e.g., shiva) are conducted, limit attendance to 10 people and maintain masking and at least 6 feet of distance between attendees.

Handwashing

- Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizer at entry and outside communal bathrooms for all staff and attendees with prominent signage promoting use.
- Give staff hourly handwashing breaks.

Clean

- Wipe down high-touch surfaces with disinfectant at least once every 4 hours. See [CDC guidance](#) for details.

Ventilation

- If possible, increase ventilation in the building by either:
 - Opening windows and/or doors on opposite sides of the building and using fans to blow outside air through the building OR
 - Optimizing ventilation provided by the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system by:
 - Having the HVAC system checked to assure that it is working properly. If it can be adjusted, the system should be set to provide at least 6 air exchanges per hour.
 - Maximizing the amount of outside air circulated by the system.
 - Installing filters with minimum efficiency reporting values (MERV) of 13, or the highest compatible with the filter rack. It is not necessary to use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters or ultraviolet light irradiation systems.
 - Checking that the external air inlet duct is not blocked and that it is at least 15 feet from people.

Communicate

- Educate employees about symptoms and prevention of COVID-19.
- Post prominent signs at entrances and in employee break rooms (if applicable):
 - Asking people who are sick or who have had contact with someone with COVID-19 within the past 14 days not to enter.
 - Encouraging people to cover coughs or sneezes.
 - Mandating physical distancing of at least 6 feet.
 - Mandating that all staff and visitors wear masks.