

Arch Covid-19 Task Force update: Phase 5 Guidance – June 9, 2021

The following guidelines are effective with the start of Restore Illinois Phase 5 beginning June 11, 2021 for all archdiocesan locations unless otherwise noted.

Capacity

- All capacity restrictions are lifted.
- Masses, liturgies, sacramental celebrations, parish/school events and all offices may resume 100% capacity.

Physical Distancing

- Physical distancing is NOT required for vaccinated persons.
- Physical distancing **is recommended** by public health authorities, when possible, for unvaccinated persons if conditions allow up to 6 ft. of separation.

Masks

- Masks are NOT required for vaccinated persons.
- The only exception is the priest or deacon celebrating infant **baptism** – he should continue to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status when he is close to the infant’s nose and mouth to best protect the health of the infant. The priest or deacon need not wear a mask during the rest of the service.
- Masks are recommended by public health authorities for unvaccinated indoors, particularly in crowded venues.

Hand Sanitizing

- Hand sanitizer should remain prominently available in churches, schools and offices.

Masses and Liturgies

- All forms of sacramental and liturgical ministry may resume normal practice with a few minor exceptions noted below.
- Registration is no longer required. Parishes should maintain their reservations system accounts (e.g. SignUpGenius) or document their registration processes in the event we need to resume them to any degree in the fall or winter if concerning metrics related to the pandemic warrant such a return.
- Proof of vaccination is not required for attendance at any liturgies or services.
- Holy Water fonts may be filled and used.
- Ushers may resume their pre-pandemic routine; registration greeters can be re-directed to support the hospitality team in welcoming everyone returning to in-person worship and into the parish community.
- Choirs, congregational signing, oral responses, use of worship aids, envelopes and bulletins may be fully resumed if not already done.
- The Sign of Peace may be restored. Pastoral care and prudence are needed here to ensure everyone at Mass feels cared for and is sensitive to the limits and comfort of each other in exchanging the Sign of Peace.



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- Reception of Holy Communion:

- Receiving Holy Communion in the hand no longer requires extra hand sanitizing on the part of the Communicant. However, the *priest and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should continue to sanitize their hands prior to distributing Communion.*
- Receiving Holy Communion on the tongue may resume; however, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must have hand sanitizer nearby and use it immediately in the event of contact with saliva (which is good practice in all circumstances).
- Distributing/receiving Holy Communion from the cup remains suspended at this time; concelebrants should proceed with the practice of intinction. The archdiocese will communicate once sharing of the cup may resume.

Social gatherings

All social gatherings (potlucks, office luncheons, parish picnics, carnivals, etc.) may resume while incorporating the guidance on masks and physical distancing noted here.

Reporting COVID-related Illnesses

Parishes should continue to encourage parishioners to report if they become COVID-positive and if they attended a Mass or liturgy within three days of diagnosis. Additionally, parishes, Pastoral Center and agencies should request staff to report any COVID-positive diagnoses, as well. In such instances:

- Parish, Pastoral Center and agency supervisors should continue to submit an [Intake Form](#).
- School leaders should continue to submit the [School Intake Form](#).
- At parishes, a notice with date and time of Mass/liturgy should be posted on the parish website alerting parishioners who were also in attendance that they should monitor themselves, especially if unvaccinated.

Anointing of the Sick

Beginning July 1, the COVID-19 Anointing Team will be deactivated, and parishes will need to resume providing anointers for hospitals within their area that normally would call for Anointing of the Sick. Simple, minimal precautionary instructions will be distributed to clergy prior July 1.

Additional guidance specific to school-related activities, mission trips and summer camps is forthcoming. Those guidelines will include some exceptions to what was noted above.

In the event that anything changes per the State of Illinois, City of Chicago or public health departments, we will communicate immediately.

Peace,
COVID-19 Task Force