

# Safe and Sound for 2022-2023

Last year, as parish communities, you were phenomenal in preventing COVID-19 exposure and keeping our young people and families safe. We are so grateful for the hard work you have done to continue to form our youth in the faith.

Because there has been so much progress in education on reducing risks, understanding of symptoms, vaccinations, and treatment of those with COVID-19, the CDC, NY State, and NYC Departments of Education have streamlined their guidelines. In light of this, we provide the following guidelines and recommendations for the 2022-23 year.

## Vaccinations

- The City of New York requires staff and volunteers to either be vaccinated or submit to weekly COVID testing.
- Outside of the City, it is encouraged that all volunteers be vaccinated and boosted but is not required.
- There is no requirement of children or youth to be vaccinated, however it is encouraged.

## Communicate with Parents

- Communicate with parents/guardians prior to the start parish religious education and youth ministry your parish's guidelines on COVID including mask wearing after exposure.
- Share with parents/guardians information on what to do if their child has been exposed to COVID. (see links on next page)

## Room and Facility Set-up

- Set-up spaces that allow room between young people.
- Windows and doors should be opened to provide maximum ventilation.
- It is recommended that a "Guardian Angel" room or space is setup in the event of an ill child (COVID or otherwise).
- Hand sanitizer should be available throughout the building.
- Restrooms have signs that promote effective hand washing and coughing/sneezing etiquette.
- Masks are available for young people and staff/volunteers who desire them.

## If an Exposure Occurs

- Contact parents/guardians and volunteers of those who were within six feet of the individual for at least a total of 15 minutes.
- Young people and volunteers do not have to quarantine but will need to wear a mask for at least 10 days after exposure. (see links on next page)
- Clean and disinfect the area in which the exposure occurred (see CDC guidelines when to clean and when to disinfect).

## NO LONGER REQUIRED

- Temperature checks
- Escorting young people to class (parents may now bring young people into the building)
- COVID hall and bathroom monitors
- Quarantining after exposure
- Six-foot social distancing
- Forward facing classes only
- Contacting the Archdiocese after an exposure

## If Positive for COVID-19\*

- Young people and adults who test positive for COVID-19 must stay home from parish faith formation for five days.
- Youth people and adults can return to parish faith formation on Day 6 if they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved, and must wear a mask for 10 days after their symptoms began or positive test date (whichever is earlier).

## Mask Wearing\*

- Young people and adults, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a mask when returning after testing positive for COVID-19 through Day 10 after their symptoms began or positive test date (whichever is earlier).
- Young people and adults, regardless of vaccination status, should strongly consider wearing a mask after being exposed to someone who has COVID-19 for 10 days.
- Those who are moderately to severely immunocompromised and recommended by their health care provider are also encouraged to wear a mask.
- Mask wearing is encouraged in crowded indoor settings.
- Anyone may choose to wear a mask all the time or when it makes them feel comfortable.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

- IF there has been no confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in a space, routine daily cleaning will suffice.
- IF a sick person or someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 has been in the space within the past 24 hours, space should be cleaned AND disinfected. (see links below).

## Accommodation for Vulnerable Young People and Families

- Your parish may have young people or family members of young people who are at high risk of getting very sick with COVID-19. These young people may need additional accommodations to protect them, including but not limited to mask wearing or family-based learning. Work closely with the family to ensure their young person can participate in formation and in the life of the parish as best as possible.

## Educate Yourself

- As we experienced over the past two years, our understanding of COVID-19 has changed, our communities have learned and responded, and guidelines are adjusted. Refer frequently to the CDC COVID-19 website for updates on the virus, vaccination efforts, and methods to reduce transmission.

## Links

- **If you are exposed to COVID-19:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/if-you-were-exposed.html>
- **If you are sick with COVID-19:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
- **When to Clean and When to Disinfect:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

\*From the NYS and NYC DOE guidelines for 2022-2023.