**Appendix 4**

# [Insert Parish Name]

# COVID-19 Response Plan Template

## Introduction

The COVID-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for the incumbent and select vestry to safely reopen our church(es) for public worship and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace[[1]](#footnote-1).

The plan will give an overview of key areas that the incumbent and select vestry must assess to ensure compliance with health and safety protocols and to minimise the risk to workers[[2]](#footnote-2) and others.

A plan must be developed in respect of every church prior to its reopening for public worship.

The plan needs strong commitment from the incumbent, select vestry and workers and should be developed and put in place in consultation with workers. Consultation with workers, supervision, clear direction and information for parishioners are key in ensuring the success of your COVID-19 Response Plan.

**Note: The plan is a live working document and it should be reviewed on an ongoing basis and amended to take into account new guidance from government and public health authorities.**

## How to use this plan

Your COVID-19 Response Plan must detail how you will put in place control measures to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19.

The response plan is set out as a 4 step process (Fig.1) overleaf.

N.B. It is important to keep the plan under review to ensure it is kept up to date with public advice and to follow up on all actions identified on each checklist to make sure that they are completed as soon as possible.

Figure 1 – COVID-19 Response Plan 4 Step Process

**Duties of Employers**

Parishes may have additional statutory duties in relation to workers who are also employees and separate advice may be required to ensure compliance with applicable legislation

## Response Plan Template

## Step 1 Parish COVID-19 Policy

This COVID-19 policy outlines our commitment as an employer to implement the plan and help prevent the spread of the virus. The policy will be signed and dated by the incumbent and secretary of the select vestry and brought to the attention of workers and parishioners.

**COVID 19 Policy Statement**

[Parish name] is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers and parishioners. To ensure that, we have developed the following COVID-19 Response Plan. All workers are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus. We will:

* continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our workers
* provide up to date information to our workers on the Public Health advice issued by the relevant authorities
* display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
* inform all workers of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
* adapt the workplace to facilitate physical distancing
* keep a log of contact / group work to help with contact tracing
* have all workers attend an induction / familiarisation / briefing
* develop a procedure to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or in the workplace
* provide instructions for workers to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during work
* intensify cleaning in line with government advice

All workers will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Incumbent

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Secretary of Select Vestry

## Step 2 - Responsible Persons for Performing Tasks

We have identified suitably trained person(s) to help with ensuring that the plan is implemented and checklists are completed.

Persons have been identified who have agreed to take responsibility for carrying out tasks such as:

* use of checklists to identify any areas for improvement
* regular checks to ensure the plan is being implemented
* review of risk assessments and the safety statement
* renewal of statutory certification where needed
* training
* reviewing emergency procedures and first aid

We have consulted with the persons responsible for these tasks and have:

* briefed them on the tasks and their responsibilities
* entered their name against the relevant task(s) in the Responsible Persons table (see below) and asked each responsible person to sign to indicate their agreement with carrying out the task.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Responsible Persons Task Register (Non-Exhaustive)** | | | |
| **NO.** | **TASKS**  **(non-exhaustive list)** | **RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S)** | **SIGNATURE** |
| 1 | Person responsible for overall implementation of the plan |  |  |
| 3 | Planning and Preparing to Return to Work |  |  |
| 4 | Control Measures |  |  |
| 5 | COVID-19 Induction |  |  |
| 6 | Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19 |  |  |
| 7 | Cleaning and Disinfection |  |  |

## Step 3 - Parish Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Parish Name:** |  |
| **Church Address:** |  |
| **Incumbent** |  |
| **Secretary of Select Vestry** |  |
| **Number of Workers:** |  |
| **Number of Workers who Deal Directly with Parishioners:** |  |
| **Phone:** |  |
| **Email:** |  |

## Step 4 – Checklists

### a) Return to Work – Planning and Preparing

The planning and preparing phase is critical to ensure a safe return to work and covers such items as information and guidance, return-to-work forms, revising our induction briefing, identifying and putting in place control measures and updating our safety statements, risk assessments and emergency plans.

Workers have been told to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, which have been explained to them, and the return-to-work form will be used to assess workers’ health before they enter the workplace.

**b) Control Measures**

This section deals with the measures we are implementing to prevent or minimise the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and in our communities.

Measures which must be complied with include:

* Hand hygiene/Hand sanitising
* Respiratory hygiene
* Physical distancing
* Minimising contact
* Considering At-risk workers
* Visiting Contractors / Others

### c) COVID-19 Induction / Familiarisation

Workers need to be told about changes in the workplace and updated on new ways of working. Our usual induction, or workplace familiarisation, for new workers has been revised to include measures to help prevent the spread of the virus. All workers will be brought through this induction before starting back to work. The induction will be carried out in a safe manner with physical distancing measures in place.

The following range of items will be discussed and brought to the attention of workers:

* Communication system
* Return-to work form
* Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 (at home and in the workplace)
* Information on how the virus is spread
* Control measures to help prevent infection
* COVID-19 contact log
* Changes to risk assessments and safety statement
* Changes to emergency plans and first aid procedures
* Minimising contact
* Reporting procedures
* Attendance at a COVID-19 induction will be recorded and records kept.

### d) Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19

This details our procedure to be followed in the event of someone developing the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or while in the workplace.

We have assigned a responsible person to manage this situation and provided them with information on how to do this safely. We have also identified and marked an isolation area(s) to be used to isolate the affected person and procedures to be followed to enable them to safely leave the premises.

### e) Cleaning and Disinfection in the Workplace

We have put in place an effective cleaning and disinfection system as regular cleaning and disinfection will help reduce the spread of the virus.

If disinfection of contaminated surfaces is needed, this will be done in addition to cleaning.

Volunteer cleaners will be given information and instruction in relation to the new procedures.

### f) Workers’ Responsibilities in the Workplace

Aside from the usual day to day responsibilities that workers must comply with, the introduction of COVID-19 into society brings new challenges that workers need to be aware of so that Churches may be safely reopened for public worship.

Workers must keep themselves updated on the latest advice from Government and public health authorities. They must also co-operate in maintaining the control measures put in place to help prevent the spread of the virus and report any issues or concerns they may have.

1. For the purposes of this document only, churches are considered to be ‘workplaces’ as well as places of worship [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For the purpose of this document only, the term ‘workers’ is used to include clergy and volunteers involved in the preparation and operation of churches for public worship. Parishes may have additional statutory duties in relation to employees. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)