



# Safe and Sound 2021-22:

Guidelines and Procedures for Holding On-Site  
Parish Religious Education  
and Youth Ministry Programs



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK  
YOUTH FAITH FORMATION

August 2021

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Dear Pastor:

First of all, I thank you and your faith formation teams for the amazing work you have done to reach out to and engage families and young people in growing in their faith. We have learned so much, for example, the enjoyment many parents took in learning about their faith as they taught their children. May these lessons carry us into the future.

As we moved into the summer, the hope was that impact of COVID-19 on gatherings was lessening. We all recognize the critical importance of gathering as a "people of God." We are Catholic--we are communal. However, with the surge of infections from the Delta variant, we also recognize that continued efforts must be implemented to ensure the physical well-being of young people, catechists, youth ministry leaders, and families as we plan for parish religious education and youth ministry.

In light of this, we again advise parishes to devise two to three plans dependent on the status of the virus in our area:

- The first plan should be for an on-site approach that follows closely the social distancing regulations and other precautions outlined in this document. Because of space limitations and ventilation requirements, this approach may still not be feasible for some parishes.
- The second plan can be made for a blended on-site/remote approach. This may include breaking participants/families in small groups for the on-site component to ensure social distancing practices can be followed.
- A final plan should be devised for a completely remote program. For this plan, the parish director/coordinator of religious education and youth ministry coordinator will need to make creative use of the variety of digital platforms and the resources provided our department, publishers, and ministry organizations.

Although not what we are used to, remote and hybrid programs can be an effective way to help families grow together in their faith while still under the guidance of the parish.

As you develop your on-site youth ministry and/or religious education plans, the *2021-22 Safe and Sound: Guidelines and Procedures for Holding On-site Parish Religious Education and Youth Ministry Programs* is your guide to creating a healthier environment. This document outlines the required procedures for the parish communities that desire to hold on-site religious education and youth ministry gatherings. It includes updated guidance on seating, social distancing, and mask wearing. It is adapted from the guidelines presented by Office of the Superintendent of Schools on August 16, 2021 which reflect state and federal guidelines and best practices. They have also been approved by the Office of Risk Management and the Vicar General. **If your parish plans to host on-site religious education and/or youth ministry, you must read the protocols carefully and—working collaboratively with your parish team—develop a comprehensive plan to safeguard the safety of your young people, their families, and the greater community as young people are formed in their faith.**

**As per archdiocesan legal counsel, a parish cannot offer on-site religious education or youth ministry unless it can fulfill all the responsibilities outlined in this document.**

As you work on your opening plans for this fall for youth ministry and religious education, we recommend you sit with your team to review lessons learned from the past year. Capitalize in light of all the additional planning needed to adapt to religious education and youth ministry for this school year. If possible, we highly recommend, as we did last year, to delay starting your programs until the beginning of October. This will give young people and their families a little extra time to adjust to the changes in their schools.

Our parish religious education and youth ministry programs offer more than formation in the faith. They are often safe harbors where they can anchor their hearts during this storm. The people who minister to our young people are living reminders of Christ's love and compassion and His hope for their future. May we continue to embrace our sacred call to walk in faith with our young people and their families.

In Christ,

*Ela Milewska*

Executive Director, Youth Faith Formation

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# Summary of Guidelines and Procedures for 2021-22

The following is a brief summary of the on-site parish religious education and youth ministry guidelines. The guidelines are very similar to the protocols for 2020-2021. This summary is an overview of the guidelines and protocols and is not a replacement for reading the entire document, *Safe and Sound: Guidelines and Procedures for Holding On-site Parish Religious Education and Youth Ministry Programs*.

**Per legal counsel of the archdiocese, the parish cannot offer on-site religious education or youth ministry unless it can fulfilled all the responsibilities outlined in the full document.**

**Any parish that seeks to offer on-site religious education and/or youth ministry sessions must complete and submit the attached plan to their regional catechetical or youth ministry director prior to beginning programs.**

## Preliminary

- Because of the significant extra steps to ensure social distancing and screening, programs will need additional volunteers to assist with procedures such as hall and bathroom monitoring, arrival screening, and dismissal.
- Parish should purchase additional protective equipment such as touch-less thermometers, masks, gloves, and extra hand sanitizer stations.



## Regular Cleaning and Disinfection

- All rooms/areas and furniture to be used for parish programs are to be cleaned and disinfected according to [NYS Department of Health guidelines](#) prior to and after religious education and/or youth ministry gatherings by trained custodial staff.
- If parish uses a functioning school, it must follow the cleaning guidelines outlined by the school.

## Entrances and Signage

- There is one clearly designated entrance into the facility.
- Clear signage is placed throughout to promote social distancing, reminders of mask requirements, and entrance requirements.

## Room and Facility Setup

- Rooms are setup with chairs/desks that ensure at minimum *three-foot social distancing* in all directions for students in low/moderate transmission areas. In regions/counties of high risk, three-foot distance can be maintained for elementary age, but six-foot distance is required for middle and high school students.
- Student seating must face in one direction.
- Catechists, youth ministry leaders can face the young people but must maintain a six-foot distance.
- Windows and doors are opened to provide maximum ventilation.
- A "Guardian Angel" room or space is setup in the event of an ill child.
- Hand sanitizer stands are available throughout the building.
- Water fountains and air hand dryers are off.
- Items and supplies may not be shared between students or between young people and adult leaders.

# Summary of Guidelines and Procedures (con't)

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## Communicating with Parents/Guardians

A letter or email is sent to parents/guardians that outlines the steps the parish is taking to safeguard the health and safety of their young people and parish volunteers and the requirements of parents to monitor their young person's health and possible COVID-19 exposure.

## Arrival and Dismissal

- All young people and adults will be screened for fever and exposure to COVID-19 prior to entrance.
- Anyone who exhibits symptoms or may have been exposed to COVID-19 may not enter the facilities.
- Parent/guardian cannot leave until his/her young person clears screening.
- **Masks are to be worn at all times by all young people and adults, even if they are vaccinated.**
- Parish will provide additional masks.
- Young people will be escorted to rooms.
- No unapproved visitors are allowed.
- Hall and bathroom monitors are available to enforce social distancing.
- Young people and/or adults cannot congregate in groups prior to, during, or after programs

## If an Individual Becomes Ill

- All volunteers will be trained to identify symptoms of COVID-19.
- If a young person or adult becomes ill, parish will follow procedures to identify, separate, and send that person home in a safe manner.
- Parish will deep clean and disinfect spaces the ill person occupied.
- Parish will follow procedures to inform appropriate archdiocesan and civil authorities.

## Notes for Our Parish

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# Full Guidelines and Procedures for Holding On-site Parish Religious Education and Youth Ministry Programs 2021-22

Providing opportunities for our young people and their families to encounter Christ and grow in their Catholic faith is one of the fundamental duties of our parishes. As your community explores the most effective—and safe—way to do this during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Youth Faith Formation is sharing these critical guidelines and responsibilities required by the parish if it chooses to offer on-site religious education and/or youth ministry. Please know that it is possible to offer effective, engaging, and relational ministry that forms young people in their faith through remote and hybrid methods. The Department of Youth Faith Formation is very happy to help you with these.

In light of all the additional planning needed to adapt to religious education and youth ministry for this school year, it is recommended that a reopening team for religious education and youth ministry be developed. This team, made of relevant parish staff and/or volunteers, would work collaboratively with the pastor to visualize how to make these protocols work within the parish community and develop a comprehensive implementation plan. This team would also be able to help in determining the number of young people per room, whether there will be a need to increase the days/times programs are offered, costs of additional cleaning and sanitization, etc.

As more is discovered regarding COVID-19, these protocols may be revised by the archdiocese.

The staff of the [Office of Risk Management](#) is available to work with parishes to assist in the development of their plans.

## Preliminary Considerations

The following requirements are a careful reflection of guidelines of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, NY State Department of Health, and the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of New York.

It is imperative for a parish choosing to open an on-site religious education or youth ministry program to follow all federal, state, municipal, and archdiocesan guidelines.

**As per archdiocesan legal counsel, a parish cannot offer on-site religious education or youth ministry unless it can fulfilled all the responsibilities in this document.**

**Parishes that wish to offer on-site religious education and/or youth ministry must complete and submit the attached plan prior to the start of the program(s).**

The best protection against potential liability is not a signed waiver or release but rather the fulfillment of the guidelines.

## Making and Submitting the Parish Plan

- **The final decision to hold on-site religious education and/or youth ministry is to be made by the pastor.**
- **The pastor is responsible for approving subsequent plans for implementation of the guidelines and protocols.**
- **Signed plans are to be submitted to the parish's regional director of catechesis or youth ministry prior to the start of programs.**
- **The parish plan must be readily available for anyone—parents, staff, volunteers, public health officials, etc.—to have access to at any time.**
- **Please note: The NY State officials can come out and ask to see the plan, so it is important that it be prepared and available.**

# Regular Cleaning and Disinfection

The parish must ensure that all rooms/areas to be used for sessions, and all furniture such as tables, chairs, and desks, are cleaned and disinfected before and after religious education and youth ministry gatherings. This should be done by individuals trained in how to properly disinfect according to [NYS Department of Health guidelines](#). Therefore it is not appropriate for the director of religious education, youth ministry coordinator, or volunteers to engage in this process.

If using a functioning school for religious education or youth ministry:

- Parish must follow the cleaning guidelines as outlined by the school for the use of the building.

For parish facilities:

- Custodial staff and director/coordinator of religious education and/or youth ministry coordinator need to develop a communication protocol to ensure that the facilities have been cleaned prior to and after use.
- Bathrooms must be cleaned and sanitized prior to and after gatherings.
- Cleaning and sanitization of frequently touched surfaces occur prior to and after gatherings. These surfaces can include but are not limited to:
  - Tables and chairs
  - Door handles and push plates
  - Handrails
  - Bathroom faucets
  - Light switches
  - Handles on equipment (e.g., carts)
  - Remote controls
  - Shared electronics and phones
- Windows should be opened as frequently as possible, weather permitting, even when the space is occupied, to allow for maximum ventilation.
- Custodial and maintenance staff must ensure that filters are regularly cleaned and replaced.
- Staff must ensure proper ventilation during cleaning and disinfecting.
- Cleaning materials must be kept out of reach of children.



## Notes for Our Parish

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# Facility Requirements, Room Setup, and Guidelines

## Entrances and Signage

- There should be one entrance only into the building, and exits should be designated if possible. Pastors may designate an additional entrance, if deemed necessary.
- Signage to indicate requirements for entrance must be posted outside of entrances. These signs should include notice of temperature checks, mask requirements, social distancing, and visitor policies. Signs can be ordered from Institutional Commodities Service Corp.
- Hall monitors and/or signage for directions in which to travel in hallways and stairways for consistent flow, social distancing, and proper distancing for lining-up and movement of young people is required.
- In preparing the entrance for admitting volunteers, young people, and parents/guardians, social distancing markers outside the building should be set up along the sidewalk, fence, play yard, and parking lot adjacent to the front doors.
- Director of religious education and youth ministry coordinator should identify the best available space for volunteers, young people, and parents/guardians to safely line up for screening and admittance.
- If possible, signs should indicate six-foot distances and should have directional arrows pointing toward the screening area.
- Bathrooms should have signs with directions on how to properly wash hands.



## Room Setup

- Rooms are setup with chairs/desks that ensure at minimum *three-foot social distancing* in all directions for students in low/moderate transmission areas. In regions/counties of high risk, three-foot distance can be maintained for elementary age, but six-foot distance is required for middle and high school students.
- All young people are to be facing one direction and are not to be grouped in configurations that would require facing one another (see sample layouts).
- Catechists, youth ministry leaders can face the young people but must maintain a six-foot distance..
- Shared spaces such as church halls, gyms, etc., may be appropriated for additional meeting spaces as per social distancing norms and expectations as long as adult/young people ratios are in place.
- *High school youth ministry only:* for *short* periods of small group sharing, see the sample acceptable layouts that can be used as long as masks are worn and social distancing is maintained.
- Windows should be opened as frequently as possible, weather permitting, even when the space is occupied, to allow for maximum ventilation. Open doors at the same time to provide maximized cross-ventilation.

## Larger Gatherings

- Gathered day retreats or events that cannot accommodate the six-foot social distancing guidelines are not to be held.
- For any interior gatherings—including parent/guardian meetings—that necessitate more than 12-15 people and less than 100 in a room, consider using parish halls, sanctuary, or other large space with chairs setup according to the six-foot social distance guidelines. Gatherings of young people cannot exceed 100 total (including at minimum 11 adults) with six foot social distancing.
- Overnight retreats or events (grades 9-12) are not to be held.

# Facility Requirements, Room Setup, and Guidelines (cont.)

## Other Procedures

- All water fountains should be turned off.
- Hand (air) dryers are not to be utilized in restrooms.
- Bathrooms must be in good working order with soap, running water, and paper towels.
- Parishes will be expected to designate “Guardian Angel” space for when a young person is ill or showing symptoms of illness during the session.
- Hand sanitizer stations should be located at the entrance of the building as well as at the entrances and exits of each room and throughout the building as appropriate.
- Proper ventilation must be ensured with air flow from outdoor air—this includes having windows and doors open at the same time across all rooms to maximize cross-ventilation.
- Central HVAC units that are in use should be equipped with air filters with a targeted rating of at least MERV 13 and should be replaced regularly to ensure proper operation (see The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers [ASHRAE] guidelines). If using window air conditioning units or ductless units, staff members must ONLY use the fresh air settings; see the ASHRAE guidelines for additional details.
- In general, all trips, public events, and off-site activities are to be discouraged. However, certain low-risk activities—as determined by the NYS Department of Health—in which social distancing can be maintained may be offered with the express written permission of the pastor. These activities include:
  - Community walks/hikes
  - Contactless outdoor sports activities such as the following with equipment being sanitized before and after use:
    - Tennis and badminton
    - Batting cages
    - Toss/bowl games such as horseshoes, cornhole, bocce, etc.
    - Flying disc games
  - Group bike riding
  - Visiting shrines and other facilities that have outdoor spaces for gathering

## Notes for Our Parish

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# Communication with Parents/Guardians Prior to Religious Education and Youth Ministry

Prior to the opening of religious education and youth ministry, a letter must be sent by the pastor and the director/coordinator of religious education or coordinator of youth ministry to all parents/guardians specifying the policies and structures related to COVID-19 that the parish has established for the health and safety of young people and their families. This letter should be clear on the guidelines, but also seen as a positive invitation to continue the faith formation of their young person.

This letter should specifically include:

1. An assurance that the parish is committed to providing quality faith formation while at the same time working to protect the welfare of its young people and the volunteers.
2. A reminder that it is the parents/guardians to monitor the health of their young person for signs of infection and exposure. Young people stay home if:
  - a. They are exhibiting symptoms such as a temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.
  - b. They were within six feet of a person with COVID-19 for a prolonged period of time.
  - c. They are at higher risk medically to infection.
3. Clear communication of arrival, screening, and departure procedures including, but not limited to:
  - a. Traffic flow
  - b. Location of entrance, exits, and pick up procedures
  - c. Description of the screening process
  - d. **Requirement that all people, vaccinated or unvaccinated, must wear masks.**
  - e. *High school youth ministry only:* Young people should bring their own water bottle, snack, Bible, and/or other commonly used items
  - f. Requirement that parents/guardians should not leave until their young person has cleared the screening process or details on the process if young people arrive by bus/carpool or arrive on their own
  - g. **Requirement that screening forms are to be completed by a parent/guardian each time a young person attends religious education and/or youth ministry.** These forms must be kept secure with other legal documents. Forms can be emailed to parents/guardians. Parents/guardians can print, sign, and submit each week.
  - h. If young people arrive by bus, young children can submit a signed and dated card (see sample) from their parent with the answers to the screening questions. Only young people whose cards have all “no” answers can participate in on-site religious education that day.
  - i. Social distancing requirements
4. An assurance that those who cannot or are not comfortable participating in the on-site program will receive the resources, guidance, and support for formation done in the home.
5. A request for continued prayer for the parish and for those impacted by COVID-19 in all ways.

## Notes for Our Parish

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# Arrival and Dismissal Protocols and Procedures

**Staff, volunteers, and young people should stay home if they do not feel well.**

**Staff, volunteers, and young people should stay home if they were within six feet of a person with COVID-19 for more than fifteen minutes.**

**Parishes should strongly recommend that parents take their child's temperature before the child comes for religious education or youth ministry. If the temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, the young person should stay home and see a doctor. This will ensure that young people who likely would be excluded upon arrival will self-monitor and remain home.**

## Arrivals

- Because of the significant extra steps to ensure social distancing and screening, programs will need additional volunteers to assist with procedures such as hall and bathroom monitoring, arrival screening, and dismissal.
- **Masks are to be worn at all times by all young people and adults, even if they are vaccinated.**
- An appropriate number of volunteers should be recruited to assist in taking temperatures at the designated entrances. Volunteers must be provided with masks, gloves, and touchless thermometers.
- Parent/guardian must not leave the premises until their young person passes screenings. Parishes that have bus drop-off may need to develop protocols for screening without a parent and make use of the Guardian Angel room until a parent/guardian can pick up a young person if he/she does not pass screening.
- Temperature and screenings are to be taken as each adult and young person enters the building while maintaining social distancing between people waiting to be screened.
- Screening questionnaire should be asked of volunteers and parents/guardians should complete questionnaire for their young person.
- Screening questionnaire must include questions that determine if the individual has:
  - (a) knowingly been in close or proximate contact in the past 10 days with anyone who has tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 or who has or had symptoms of COVID-19;
  - (b) tested positive through a diagnostic test for COVID-19 in the past 10 days;
  - (c) has experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a temperature of greater than 100.0°F, in the past 10 days; and/or
  - (d) has traveled internationally per the [New York State Travel Advisory](#) in the past 10 days.
- Persons who have fevers of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above, answer yes to any of the screening questions, or are exhibiting signs of illness cannot be admitted. They are to be sent home with instructions to contact their health care provider for assessment and testing.
- Only a notation of pass/fail should be made by the person's name. No notation of temperature or of the answers to the questions should be made. This log should be kept in a secure file with other important records.
- Recommend to adults who are elderly or frail, or have underlying health conditions or who feel in any way sick not enter the area.
- Boxes of masks must be available at the entrance for those who arrive without a mask. People refusing to wear a mask cannot be admitted.
- After the screening, everyone should disinfect their hands with hand sanitizer.
- Adult volunteers should escort young people to their assigned room or gathering space after clearing screening, ensuring the keeping of social distancing.
- A volunteer should be in the room to ensure that young people are seated promptly in designated spaces.
- No unapproved visitors are allowed during religious education or youth ministry gatherings with the exception of emergency personnel.



# Arrival and Dismissal Protocols and Procedures (cont.)

## Dismissal

- Exiting young people should maintain the six-foot social distancing.
- Consider dismissing by individual rooms and identifying specific pickup areas to ensure social distancing.

## Additional Considerations

- All young people and volunteers are to be reminded to cough/sneeze into a tissue or their elbows.
- Young people are to be instructed not to share pencils, paper, supplies, toys, phones, etc.
- Paper handouts should be kept to a minimum.
- Everyone must be reminded not to touch or remove face coverings, and if they are removed for any reason, not to place them on surfaces.
- Face coverings are most essential when physical distancing is not possible, and they are required at all times.
- *For youth ministry gatherings*, young people should bring their own water bottle, snack, Bible, or other commonly used item.
- Hand sanitizer will also be available when hand washing is not possible. It should not replace hand washing, which is the most effective protection against germs and the spread of disease.
- Instruct young people to wash their hands after using bathroom facilities.
- A bathroom monitor should be stationed outside of the restroom to allow one person in at a time and ensure young people leave with hands washed.
- A hall monitor should be in place to ensure social distancing procedures.
- Directors/coordinators of religious education and youth ministry coordinators will be responsible for sending reminders to stay home when sick or exhibiting symptoms that may lead to sickness as well as information about COVID-19.
- Director/coordinators of religious education, youth ministry coordinators, and volunteers shall reiterate the importance of “non-touch acknowledgments” to show friendship and to reiterate the importance of socialization and human connection.
- Young people and adults shall not be permitted to congregate in large groups before, during, or after gatherings.
- Windows should be opened as frequently as possible, weather permitting, even when the space is occupied, to allow for maximum ventilation.



## Notes for Our Parish

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# If a Young Person, Volunteer, or Staff Member Becomes Ill During a Gathering

- Volunteers working with young people must be trained to identify the potential symptoms of an illness. These are:
  - Fever of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
  - Cough
  - Chills
  - Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
  - Loss of taste or smell
  - Congestion/runny nose
  - Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
  - Muscle/body aches
  - Fatigue
  - Sore throat
  - Headache
- Anyone exhibiting the symptoms above must be sent home according to the protocol established below and according to the best judgment and discretion of the designated individual in charge of monitoring symptoms.
- To ensure safety and best practices, a “Guardian Angel” space must be designated where a young person can go until he/she can be picked up and taken home. This space when in use, must have adequate ventilation and be in a place that does not have much foot traffic. An adult, wearing a mask and gloves, must be present nearby, but more than six feet away to ensure the child’s safety and health. If the space is a separate room, the adult is to be outside of the room with the door open.
- Young people must be immediately moved to the Guardian Angel space where they must wear a face covering until they are picked up, as soon as possible, by an authorized person. The parent or guardian must be notified, and safe pick up must be arranged.
- Adults who are exhibiting symptoms will be discreetly asked to leave the building immediately and to report their symptoms to a medical professional.
- The director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator and maintenance personnel will be required to close off and restrict the areas accessed by any sick individual or any individual exhibiting symptoms.
- The Guardian Angel space, or any room or area occupied by sick or symptomatic individuals, must not be reopened or utilized until cleaning and disinfection have taken place in an acceptable and prescribed manner following the CDC guidelines.
- Parish staff are to wait twenty-four (24) hours before custodians clean and disinfect the Guardian Angel space. Staff members tasked with cleaning the affected areas must wear appropriate personal protective equipment and arrange for optimal ventilation conditions during the cleaning process.
- The director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator is to advise sick young people and adults not to return to school until they have met the CDC criteria to discontinue home isolation for COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 related illnesses, which include three days with no fever, an illustration that symptoms have improved, and ten (10) days elapsed since the symptoms first appeared.
- The director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator should monitor volunteer absenteeism as well as present symptoms or types of illness among young people and adults to guide decision-making and next steps. All quarantine orders issued by the federal, state, and local government directives must be followed by the parish, staff, volunteers, and families.

## Notes for Our Parish

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# When a Case of COVID-19 Occurs

1. Director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator is to determine who was within six feet of the infected person for more than 15 minutes. If the infected person is an instructor or a student in a classroom, at least the entire class has been presumably exposed to the infected person.
2. Director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator is to also determine when the last exposure was during religious education or youth ministry program.
3. Director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator is to notify the pastor and who will then notify, in writing, the Archdiocesan Office of Risk Management and the executive director of the Department of Youth Faith Formation, who will assist in creating the appropriate public health notifications for the local government agency and provide guidance on next steps.
4. The pastor and director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator will then be provided with the approved e-mail communication from the Office of Risk Management to distribute to faith formation communities from the parish. No identifying information is to be used in any communications regarding the individual who may be symptomatic.
5. The pastor and director/coordinator of religious education or youth ministry coordinator must then distribute this notification to the volunteers and families once approved by the Office of Risk Management.
6. The pastor will follow all health department and Office of Risk Management directives on facility closures.
7. If the exposure was less than 24 hours ago, vacate the area, wait 24 hours and then have the area cleaned and disinfected. During this waiting period, windows may be opened to increase air circulation in the affected area, if feasible. After 24 hours, the affected area will be cleaned and sanitized. The space may be occupied 12 hours after the cleaning has been completed.
8. The pastor will coordinate with the appropriate vendor for disinfection procedures and timelines according to CDC guidance.
9. Individuals who are COVID-19 positive may only return after providing a note of medical clearance and two negative COVID-19 test results after they are without fever for three days. **At no time should the identity of the individual who is COVID-19 positive be revealed.**
10. **Parishes must take extreme measures to protect the identity of the individual and not foster gossip or water cooler talk. This is a critical violation of a person's civil rights, and appropriate action for the failure to protect the individual's identity will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.**

NOTE: The scope of the exposure will dictate the extent of the response. If the exposure is isolated a limited response may be needed. However, if the exposure is greater, a full shutdown of the program for 10 days may be warranted. The Archdiocesan Office of Risk Management can advise you on your response.

The executive director of the Department of Youth Faith Formation will engage the director of the Office of Youth Ministry and the director of the Catechetical Office in this process and will keep them updated on situations as they arise.

# Terms

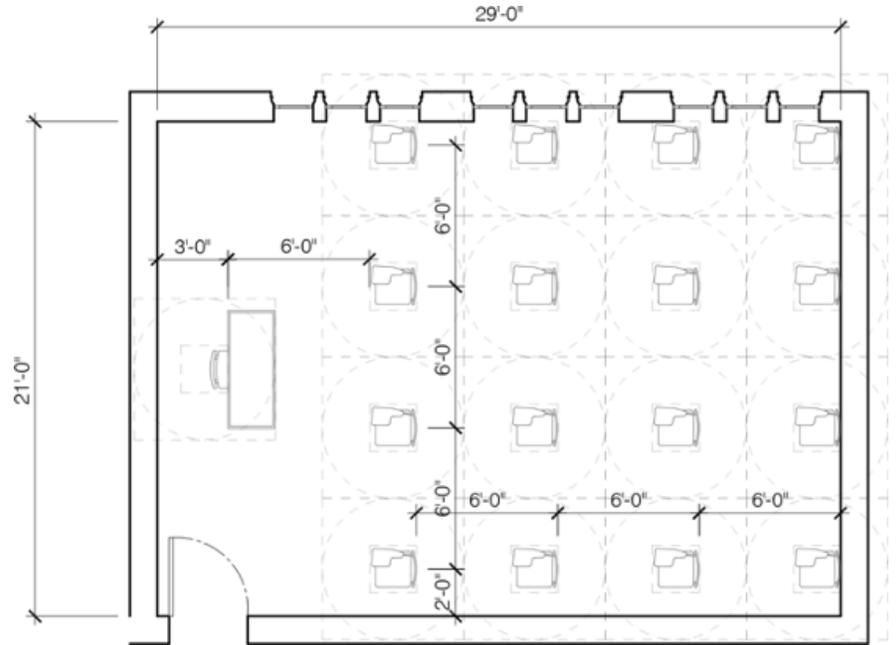
CDC	Center for Disease Control and Prevention
NYS DOH	New York State Department of Health
HIPPA	Health Insurance Portability and Privacy Act – this act also includes significant rules governing the privacy of medical information of individuals
HVAC	Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning
Staff	Person employed by the parish
Volunteer	Non-paid adult engaged in the faith formation as a catechist, assistant, youth ministry team member, or other role
PPE	Personal protective equipment such as masks, gloves, etc.

## Notes for Our Parish

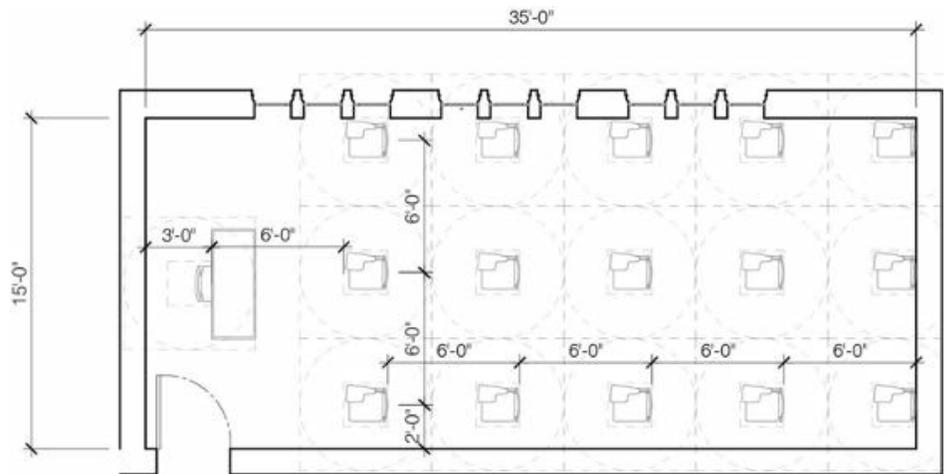
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# Sample Layouts

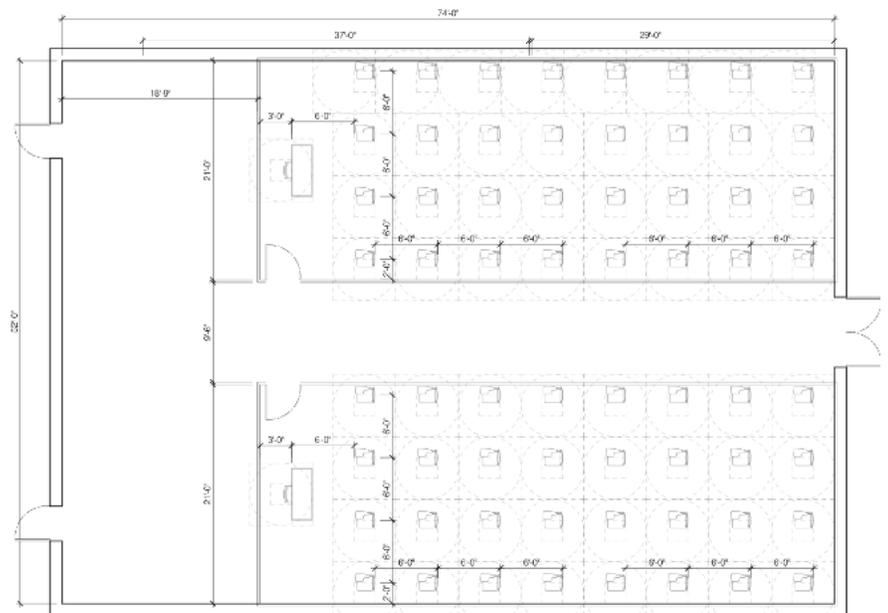
Regular Room



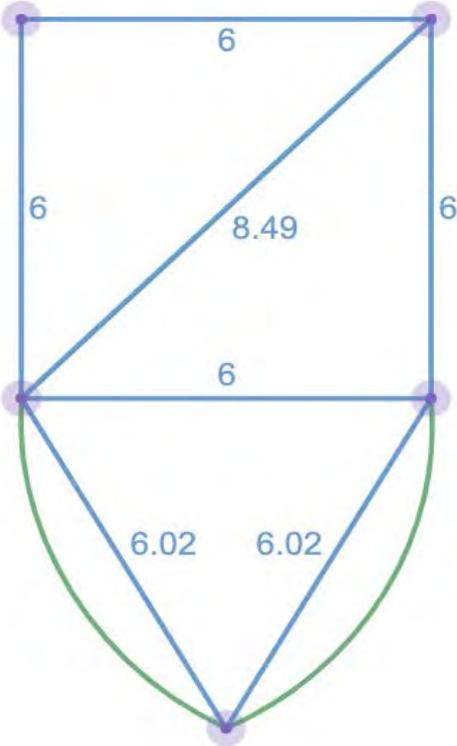
Small Room



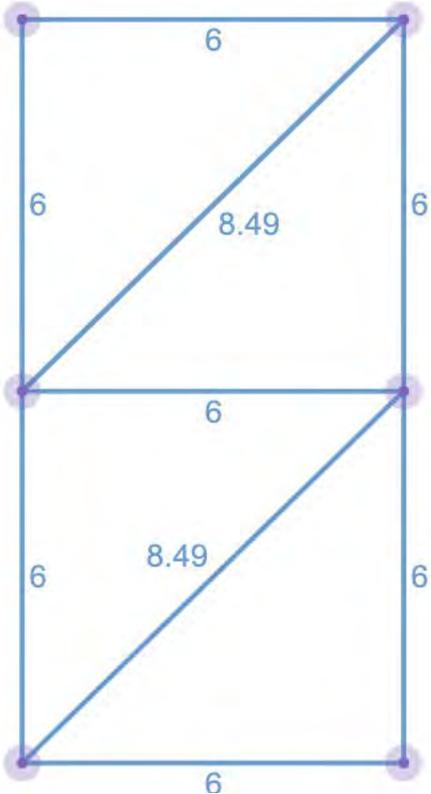
Church Hall or Gym



# Sample Small Group Layouts for High School Youth Ministry



Five Person U



Six Person Rectangle

# Parish On-site Religious Education and/or Youth Ministry Plan

Please complete the following and return to your regional director of catechesis or youth ministry prior to the start of the program. This form is also available as a PDF form that can be filled out and printed to be signed.

**Parish Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Deanery:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pastor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Coordinator/Director of Religious Education or Youth Ministry:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:**

**This Plan is For:**

- Religious Education
- Youth Ministry

**Facility or Facilities Used for Religious Education or Youth Ministry:**

## Cleaning and Disinfecting Plan

Name and position of person responsible for cleaning and disinfecting:

How will this person be trained?

How often will it be done?

Describe the process

How will communication be facilitated between director/coordinator and cleaning staff?

## **Organization of Facility**

Location of entrance(s):

Location of exit(s):

Where will signage be placed?

Rooms used for sessions:

Are they well-ventilated?

Types of furniture that will be used:

Number of hall and/or bathroom monitors:

How will you ensure six-foot social distancing?

Locations of hand-sanitizers:

Location of Guardian Angel room/space:

## **Communication with Parents/Guardians**

How will you communicate with the parents/guardians prior to your program?

## **Arrival**

How many screening volunteers will you need?

Location of the screening process occur:

How will the screening process occur?

If you have young people who arrive without a parent (e.g., on buses, carpools or alone), how will you help them through the screening process?

How and where will the screening log be kept?

## **In the Event of an Illness**

Procedure used if someone does not pass the screening:

Procedure used if someone gets ill during a session:

Methods used to ensure privacy:

## **Youth Ministry Only**

Will you be using small groups?

If so, how will you ensure six-foot social distancing?

## Dismissal

Describe your dismissal procedure, including how the children will be dismissed into the care of their parent or the person designated by the parent to pick them up:

## Larger Gatherings

Will you be having larger gatherings?

If so, where?

How will you ensure six-foot social distancing?

How will you do the screening process (temperature taking and required questions)?

## Additional Considerations

How will you remind young people and adults of healthy COVID-19 guidelines?

How will you educate your volunteers on COVID-19 symptoms and protocols?

- By signing and submitting this worksheet, I am stating that the parish can fulfill all the responsibilities outlined in Safe and Sound: Guidelines and Procedures for Holding On-site Parish Religious Education and Youth Ministry Programs.**
- I have read and understand the procedures and guidelines outlined in Safe and Sound: Guidelines and Procedures for Holding On-site Parish Religious Education and Youth Ministry Programs. As pastor I recognize that it is my responsibility to ensure all protocols are being followed to ensure the well-being of our young people and adults and that my staff and/or volunteers are trained to implement the protocols well.**

**Plan submitted by:**

**Pastor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_