



The
EPISCOPAL CHURCH *in*
CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

**Returning to Our Buildings:
Guidance and Direction
for Worshipping Communities
in the Time of COVID-19**

INTRODUCTION

The following document offers guidance and direction on the process of returning to our church buildings for worship in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. This document offers guidance for the celebration of Holy Eucharist; some congregations may choose to read Morning Prayer.

This document has been prepared by the Task Force on Operations of our diocese. Another group- the Task Force on Theology and Ecclesiology- is gathering best practices from around our diocese in the areas of liturgy, pastoral care, stewardship, and mission to offer a Word to the Church on the influence of our recent experience and how we think about and practice our faith. Their report will be issued in the early summer.

Much like Governor Wolf's plan for reopening (available in this document in Appendix D), the plan that is laid out in these pages is sequential and will occur in stages. This will allow us to stay in step with the process as it unfolds in our Commonwealth and to respond to the shifting status of COVID-19 infection rates in the diocese. Above all, safety is our first concern. It is important to note that this process is not unidirectional. As we hope to move from our current restrictive environment to a least restrictive environment, the course of the disease, possible resurgences, and their impact may cause the need to retreat again to practices of isolation and to move back and forth between the stages outlined here for some months if not years. Governor Wolf's plan includes three phases: Red, Yellow, and Green. The plan in these pages follows those phases and adds an additional phase of "Yellow/Green" to accommodate the point when some of the restrictions of the Yellow Phase have been relaxed (i.e., group numbers allowed to assemble increase from 25 to 50). The "Yellow/Green" phase has been created by the Task Force to assist churches in shifting their protocols in response to Government announcements.

The work of the Task Force for Operations is based on the following principles:

- We recognize that we are the Body of Christ, faithful to the mission of God, whether gathered or scattered.

- We respect the dignity of all human beings and understand that by the waters of baptism, we are joined as kinfolk in Christ. The safety of our neighbor is important to us, as is the safety of our families and ourselves.
- We care for the weak, the vulnerable, and those who are alone through agape living.
- We recognize the value of physical proximity in the incarnational nature of our faith and the mystical union that we experience in community through receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus through the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
- We respect our place in the culture of our Commonwealth and strive to be cooperative and supportive of our civic leaders as decisions are made for our welfare.
- We know- by faith and by our Judeo-Christian heritage- the disorientation of being in the wilderness, the pain of the diaspora, the joy of homing, and the care of a providential God.
- We recognize the fluid nature of crisis containment and the need to remain flexible, open, and accepting.
- We recognize our connection to each other and value leadership that is clear, honest, and direct.

Task Force for Operations

Members

Ms. Elaine Austin, St. Thomas, Lancaster

Ms. Barbara Cross, St. John's, Carlisle

Ms. Alexis Guszick, Canon for Communications and Events

Mr. Chad Linder, Canon for Finance and Operations

Mr. William Lord, St. John's, Carlisle

The Rev. Rowena Mae MacGregor, St. James, Mansfield

The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow, Canon for Congregational Life and Mission

The Rev. Jeff Packard, St. Andrew's, State College

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Audrey C. Scanlan, XI Bishop

Consultants

Mr. Charles Banks, Esq., Diocesan Chancellor

Mr. Ed Robertson, Diocesan Disaster Coordinator

Dr. Pam Vnenchak, St. Thomas, Lancaster

Standing Committee Statement in Support of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania's Task Force on Operations

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania unanimously supports Bishop Scanlan and the Diocese's Task Force on Operations Returning to our Buildings Guidance and Direction for Worshipping Communities in the time of COVID-19.

We comprehend and appreciate the significant amount of input from around the diocese in this process. We recognize the support of legal, disaster management, and medical subject matter experts who are advising the Bishop and task force – especially as conditions change. Thus, we are confident that the task force's work in such stressful circumstances is well-reasoned. We commend them for completing these tasks so efficiently.

We note that these guidelines are broad enough to meet the needs of various parishes. This document prompts parochial, lay, and ordained leaders to be aware of, and responsive to, their Congregation's needs for well-being and safety, as well as opportunities to learn and resist returning to the status quo prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The task force's Socratic approach to raising questions is significant. Congregations who are returning to our buildings for our missional, educational, and liturgical lives need to contemplate and act upon our theological, spiritual, and pastoral reasons for gathering within church walls, as well as continuing virtual communal activities. Local plans are needed outgrowths of this effort. Leaders should be well prepared and have plans prior to speaking with Bishop Scanlan or the task force's appointed officers.

In conclusion, we suggest that this "re-entry" is an opportunity for creative possibilities in ministry. It also essentially demands that each parish understands the necessary work to be done throughout the process. We offer this prayerful basis for going forward:

*O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of The Spirit's presence. Create in us inspired and calm hearts, bodies, and souls as we seek to return to our shared baptismal responsibilities with a renewed sense of our connections to you and one another. We humbly ask for this wisdom through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

The Plan

1. Guiding principles (all phases)

- The diocese will protect the physical health of the faithful by adopting acceptable, albeit suboptimal spiritual practices.

- We will follow Governor Wolf's three-phase process relying on state and regional health assessments as modified by counties and communities if implemented. Various parishes in the diocese will move from phase to phase at different times. Parishes will change protective measures in consultation with the Bishop or appointed Canon. Parishes may implement stricter standards than those mandated by governmental authorities if circumstances dictate. They may not adopt less strict standards.

- All must be prepared to return to more strict protective measures if warranted by parish situation or mandated by cognizant governmental authority.

- If someone in the Congregation contracts COVID-19 after worshipping at church, the clergy person or lay leader shall be informed immediately. Attempts will be made to notify all those in the worshipping community who were present at the particular service, with the person who became ill. Decisions about quarantine should be made in conjunction with local or state health officials. Additionally, the church will require thorough cleaning before holding any additional services. The parish will cooperate with any request for visitor contact information by state authorities for contact tracking purposes.

2. Red Phase Guidance

Parish-related:

- There will be no group activities in person. Worship and formation events will be "online" in accordance with the capabilities and desires of the parish.

- Pastoral care will be by telephone or by using online conferencing. Pastoral care *in extremis* will be offered by clergy in consort with their comfort levels and protocols at hospitals and private homes.

- Some service ministries may continue with altered methodology: For example: preparing food for take-out instead of offering a community dinner, distributing clothing and diapers from outside stations with appropriate physical distancing, etc.

Diocesan-wide:

- Committees, Commissions, and other meetings will only meet online.

3. Yellow Phase Guidance

Parish-related:

- We will return to face-to-face worship, while fully observing all physical distancing, use of face masks (defined as non-vented, non-medical grade masks), and enhanced facility cleaning as outlined in the appendices of this document and suggested by applicable governmental authorities. Our goal is to provide face-to-face worship to the largest proportion of the parish membership while maintaining options and lower exposure for those who should not or do not care to resume the face-to-face engagement. It may be possible to gather several 25 person groups in separate meeting spaces at the same time. Detailed operational guidance is in Appendix A. Detailed facility guidance is in Appendix B. Specific guidance related to ushers is in Appendix C.

Diocesan-wide:

- Committees, commissions, and any gatherings with more than 25 attendees will meet online. Smaller meetings may be conducted face to face with all appropriate protective measures enforced.

4. Yellow-Green Phase

Parish Related:

- While not linked to a specific phase in the Governor's plan, modifications within the three colored phases may occur, such as changing the allowable size of group gatherings. Parishes may find a rationale for loosening the restrictive nature of some protective postures. Some examples are listed in Appendix A below.

Diocesan-wide:

- The allowable size of gatherings may be modified as governmental guidance changes.

5. Green Phase Guidance

Parish-related:

Large parish gatherings, social events and ministry projects remain restricted.

Parishes can hold worship at up to 50% capacity with 6 ft. social distancing restrictions in place (this increases the amount of people allowed to gather from 25 or fewer, to the number that each building can accommodate up to 50% of its total capacity while employing social distancing. For example, if a sanctuary can under normal circumstances seat 100 people, under the green phase, it can now welcome up to 50 people provided that each family group can sit 6 ft away from each other.)

All measures in Appendix A remain highly recommended. Measures titled Participant checks, Attendance, Masks, Ushers are mandatory.

CDC guidelines are still in place:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Coffee hour and nursery/Sunday School/Formation protocols are as outlined in the Yellow-Green phase.

Maintain the ability to contact trace in the event there is a new case of COVID-19 within the parish.

Maintain selected capabilities developed during the pandemic to enhance our ability to serve all our members.

Adopt, as applicable, health safety lessons learned.

Diocesan-wide:

- Online capabilities developed during the pandemic will be retained with diocesan meetings on line to be preferred and offered when possible.

Appendix A: Protocols for Worship and Community Life Yellow and Yellow/Green Phase

What follows are guidelines for returning to worship and community life in our parishes under the Yellow Phase. These guidelines offer a mixture of instruction and questions for clergy to discuss with the Bishop and/or appointed Canon as they plan to reopen.

Please contact the Bishop's office by emailing Carolyn Patterson, Assistant to the Bishop at cpatterson@diocesepa.org, when you are ready to begin planning to return to church. You will be assigned to the Bishop, Canon Chad Linder, or Canon Dan Morrow to assist with following the protocols and ensuring a safe return. As we gain experience in these procedures across the diocese, these guidelines may change.

Participant check- All clergy, ushers, lectors, musicians, etc. will be asked to submit to temperature tests and display a normal temperature on the day of leading worship.

Admission of Worshippers- For those congregations of more than 25 members, a system for ensuring no more than 25 people in the sanctuary will need to be devised. Will you take reservations? Hand out tickets? Assign family units and individual worshippers to different service times? How will you handle "walk-ins" and visitors? How many services will you need to hold to accommodate your entire parish membership? It is recommended to continue virtual worship options for at-risk and others.

Attendance- During this phase, a complete record of all attendees at each service must be maintained to facilitate potential contact tracking by cognizant health authorities. Members of the parish will be informed of this requirement before entering the Yellow Phase and periodically thereafter. The Usher(s) will be key to this process. The Usher(s) will be key to this process. More detailed considerations are contained in Appendix C.

Advertising services- Attendant with the limitations of worshippers, how will you advertise that you are "back in business" and communicate your admission protocol? Will you send an email blast or activate the phone chain to share this news and the returning guidelines?

Gathering- Each service will begin with a review by the clergy of the protocols for physical distancing, movement in the space, limitations on physical contact, ways to receive communion, identification of ushers to assist, procedures for exiting the church, etc.

Masks- in the Yellow Phase, all worshippers and clergy will be expected to wear clean cloth masks (non-vented, non-medical grade) before arriving, while in the church, and when exiting. Clergy can remove their masks when at the altar celebrating and officiating/speaking (Eucharistic elements will be covered with a cloth). Lectors and intercessors may remove masks when reading. Both officiant and lectors (including intercessors) must be at a safe distance from others to avoid spreading respiratory droplets.

Physical Distancing- in the Yellow Phase, all congregants (except for members dwelling together) and clergy must sit at least 6 ft. from one another. Masking tape, ribbon markers, etc. can be used to set up a system to indicate approved seating.

Single-use bulletins - Parishes will provide paper, single-use bulletins (and a wastebasket for recycling on the way out), or screen-projected liturgies. All prayer books, hymnals, and bibles will be removed from the pews in the Yellow Phase.

In the pew materials- Tissue and a paper disposable (lunch-sized) bag will be available in the pews. Hand sanitizer and wipes (not Clorox, Lysol, or others not suitable for skin decontamination) may be available. Members of the Congregation will be asked to dispose of the used tissues and bags at the end of service.

Ushers- Ushers are essential to our safe return to in-person worship. Individuals must have the temperament and ability to enforce absolute standards. Capable ushers will enable clergy persons to concentrate their energies on officiating, preaching, and celebrating the holy mysteries. Additionally, ushers may be at a higher level of risk for contracting COVID-19, so consideration should be given to select individuals who are not already considered high risk. Please see APPENDIX C for specific instructions for Ushers. It is strongly recommended that parish leadership provide Appendix C (as supplemented for each parish) to individuals selected for this responsibility and go over its guidance in detail. The ushers' role in Health Safety can be emphasized with the name tag "Health Safety."

Chancel Party - Physical distancing will be adhered to in the chancel, and a minimum number of ministers will be assigned to serve, allowing for more people in the Congregation and enhancing social distancing.

Choirs - In the Yellow Phase, choirs will not perform since choral singing has been noted as one of the prime methods of spreading respiratory droplets. Congregational singing will also be avoided. A soloist may be considered.

The Peace - Offering a bow or wave at the time of the Peace is recommended. Parishioners will maintain safe physical distancing.

Offertory - Elements will not be processed but brought by the assisting minister or acolyte from the credence table to the altar. If the Celebrant removes his/her mask for the eucharistic prayer, the host must be protected from exhaled droplets (e.g., covered with a cloth).

Collection - It is recommended that a basket at the head of the aisle be used for parishioners to deposit their offering envelopes at the start of the service. Has your parish encouraged online giving? Pledges and contributions that are collected at services will be locked in the parish safe and remain untouched for at least three days to permit possible virus particles to degrade. Moving the collection to the safe will be done with gloves and all other protection techniques.

Communion - Holy Eucharist in the Yellow Phase will be celebrated with chalice and paten on the altar, and the Celebrant alone will drink from the cup. Others (including the chancel party) will receive communion in one kind (bread), which will be distributed by the Celebrant or another minister who has washed or sanitized their hands immediately before the distribution. The Celebrant or other minister distributing communion will be masked. Bread will not be used in the Yellow Phase, only wafers. Those receiving communion will not kneel but remain standing at the altar rail at an appropriate distance. Blessings should be offered without physical contact. The Prayer for Spiritual Communion should be added to the bulletin to accommodate those who choose to stay in their pew.

Pathways - Ushers will direct people to and from the altar in a single line to receive communion maintaining safe distancing while standing at the altar rail.

Receiving line - Ushers will help to direct parishioners out of the church at the end of the service. There will be no "receiving line" at the door. See APPENDIX C for full directions for ushers.

Counters - Even after contributions have remained untouched for three days, counters must practice safe procedures, including wearing masks and frequent hand washing.

Formation - In-person formation will be deferred until the Yellow-Green Phase. Online formation continues to be encouraged.

Nursery - Because of the difficulty in physically managing toddlers and infants, nursery care is suspended until the Yellow-Green Phase (see below).

Worship Out-of-Doors - It may seem easier to manage and conduct safe worship if it is conducted out-of-doors. How will the ushers/clergy/lay ministers enforce Yellow Stage protocols in an outdoor setting?

YELLOW/GREEN PHASE - This is an intermediary phase (so named by our Task Force). After some time, some of the restrictions of the Yellow Phase may be relaxed, allowing for a shift in community practices. In this "Yellow-Green" intermediate phase, all the practices of the Yellow Phase are in place with these changes:

Increased numbers of congregants - Depending on instruction from the Commonwealth, the size of the groups allowed to gather may be increased. How many people can your sanctuary accommodate while still keeping a safe distance (6 ft) between individuals and/or family groups?

Communion in two kinds - In the Yellow-Green Phase, wine may be offered using individual cups poured from a single consecrated ewer on the altar. No intinction will be allowed.

Nursery Care - It may be possible to reopen Nursery Care employing usual Safe Church protocols at this time. Nurseries will be stocked with the same supplies as the pews (sanitizer, tissues, paper bag for disposal) and kept in a safe location away from the reach of children. See cleaning protocols in APPENDIX B.

Formation - It may be possible with a larger number allowed to gather that some Sunday School and Adult Forums and Bible Studies may resume using the practices of safe-distancing, no touching, and single-use materials.

Coffee Hour - Is it possible for the parish to sit in a large circle of chairs, or a couple of smaller circles safely distanced for a short time of conversation and fellowship? Can food be prepared and packaged in single-serving portions (coffee cake, brownies, cookies, etc.) so that members can choose something from a tray without touching other pieces? Fellowship is so important. Can we do this without putting others at risk?

Appendix B: Property Considerations and Cleaning Protocols

Before a parish can consider opening for in-person worship, they first must be prepared by having a thorough understanding of opening guidelines and have available all supplies necessary to maintain a safe environment.

Even though your parish may not have a planned opening date established and approved, you should start to acquire the necessary supplies today. Due to global shortages of cleaning, disinfection, and personal protection supplies, it may take weeks or even months before you will be able to acquire needed items.

Here are the supplies you need to acquire:

- Paper towels and/or cleaning rags
- Facial tissues
- Large trash bags
- EPA-registered household disinfectants or diluted household bleach solution
- Dispenser spray bottles – if using a household bleach solution
- Boxes of disposable protective gloves – nitrile (preferred), vinyl or latex
- Boxes of disposable masks – non-surgical paper and not N95 masks (reserved for health care) or clean cloth masks. These are to have on hand if parishioners arrive without masks.
- Extra disposal containers such as large trash cans that can be placed in several locations
- Multiple containers of hand sanitizer with a minimum of 70% alcohol content
- Sanitizer dispenser stations at key locations
- No-touch thermometers – only one is necessary unless you plan to take the temperature of parishioners where you would need multiple thermometers.

Preparing for your first service-

All pews, door handles, faucet handles, light switches, elevator buttons, and other commonly touched surfaces are to be cleaned before the service.

Remove all prayer books, hymnals, and any other books and paper from the pews.

Secure any common areas that do not need to be accessed for service.

Place signage in predominant locations with instructions for parishioners to maintaining proper social distancing.

Use floor markers such as tape to help provide distancing guides and traffic flow.

The First Service-

Depending on the congregational size, parishes should have one or two (more if necessary) Ushers assigned to enforcing protocols. These individuals need to be confident enough to deny entry to parishioners and guests not wearing masks, to insist on maintaining social distancing standards or to enforce established protocols. See APPENDIX C for complete instructions for Ushers.

Weather permitting, entrance doors should be propped open or have someone assigned to open doors so that parishioners do not need to touch a common surface.

If possible, consideration should be given to limit access to the sanctuary to one door.

Egress routes should be planned to minimize the potential for informal gatherings, not following social distancing standards.

After Service-

If a parish is holding more than one service, there must be adequate time for proper cleaning between services. All surfaces such as door handles, pews, bathroom handles, elevator buttons, hand railings, etc. must be treated thoroughly, following the product instructions. Many products require a minimum time on surfaces before wiping to be effective.

Time Between Services-

The length of time that COVID-19 remains viable depends on temperature, humidity, and type of surface. Current research for the New England Journal of Medicine suggests that the virus lasts the longest on glass and some metal (such as stainless steel) for up to five days.

If a parish is able to wait six days or more between services, heavy disinfecting should not be necessary.

Parishes that want to hold a service on a Saturday night and again on Sunday morning or multiple services of “small batch” worship on the same day must allow for adequate time for comprehensive cleaning and disinfection. Should a parish become aware that one or more parishioners were positive for COVID-19 after attending a service, the meeting space must be cleaned unless it can be left empty for seven days in accordance with CDC recommendations.

Cleaning Protocol-

All pews, door handles, faucet handles, light switches, elevator buttons, and other commonly touched surfaces must be cleaned with disinfectants prior to the next scheduled service.

Microphones used during services should be wiped with disinfectant between uses.

Restrooms must be kept available and cleaned between services.

Office-

All common areas and offices will be thoroughly cleaned between uses with disinfectant to ensure a safe environment. This includes door handles, counters, printers, copiers, telephones, etc. How will the office staff maintain safe distancing? How will visitors/delivery persons/service persons be admitted?

At the end of each day, work surfaces should be free of all paper, documents, office supplies, etc. to facilitate cleaning.

Classrooms/Nursery/Playground-

Church Nurseries will remain closed during Yellow Phase worship. Lock doors when possible to prevent children from entering. If the parish has a playground or outdoor area, will the children be allowed to have access? How will safe distancing be ensured?

Protocols for Altar Guild-

Altar Guild members will do their work while maintaining safe social distancing at all times and are required to do so while wearing masks. This may require limiting the number of people at one time in some of our smaller sacristies.

On-site Materials-

Pews will have tissues and disposable paper lunch bags to discard materials after use. There may be sanitizer and wipes (other than Clorox, Lysol, or other products unsuitable for hand sanitation use). The bags will be removed, as needed, after each service. Large hand sanitizer stations are recommended for entryways and at the chancel steps for use before receiving communion.

Set-Up of Pews/Chairs for Safe Social Distancing-

In Yellow Phase, worshipping congregations will be limited to 25 (including chancel party). How will you indicate where people may sit while still ensuring safe distancing? Masking tape

indicators? Pew signs? Can you set up the parish hall in advance with circles of chairs, appropriately distanced, to allow for some fellowship in the yellow-green phase?

Signs should be posted, providing safe distancing guidelines, reminders about greeting each other with bows and wearing masks.

LINK TO POSTERS AVAILABLE FROM CDC ON CLEANING PROTOCOL:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

Other useful links:

CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

OSHA posters

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>

PA.gov

<https://www.pa.gov/guides/responding-to-covid-19/#PhasedReopening>

PA References

<https://steamecosystem.partnershipplanners.org/projectlist/index.php?ece041bbdce806>

Diocesan Website

<https://diocesecpa.org/parish-news/coronavirus-facts-precautions-and-prayers/>

Appendix C: The Role of The Usher

Returning to church in a manner that will ensure a safe environment for all is critical. There will be a need in Yellow and Yellow-Green Phases of worship for specially trained ushers to oversee the conduct of the Congregation and to promote healthy practices. During this time, the principal role of the usher is to serve a health safety ministry. These duties must be well executed to allow the clergy to concentrate on the liturgy and the Congregation. Ushers will demonstrate proper protocols by being masked and maintaining social distance. They may use disposable gloves.

Greeting - The doors should be propped open when possible, to keep people from touching them.

Masks - All those attending worship, including the usher, will wear masks. The usher will ask congregants to put on their masks or offer a single-use mask from a basket. No one will enter without a mask. Masks will be worn while in the church and while exiting until social distancing guidelines can be achieved.

Entry - Ushers will ensure that no more than the authorized number of people enter the church. Initially, this is set by the state at 25. This includes clergy and other members of the worship team, including the ushers. A by-name record will be kept and provided to parish leadership at the end of each service. This can be done with an annotated church roster, reservation list if implemented by the parish or any other similar methodology. Visitors will be asked for minimal contact information (name, email, telephone no.) to facilitate contact tracing if needed. This may be done by a simple form, including spaces for the data requested and a disclaimer that the information may be only be used for contact tracing. An usher or other trained volunteer should record the information provided verbally by parishioners. Measures will be taken to limit access to this information to parish leadership. This may be done by providing envelopes for contact information forms.

Bulletin - The usher will make available a single-use bulletin or program for the worshippers or direct the worshippers to the screen for projected materials.

Seating - The usher will instruct worshippers about available seating. Family groups dwelling together may sit together. Individuals and family groups must be at least 6 feet away from each other. It may be necessary to direct individuals and family groups to move from seat to seat to achieve required separation.

Opening of the Service - The clergy person will announce at the beginning of service, the protocol and conduct guidelines. The usher(s) will ensure these rules are followed.

Traffic Flow - At the time of communion, the usher(s) will direct worshippers to the altar and assist in maintaining appropriate physical distancing. Worshippers will stand at the altar rail to receive communion in one kind.

Dismissal - At the close of the service, the usher will direct worshippers out of the church by pew and discourage violation of social distancing standards in the church. They will indicate to the worshippers the bin for recycling of bulletins. They will replace any paper waste bags that were discarded by members of the Congregation.

Appendix D: Governor Wolf’s Plan (April 2020)

The red phase, which currently applies to the whole state, has the sole purpose of minimizing the spread of COVID-19 through strict social distancing, non-life sustaining business, and school closures and building safety protocols.

Red	
Work and Congregate Setting Restrictions	Social Restrictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-Sustaining Businesses Only • Congregate Care and Prison Restrictions in Place • Schools (for in-person instruction) and Most Child Care Facilities Closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay-at-Home Orders in Place • Large Gatherings Prohibited • Restaurants and Bars Limited to Carry-Out and Delivery Only • Only Travel for Life-Sustaining Purposes Encouraged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reiterate and reinforce safety guidance for businesses, workers, individuals, facilities, update if necessary • Monitor public health indicators, adjust orders and restrictions as necessary 	

As regions or counties move into the yellow phase, some restrictions on work and social interaction will ease while others, such as closures of schools, gyms, and other indoor recreation centers, as well as limitations around large gatherings, remain in place. The purpose of this phase is to begin to power back up the economy while keeping a close eye on the public health data to ensure the spread of disease remains contained to the greatest extent possible.

Yellow	
Work and Congregate Setting Restrictions	Social Restrictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telework Must Continue Where Feasible • Businesses with In-Person Operations Must Follow Business and Building Safety Orders • Child Care Open with Worker and Building Safety Orders • Congregate Care and Prison Restrictions in Place • Schools Remain Closed for In-Person Instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay-at-Home Restrictions Lifted in Favor of Aggressive Mitigation • Large Gatherings of More than 25 Prohibited • In-Person Retail Allowable, Curbside and Delivery Preferable • Indoor Recreation, Health, and Wellness Facilities (such as gyms, spas), and all Entertainment (such as casinos, theaters) Remain Closed • Restaurants and Bars Limited to Carry-Out and Delivery Only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All businesses must follow CDC and DOH guidance for social distancing and cleaning • Monitor public health indicators, adjust orders and restrictions as necessary 	

The green phase eases most restrictions by lifting the stay-at-home and business closure orders to allow the economy to strategically reopen while continuing to prioritize public health. While this phase will facilitate a return to a “new normal,” it will be equally important to continue to monitor public health indicators and adjust orders and restrictions as necessary to ensure the spread of disease remains at a minimum.

Green	
Work and Congregate Setting Restrictions	Social Restrictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Businesses Must Follow CDC and PA Department of Health Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressive Mitigation Orders Lifted All Individuals Must Follow CDC and PA Department of Health Guidelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor public health indicators, adjust orders and restrictions as necessary 	

Just as the administration took a measured, county-by-county approach to the stay-at-home order before expanding statewide, it will do the same to ease restrictions and reopen the state.

The Governor first announced the standards for reopening last week, and they remain the focal point for the comprehensive plans announced today:

- The approach will be data-driven and reliant upon quantifiable criteria to drive a targeted, evidence-based, regional approach to reopenings in Pennsylvania.
- There will be guidance and recommendations for employers, individuals, and health care facilities and providers for assured accountability as we reopen.
- Reopening necessitates that adequate personal protective equipment and diagnostic testing are available.
- Reopening requires a monitoring and surveillance program that allows the Commonwealth to deploy swift actions for containment or mitigation.
- Protections for vulnerable populations must remain steadfast throughout the reopening process, such as limitations on visitors to congregate care facilities and prisons.
- Limitations on large gatherings unrelated to occupations should remain in place for the duration of the reopening process.