

Diocese of Reno Updated Fall 2021 Protocols for Youth Gatherings

Please note that this is a constantly moving situation. We also note that we are not the experts and rely heavily on guidance from both the CDC, State, County and local authorities including the school districts in which our ministries operate.

Our guiding principal from the outset of the pandemic is love for thy neighbor (Mt 22:39). As we move into a new season of this pandemic, the Diocese of Reno is still operating from this scriptural mandate that reflects the dignity and care for each and every person.

Based on our guiding principle, the following directives are for the health and safety of all and to be followed at both on and off parish campus events, activities, and retreats for both youth and adults. We especially emphasize to check with your local school and counties policies and operate always from the most restrictive guidance. Therefore, if a school is closed or class is quarantined, the same should happened with your ministry or participants attending your programs, events, etc. that have been affected.

General Protocols (on and off campus)

1. Pastoral care with sensitivity must be our first and guiding principle.
2. As ministers of our parishes, it is expected that our behavior for others reflects the health and safety of those entrusted to our care. It is irresponsible to allow behavior that goes contrary to the guidance of the CDC, State and local government agencies.
3. Everyone aged 12 years and older is strongly recommended to be vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible to keep from getting and spreading COVID-19.

FULLY VACCINATED: is defined as 14 days after final dose, 2nd dose for Pfizer and Moderna, and after one dose for Janssen vaccine (Johnson & Johnson).

- a. Where everyone is *fully vaccinated*, it is safe to return to full capacity, without physical distancing in accordance with CDC's Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People; except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations.
- b. **Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all youth (age 2 and older), staff, catechists, volunteer leaders, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status. In many counties of Northern Nevada, masks are mandated due to substantial or high transmission**

of Covid 19, under Nevada Emergency Directive 045 regardless of vaccination status.

- c. Special care must be taken when masks are not mandated so that those who choose to wear face masks and/or remain socially distanced do not feel pressure to comply.

NOT VACCINATED: is defined as not having received both doses of Pfizer or Moderna, one dose of Janssen (Johnson & Johnson), not having completed the 14 day wait period or not being vaccinated regardless of the reason.

MIXED AUDIENCE: is defined as a gathering of those who are fully vaccinated and those who are not fully vaccinated, or not vaccinated regardless of reason.

- a. People who are *not fully vaccinated*, or *when gatherings include a mixed audience of fully vaccinated and not fully vaccinated* including children under the age of 12 years who are not yet eligible for vaccination, still need to use all the tools (face masks and social distancing) we have available to slow the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19.
- b. **Maintaining Proper Face Mask Use:** Consistent and correct mask use by all participants is especially important indoors and in crowded settings, when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
 - i. **Indoors.** Due to the circulating and highly contagious Delta variant, CDC recommends universal indoor masking by all youth (age 2 and older), staff, catechists, volunteer leaders, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status. In many counties of Northern Nevada, masks are mandated due to substantial or high transmission of Covid 19, under Nevada Emergency Directive 045 regardless of vaccination status.
 - ii. **Outdoors.** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. However, particularly in areas of substantial to high transmission, all participants regardless of vaccination status are encouraged to wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who may not be vaccinated.
 - iii. **Activities/Sports:** Participants who are not vaccinated should not participate in close-contact or indoor sports, and activities (including singing, chanting, shouting) unless they can wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet away from others. If these activities are integral to your ministry participants based on local community rates of transmission participants may undergo a COVID-19 test to participate. Please contact the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for more information.

4. Maintaining Physical Distance: The CDC recommends putting 6 feet of distance between those who do not live in the same household regardless of activity. **Physical distancing regardless of vaccination status** can improve adherence to distancing and protect health and safety. Physical distancing provides protection for participants by reducing risk of exposure and limiting the number of close contacts. Establish policies and implement strategies to promote physical distancing among participants both for indoor and outdoor gatherings, including maintaining:
 - a. At least 3 feet between all participants within a cohort/small group
 - b. At least 6 feet between all participants outside of their cohort/small group
 - c. At least 6 feet while eating and drinking without a mask indoors, including among people within the same cohort/small group
 - d. At least 6 feet between participants/staff/volunteers
5. Large group events, gatherings or meetings should be avoided. When not possible, participants should be assigned a cohort or small group. Cohorts should stay together through the day (daily for multiple day or overnight events) to minimize exposure to the other participants. **Participants in the same cohort should continue to wear masks at all times especially when social distancing may be difficult** with the exception of outdoor activities that could get masks wet (swimming, boating, beach, pool).
6. Prior to each gathering, (daily for multiple day or overnight events) all participants, youth and adults, must be checked-in with name recorded and screened for symptoms using the Diocese of Reno "Covid-19 Self-Monitoring Checklist" (**see addendum A**). This record must be retained with your event paperwork. In addition, each youth participant must have a completed "Covid-19 / Communicable Disease Acknowledgement & Waiver" on file (**see addendum B**).
 - a. Persons who are symptomatic: Any participant, volunteer or staff who has COVID-19 symptoms must self-isolate at home *regardless of vaccination status*. If a participant has, symptoms while at a local event this person must be removed and isolated until a parent/guardian or assigned individual picks them up. Participants with symptoms must stay isolated at home until at least 10 days since symptoms first appear, and 24 hours have passed with no fever, and without using fever reducing medication and other symptoms are improving. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/isolation.html>)
 - b. Persons exposed to COVID-19: If a *non-vaccinated participant* has been in close contact with a person with COVID-19, including anyone in his or her household, the participant must quarantine. Quarantined individuals may not return to participating in events for 14 days from the date of last contact with the person that has COVID-19 and must be 48-hour fever and symptom free, or have received a negative COVID-19 test after day 7 from the last contact and are symptom free. **Vaccinated participants may continue to participate with daily self-**

monitoring. The CDC also recommends that *vaccinated participants* are tested 3-5 days after the date of exposure and wear a mask in indoor settings for 14 days after exposure or until a negative test result.

- c. Create an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP): The emergency plan needs to include how you will remove and self-isolate the symptomatic participant from the group while maintaining supervision and have a plan for transporting a sick participant safely home or to a healthcare facility if symptoms are severe.
7. Parishes are accountable for the health, safety and well-being of participants. Commonly touched surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized frequently.
 8. Food and beverage may be served with the utmost care.
 - a. Pre-packaged snacks and meals should be served.
 - b. Disposable goods including utensils, plates, cups, etc. should only be used for food service.
 - c. When serving food, do not use a buffet method, food should be served from a centralized sanitized location or delivered to the seated individual.
 - d. Extra care should be followed ensuring the sanitizing of preparation, serving and eating areas.
 - e. The use of gloves is encouraged and meal/snack workers and participants should be instructed on proper hand washing or hand sanitizing protocols before touching or serving any food.
 - f. Participants who are *not fully vaccinated* should remain at least 6 feet apart when eating or drinking.
 9. Promote healthy hygiene practices. Intensify cleaning, disinfection and ventilation for all events. For all activities, meetings, events, leaders must supply soap/ hand sanitizer and enforce mandatory mask wearing and provide disposable masks for replacements and for those participants without masks.
 10. Take proper steps to minimize sharing of materials and other items. If items need to be shared (pens, sports equipment, craft supplies, etc.), sanitation between sharing is needed.
 11. It is important to remember that Diocesan Safe Environment (Virtus training and background checks) and Catholic Mutual policies remain in effect. All employees and volunteers must be compliant and follow regulations for gathered and virtual events.
 12. This is a fluid situation. Prior to each gathering, please check with the Center for Disease Control (CDC), State, Local, Diocesan and Parish for updated guidelines and procedures. Parishes may add additional directives based on the needs of their community. These are minimum standards and parishes can add more, but not less.

Additional Guidance for Transportation Off Campus and Overnights

Overnight activities and offsite trips (activities not on parish grounds) are allowed under compliance of the following actions:

13. **Parent notification:** Parents must be notified of all activities taking place, including: physical activities, seating, meal, transportation* and sleeping* arrangements and how participants will be spaced and managed out of due diligence.
14. **Offsite activities:** Offsite activities can take place at locations that are acting in accordance with all CDC, State, and local health department guidelines.
15. **Vaccinations (preferred option):** All participants including eligible staff, volunteers, participants, and family members should get *fully vaccinated* for COVID-19 and wait 2 weeks after completing vaccination for COVID-19 before traveling or participating in overnights.
16. **Testing (secondary option):** If a participant is *not fully vaccinated* then they must undergo a COVID-19 test **through an official provider (home tests and unofficial results will not be allowed to prove a negative COVID test)**, 72 hours prior to departure to identify asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic participants and prevent secondary transmission. If a participant presents a positive test, they will not be able to travel or attend the event unless they can show documentation of recovery (proof of a recent positive viral test and a letter from their healthcare provider or a public health official stating that they are cleared to travel).
17. ***Transportation with Social Distancing (preferred option):** Transportation should be by household, if at all possible. If transportation must be provided by the group (bus) or private transportation (carpooling), social distancing must occur by all *not fully vaccinated participants* allowing only one non-household participant per row, and skipping and staggering rows between participants, windows should be open to improve ventilation. **Masks must be worn regardless of vaccination status for the duration of the transportation. Seats should be assigned and a record of this should be maintained. Participants should not switch seats during the course of the trip.** Participants should sanitize hands both upon boarding and exiting the vehicle. This is in addition to the compliance required by Catholic Mutual Group policies for transportation.
18. ***Transportation without Social Distancing (secondary option):** If no other option exists for transportation, except side-by-side seating (airplane, **chartered bus**, public transportation), **then each *not fully vaccinated* participant must adhere to Testing (secondary option) policy above. Masks must be worn by all participants for the duration of the transportation. Seats should be assigned and a record of this should be maintained.** Participants should not switch seats during the course of the trip. Participants should sanitize hands both upon boarding and exiting the vehicle.
19. ***Overnight Sleeping Accommodations:** For overnight events where participants will be sleeping, the following is expected:

Participant's should be assigned to a "household cohort", which groups participants by bunkhouse, room or similarly defined space. These should be the same cohort/small group as they will participate in small groups, activities, etc. throughout their time together. Not fully vaccinated participants should wear masks except for sleeping.

- a. **Bunkhouses:** Bunks should be spaced as far away as possible at the very minimum of 6 feet from each other for not fully vaccinated participants. Participants should sleep head to toe in upper and lower bunks, alternating so

that each participant will sleep with their heads furthest away from the person on the same level and above or below them. Bunkhouses should not be shared with other groups. Windows should be opened when possible for added ventilation. Overhead fans should not be used. Masks should be removed for sleeping.

- b. **Hotel Style Accommodations:** No more than one not fully vaccinated participant per bed. Participants in the room must be from the same household if possible or cohort. Rooms should not be shared with other groups. Proper ventilation should be discussed with the facility to ensure that it is properly ventilated and filtrated. Overhead fans should not be used; windows should be opened when possible. Masks should be removed for sleeping.
- c. **Tent camping:** No more than one non-household member per tent. Masks should be removed.
- d. **Outdoor camping without tents:** At least 6 feet of social distancing must be retained between not fully vaccinated participants. Masks should be removed.

Guidance for Protocols adapted from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/summer-camps.html#print> (updated 5/28/21)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>
(updated 8/5/21) Washoe County Schools guidance to athletics, extracurricular activities
(updated 8/16/21) [Washoe Country Schools Back to School Opening Guide](#) (August 2001)

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