



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK YOUTH FAITH FORMATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Pastors, Directors/Coordinators of Religious Education, Youth Ministry Coordinators
From: Ela Milewska, Executive Director, Youth Faith Formation
Frank Napolitano, Director, Risk Management
Date: January 18, 2021
RE: Options for On-site Formation in a Yellow Zone

There have been several inquiries regarding options for returning to onsite formation for parishes in yellow zones. The current policy is that if a parish is in a state designated yellow zone COVID micro-cluster, all in-person religious education and youth ministry should go completely remote.

After discussion with the Office of Risk Management, we have determined that if a parish would like to return to in-person formation they must comply with the following:

- Option One: Parish follows the guideline [set by the state for schools](#), which includes testing 20% of students and adult catechists and leaders weekly. This would be done at the parish's expense.
- Option Two: Parish follows the [guidelines set by the state](#), however instead the testing the students, parents provide proof of results for school COVID tests. At minimum 20% of students must test negative. This must be done weekly. Testing of 20% of adult leaders and catechists would need to occur weekly at the expense of the parish.

According to the state guidelines if, after two weeks of testing, your parish's testing reveal that the positivity rate among the 20% of those tested is lower than the yellow zone's current 7-day positivity rate, testing will no longer be required to continue. [Here is the link for the positivity rates from the state.](#)

We know that these requirements seem onerous but goal is to provide options for parishes to return to in-person ministry in a manner that keeps young people and their families in this time of increased infection rates.

If you need assistance arranging for access to testing, please contact Lidia Virgil at SOMOS Community Care (lvirgil@somoscommunitycare.org).

These options do not impact parishes in orange and red zones. No in-person religious education or youth ministry can occur in these zones.

Deciding on On-site Formation in a Yellow Zone

