



GENERAL NOVEL H1N1 FLU PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY

- Remind members of the congregation and staff to remain home if ill and not attend the services.
- Remind parents of sick children to keep them home if your congregation has child care or nursery facilities.
- Ensure that adequate supplies of cleaning materials are readily available (or, if you contract others to provide cleaning services, check that they have contingency plans) and that there are procedures for regular cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.
- Ensure that hand hygiene facilities are adequate and working properly; if/when updating or repairing facilities, consider installing automatic or foot-operated taps, hand dryers, paper towel dispensers and waste bins. Ensure that you have stocks of tissues, paper towels and soaps.
- Consider how you might use hand cleansers, for example at the entrances to rooms or sites without hand-washing facilities.
- Check that you have procedures for isolating (with appropriate supervision) anyone who becomes ill during worship services.
- Consider limiting the numbers at particular services to assure social distancing, if the number of members affected by influenza continues to increase.

In addition, the following specific infection control measures should be followed by faith communities during a pandemic:

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDED H1N1 FLU PRACTICES FOR FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY

- Give extra attention to sanitizing common areas, the pews, and where congregations kneel as part of the service, including regular sanitizing of any pew rails.
- Provide hand sanitizers in several locations.
- Consider alternatives for the holy water font or perhaps dispense with this entirely.
- Suggest social distancing as might be possible, and minimize social interactions such as handshakes, hugs, and exchanging of the "sign of peace".
- Limit contact and the spreading of germs from one worshipper to the next by placing the communion wafer in an individual's hand rather than on the tongue.
- Suspend drinking from a common chalice during this pandemic. Consider providing disposable small plastic cups for worshippers instead.
- Suggest that members of the congregation carry small bottles of personal hand sanitizers.
- Wash your hands immediately after blessing, anointing (e.g. with oil), or laying hands on someone who has an influenza-like illness.
- Minimize the risk of spreading flu viruses to those living and working in rectories or parish houses by introducing strict infection control measures such as isolating the symptomatic individual to a room and identifying one person or limited number of people to care for the individual. Ensure all utensils, towels, bedding and other shared washable materials are cleaned thoroughly before being used by others.
- Take precautions during visitations at extended care facilities, hospitals and individual residences by washing your hands or using hand sanitizer between visits from one individual to the next.