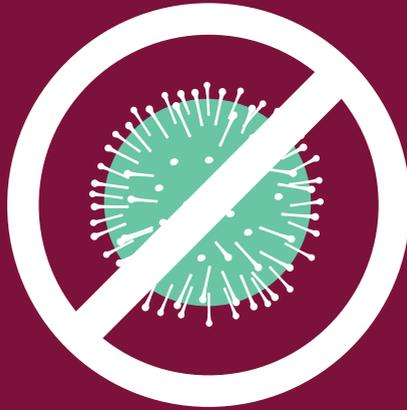




THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPS) FOR CONDUCTING CHURCH SERVICES IN THE COVID-19 ERA



Stay Safe & Stay Healthy

PREAMBLE

COVID 19 has disrupted various services in this country including worship in the church premises. The government is yet to lift the closure of church premises for worship. We have however making arrangements such that when places of worship are eventually opened, the worshippers should not be exposed to unnecessary risk. The following Standing Operating procedures (SOPs) have therefore been developed to enable leaders of churches run worship sessions without exposing the worshippers to infection.

S.O.P #1: ENTRY

- The Church **MUST** have a place/tent where worshippers can sit while waiting to enter the church building. The chairs in this facility should be set at least 1.5 meters apart
- The entry point should have clear markings showing direction of entry and ground markings set at 1.5 meters apart showing the worshippers **"STAND HERE"**

There **MUST** be security personnel to ensure worshippers follow the direction of entry and avoid crowding at the registration desk

- All persons intending to get into the premises **MUST** have their temperatures taken and recorded in the registration book. Anybody with a temperature of 38 degrees or above should be set aside for further tests. If the temperature does not get below the person should be handed to the Emergency Response team

- People who run the registration desk **MUST** have **PPEs** at all times [Aprons, Masks, Gloves]
- Educational and instructional materials **MUST** be placed at various places in the church
- There **MUST** be a registration desk where every worshipper sanitizes their hands, gets temperature taken and registers their personal information [Names, Area of residence, Phone contact, temperature and seat number allocated]
- Every point that is used as entry **MUST** have a person with a temperature taking gun and check **EVERYONE** who enters through that point. The temperature gun must be regularly checked to ensure the batteries are working and the calibration is correct
- All entry points **MUST** be clearly labeled so and separate from exit points
- Based on the space available in the church, about 100 worshippers should be allowed into the church at any one time.
- Every worshipper intending to enter the church **MUST** have a mask and have it put on properly. Any worshipper without a mask should be turned back to get one, without any exception
- **The exit points MUST be clearly labeled so and not be shared with entrance**



S.O.P #2 SITTING

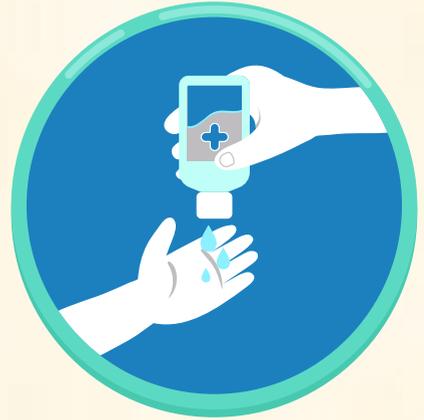
- Each worshipper should sit at the seat that was allocated at registration
- Seats must be set 1.5 Meters apart on each side from and back
- Where there are no seats, numbers on the sitting pews must be paced at least 1.5 meters apart
- Preacher's podium MUST have stationed at least 3 Meters from the front row since the Preacher might need to remove the mask when speaking. Choirs/ Worship praise teams to observe the same
- Worshippers should wear masks at all times when they are in the church premises. They may be temporarily removed when receiving holy Communion
- Worshippers should NOT move the seats from where the Church organizers have placed them
- Gloves for all the staff and ushers on duty



S.O.P #3: SANITATION

HAND WASHING

- Ensure availability of running water at all places where worshippers may soil their hands such as toilets and entry points
- Provide soap (Liquid or bar) at all places where hand washing is required
- Where there is no water ensure there are alcohol-based hand Sanitizers
- There MUST be a sanitizer at the podium for disinfecting the microphones in between use by different users
- Wherever possible sanitizers should be availed at each entry point



WASH ROOMS

- Ensure there is running water and necessary supplies (toilet paper, bins, etc) in the wash rooms at all times
- The floors of the wash rooms should be kept clean at all times. Whereas there is COVID 19, there are also other diseases that can be transmitted in a dirty washroom floor

S.O.P #4: WORSHIP TIME

- Worshippers should remain at the place where their seat at all times of the worship
- All worshippers should maintain Non-touch in all worship activities such as greeting of peace, offertory etc.

- Worshipers should exit the premises at the end of their session and allow other worshippers into the premises
- Avoid hugging other worshippers during the worship time

S.O.P #5 WELFARE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- There **MUST** be a team of trained Medical personnel who should always be available to attend to other medical emergencies but especially to respond to patients who show COVID-like symptoms
- There **MUST** be a room where worshippers with very high temperatures are observed from and may be given first aid where necessary
- The Emergency team should have the Emergency number of the Ministry of Health so that they can call when the situation gets beyond their control
- The Emergency toll free Number 0800 10066 should be displayed at various places in the church



SUSPENDED ACTIVITIES

The intention of all these guidelines is to conduct scientific Holy services that are based on the Standard Operational Procedures. Therefore the following practices will be apparently suspended in all celebrations:

- Hand shaking
- Hugging
- Microphone sharing
- Sharing Hymn books
- Sharing offertory collecting gadgets
- Altar books



NEW MEASURES

- Observation of presidential Directives and Ministry of Health Guidelines.
- Health Campaign as part of announcements at the beginning of services and at the end
- Frequent updates on the COVID 19 status in the country from the government
- Political campaigns banned in the church
- Multiple services and days of services due to the limited number of people allowed per service session
- Suspension of Sunday school.
- Observations of curfew hour limits
- Electronic and door/entrance offerings
- Registration at entry points.
Posters sensitizing about Covid-19
- Security personnel to guide people on the sitting arrangements
- A maximum of 70 people per service
- Entry point should be different from the exit point and clearly marked
- Marking seats with numbers, and each person to be given seat number at table of registration



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