



COVID-19 Health Note #2

What Should You Do If Someone has COVID within Your Parish?

*"So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous
right hand." Isaiah 41:10*

July 15, 2020



METROPOLIS OF
SAN FRANCISCO



PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide is the second booklet designed to offer recommendations to our parishes in the areas of preparation and response to the COVID - 19 pandemic.

FOCUS

If someone in your parish (or you) test positive for COVID – 19, or are having COVID – like symptoms, what should your parish do?

These materials are intended to provide helpful information to clergy and parishioners within parishes under the jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Metropolis of San Francisco. They are in no way a substitute for actual professional advice based upon your unique facts and circumstances. While this content has been derived from the CDC guidelines, situations and regulations do change depending on the pandemic's circumstances and emerging medical research. The information provided is not intended or offered as legal, medical or other professional advice. *You should always consult with all local, state and federal guidelines when finalizing your parish plans.*



GENERAL GUIDELINES

What do I do if one of my parishioners has COVID-19?

1. Notify your Parish Health Officer who can help guide the process.
2. Follow your plan to help ensure the health and safety of others in the parish and to reduce the likelihood of additional transmissions.
3. For confirmed cases, inform the Office of the Chancellor so an incident report may be completed in an effort to track situations throughout the Metropolis.
4. Maintain confidentiality of any infected person(s).
5. Confirm tracking information is maintained and filed for all parish events.
6. Positive COVID test results will be reported to your local health agency by your testing agency. As such, you will not need to report cases to the local health department.



SCENARIO 1 SUSPECTED CASE

What do I do if one of my parishioners *suspects* they have COVID-19?

- Suspected COVID-19 is defined as anyone meeting the CDC clinical screening criteria for having COVID-19 regardless of a positive test.
- Given testing delays, the test result may be pending but action should be taken at the time symptoms are evident.

Parishioner cannot return to church until...

1. 3 days with no fever **AND** Respiratory symptoms have improved (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) **AND** 10 days since symptoms first appeared **OR**
2. 3 days with no fever, respiratory symptoms have improved, **AND** you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart **OR**
3. They present a physician note stating they are fully recovered and released from medical care.



SCENARIO 2 CONFIRMED CASE

What do I do if one of my parishioners is *confirmed* to have COVID-19?

1. All members of the household (with continued contact with the positive individual) must also quarantine (i.e. stay home) until 14 days after the “suspected” criteria are met by the initially positive parishioner.
2. Clean and disinfect environmental surfaces.
3. Encourage all clergy and chanters to seek testing.
4. Calculate the exposure window.
 - a) Date symptoms began: _____
 - b) 14 days prior to (a): _____
 - c) Date of positive test/confirmation: _____
 - d) (b) to (c) = **exposure window**
5. Determine exposure points.

What dates did parishioner attend service WITHIN the exposure window?



SCENARIO 2 CONFIRMED CASE (Cont.)

What do I do if one of my parishioners is *confirmed* to have COVID-19?

6. Notify EVERYONE (i.e. parishioners, clergy, chanters, ushers etc.) who also attended those same services on the same dates.
 - Use the script on pages 6 & 7 to inform them that they have been exposed.
 - Do not reveal the identity of the individual with COVID-19.
 - Inform them that they cannot attend church for 14 days post-exposure (i.e. 14 days after their last contact).
 - Encourage them to get tested if they are in contact with high-risk individuals and to seek medical attention if they develop symptoms.
 - If they develop symptoms and have a positive/confirmatory test ask them to please notify the parish office, the Priest or the parish Health Officer immediately so the parish can track their attendance and take additional steps.



NOTIFYING PARISHIONERS OF EXPOSURE

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR INTERACTING WITH A PERSON EXPOSED TO COVID-19:

- Ensure and protect confidentiality.
- Create a judgement-free zone.
- Be attentive and respectful.
- Adapt to address concerns/information that naturally arise during conversation.
- Identify areas of need and link to appropriate resources.
- Don't overstep or overpromise.
- Set the stage for ongoing communication and support during quarantine.
- Encourage them to reach out and notify the parish office, the Priest or the parish Health Officer if they do become sick.

“NOTICE OF EXPOSURE” DISCUSSION SCRIPT

1. GREETING

2. PURPOSE OF THE CALL

- It has come to our attention that you may have been recently exposed to COVID-19 when you attended church on [DATE(S) OF EXPOSURE – (See “Exposure Window” page 4).
- Has anyone already talked to you regarding your possible COVID exposure? If so, who?
- Some of the early symptoms of COVID-19 can look similar to other illnesses, and sometimes, people have no symptoms. You may have been exposed by someone who had no idea they were sick.
- In order to stop COVID-19 from spreading in the community, we follow up with people who have been exposed, and work with them to make sure they get care if they need it. We also ask them to watch for symptoms and stay separate from others so that they don't spread it by accident, if they start to get sick.
- [if asked] The name of the person who tested positive is confidential. I cannot tell you their name, just like I cannot share your personal information with others.
- I would like to review some important information and questions with you so we can provide you with support and work together to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our city/county/town.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

- Before we go into detail, I want to be sure you understand that everything we discuss is confidential. This means that your personal and medical information will be kept private and only shared with those who may need to know, like your health care provider. What questions do you have about your privacy/confidentiality?



“NOTICE OF EXPOSURE” DISCUSSION SCRIPT (Cont.)

4. QUARANTINE RECOMMENDATIONS

- I’d like to talk with you about home quarantine, review the recommendations, and identify what you may need to support you and keep you and your family and other household members healthy.
- Since we don’t know yet if you will develop COVID-19, you will need to self-quarantine for 14-days from the day when you were exposed to the virus. Self-quarantine means that you will have stay at home for <XXX> days or until [date].
- You should not go to work or out into the community to run errands or attend events. Ideally, you should stay in a separate part of the house from others who live with you, preferably in a bedroom by yourself, and use your own bathroom that no one else uses during this time.
- Being on quarantine means that you will not be able to go to work or the grocery store or other places around town.
- During the **next <insert number of days for self-quarantine based upon last exposure>**, you will need to limit your interactions with people in your household, staying 6 feet away from them.
- When interacting with others in your household, you should wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth to help protect others in case you’re infected but don’t have symptoms. Your caregiver may also wear a cloth face covering when caring for you. Children under age 2, or anyone who has trouble breathing, should not wear a mask.
- If at all possible, you should avoid contact with people at higher risk for severe illness (unless they live in the same home and had same exposure as you), regularly wash your hands and following other measures outlined in the CDC guidance.
- We strongly encourage you to review the specific instructions for quarantine that are available on the CDC website.

5. TESTING

- You may consider getting tested
- If you do, please let us know if the test is positive as this will require some additional actions and steps to ensure the safety of our community

6. RELEASE FROM QUARANTINE

- The amount of time that you will be on self-quarantine is 14 days from the last day of exposure to COVID-19 or if you have no symptoms and have two negative tests within at least a 24 hour-period.
- Your health care provider will be talking with you to make sure that you have the testing or approval necessary to be released from self-quarantine.

7. CONCLUSION

- I can’t thank you enough for talking to me and helping us stop the spread of COVID-19 in [location].
- Before we hang up, I just want to check on what additional questions you may have?



SCENARIO 3

Parishioner tested positive for COVID-19 but had/has no symptoms.

1. Proceed to **Scenario 2** for exposure and contact tracing protocol.
2. If they continue to have no symptoms, they can be with others after:
 - 10 days have passed since the test **OR**
 - After they receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.
3. If they develop symptoms after testing positive, they should notify their healthcare provider and also the parish office, Priest or parish Health Officer, as soon as possible.

SCENARIO 4

The Priest has (or suspects they have) COVID-19?

1. Follow the protocols for Scenarios 1-3, as applicable.
2. If it is advised that you quarantine:
 - Notify the Office of the Chancellor immediately.
 - Attempt to find a substitute Priest.
 - If a substitute cannot be found, do not hold service until recovered per the criteria described in Scenarios 1 and 3; direct parishioners to view services online at a different parish until services can be resumed at your parish.



SCENARIO 5

If Parishioner arrives for Liturgy and is showing COVID-like symptoms.

- If you see a parishioner who looks ill or is exhibiting COVID-like symptoms, do the following:
 1. Have them put on a mask immediately, if not wearing one.
 2. Ask them to step away from the crowd.
 3. Maintain your own social distancing.
 4. Ask them if they are feeling well today and if they have been in contact with anyone with COVID-like symptoms.
 5. Take their temperature; if over 100.3, they must leave.
 6. Ask them if they need medical attention at this time.
 7. If not, ask them to return home and participate in live-streaming of the Liturgy.



REFERENCES

These guidelines and the “Notice of Exposure” script were adapted from recommendations from the Centers for Disease control and prevention (CDC).

For more information please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/notification-of-exposure.html>