

Infectious Disease Preparedness Plan for STFX Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation Programs

COVID-19

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation is committed to providing a safe and healthy ministry environment for all our participants, guests, and visitors. To ensure we have a safe and healthy ministry, STFX Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation has developed the following Infectious Disease Preparedness Plan (IDPP) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Youth Ministers, Catechists and volunteers are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 in our ministry and communities, and that requires full cooperation among our participants, volunteers and staff. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons in our ministry.

The IDPP is administered by STFX Youth Ministry Staff, who maintain the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, volunteers and participants are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this Infectious Disease Preparedness Plan.

Our participants are our most important assets. STFX Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation is serious about safety and health and protecting its participants.

STFX Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation's Infectious Disease Preparedness Plan follows the Minnesota Department of Health prevention guidance for Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs developed by the state of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19 and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders.

This IDPP document outlines and offers guidance for practical application of preventative strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in youth and student programs. This guidance is applicable to programs authorized to operate by Executive Order 20-74 (PDF) (https://mn.gov/governor/assets/EO%2020-74%20Final_tcm1055-434913.pdf) including youth programs, K-12 schools,

colleges, universities, and day camps. In alignment with this order, programs may operate with a maximum number of 10 people for indoor programs and up to 25 people per group for outdoor activities. ***Amounts of people are subject to change with regulation changes.***

Public health guidance is based on:

♣ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Childcare, Schools, and Youth Programs (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html)

♣ CDC: Implementation of Mitigation Strategies for Communities with Local COVID-19 Transmission (PDF) (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/community-mitigation-strategy.pdf)

Promote a safe program environment

STFX Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation strives to adapt practices to allow physical distancing of at least 6 feet whenever possible.

*****Parents you are the first wave in protecting our participants: We ask that if you Child is sick or experiencing any of these symptoms that you keep them at home.***

Symptoms of COVID-19 can include fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. Other less common symptoms include gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. Not everyone with COVID-19 has all of these symptoms, and some people may not have any symptoms. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

We ask that you please take their temperature regularly if your child will be participating in any of our Youth Ministry events. This will ensure that we protect all participants at our events.

♣ Within the program, we will strive to create consistent groupings of the same staff, volunteers, and participants. The maximum number of participants per group would be dependent upon the location of the activity, with a maximum number of 10 people for indoor activities and up to 25 people per group for outdoor activities. ***Amounts of people are subject to change with regulation changes.***

- ♣ Whenever possible, we will implement programming that refrains from intermixing groups. If intermixing of groups is necessary, limit the number of groups that intermix and keep records of staff, volunteers, and participants that intermix.
- ♣ Wherever possible, we will hold activities outdoors and encourage participants to spread out.
- ♣ Avoid having areas easily accessible that would allow staff, volunteers, or participants to easily congregate in a limited space.

Maintain safe program spaces

- ♣ Modify programs where participants are likely to be in very close contact.
- ♣ Avoid community supplies when possible.
- ♣ If shared supplies are necessary, consider using designated bins for clean and used supplies. Community supplies are considered high-touch and should be cleaned frequently.
- ♣ Do not share equipment between staff, volunteers, and participants when possible.
- ♣ Clean high touch surfaces between different groups.
- ♣ Honor requests of parents who may have concerns about their children attending the program due to underlying medical conditions of those in their home.
- ♣ The CDC lists underlying medical conditions that may increase the risk of serious COVID-19 for people of any age: Groups at Higher Risk for Severe Illness (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/groups-at-higher-risk.html).

Cloth face coverings

- ♣ Follow cloth face covering guidance from the CDC, and MDH for schools and child care, as well as the requirements from state, local and Archdiocesan authorities.

♣ Masking Recommendations for Child Care and Schools
(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/masks.html).

♣ Best Practices for Masks: Considerations for People with Disabilities and Special Health Needs (PDF)
(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/guidemasks.pdf).

Minimize opportunities for mixing between groups

When possible STFX Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation will strive to follow these recommendations.

♣ Stagger arrival and/or dismissal times.

♣ Minimize crowding at drop-off and pick-up times. ▪ Designate times for families to come, consider staggering times if possible. ▪ Whenever possible, participant pick-up and drop-off should occur outside. ▪ Add visual cues or barriers to direct traffic flow and distancing. ▪ Develop signage and processes to minimize interactions of families.

♣ Consider dividing participant entry points rather than funneling all participants through the same entry space. These approaches can limit the amount of close contact between participants in high-traffic situations and times.

♣ Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups or organizations as possible – especially with individuals who are not from the local geographic area (e.g., community, town, city, county).

♣ Pursue virtual activities and events in lieu of field trips, assemblies, and special performances, as possible.

♣ Avoid taking multiple groups to the bathrooms at once (e.g., avoid having all classes use the bathroom right after lunch or recess).

♣ Limit nonessential visitors.

♣ Limit the presence of volunteers for activities.

♣ Keep groups together; maintain the same groups from day to day. This will help reduce potential exposures and may prevent an entire program from shutting down if exposure occurs.

Encourage and reinforce social norms and health etiquette

Promote materials and trainings to ensure that staff, volunteers, and participants:

♣ Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after having been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Hand Hygiene (www.health.state.mn.us/people/handhygiene/index.html)

♣ Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your arm or elbow. Cover Your Cough (www.health.state.mn.us/people/cyc/index.html)

♣ Ask staff, volunteers, and participants to wash hands upon arriving, before and after eating meals, before and after applying sunscreen, and when entering or leaving indoor-spaces.

♣ Consider ways to reinforce good hand hygiene. For example, provide incentives (e.g., creative summer program or camp accolades) for proper and thorough hand washing.

♣ Have staff, volunteers, and participants wash hands or use hand sanitizer if they come into contact or use shared amenities.

♣ Have hand sanitizer and tissues readily available for use by staff, volunteers, and participants.

♣ Ensure the availability of appropriate cleaning supplies (e.g., disinfectant wipes) for cleaning of high touch surfaces (see more details below).

♣ Educate staff, volunteers, and participants on the importance of avoiding touching their faces throughout the day, and washing their hands when they do.

♣ Ensure participants aren't sharing water bottles, food, or other items.

♣ Exercise caution when using drinking fountains.

- Think carefully about how drinking fountains are being used and how regularly they are being cleaned in making a decision to use them. Consider

encouraging participants to use refillable water bottles to avoid direct contact with the fountain equipment.

- If you do use them, ensure there are hand hygiene products available right next to the drinking fountain and encourage users to perform hand hygiene before and after using one.

♣ Consider engaging program participants in developing communications or creative strategies to limit the spread of COVID-19 (e.g., develop a competition around creating the new camp greeting, providing alternatives to hugs or high-fives).

Promote health checks

♣ Emphasize the importance of daily health checks. Prior to allowing your child to participate in any **STFX Catholic Youth Ministry and Formation** events

- Parents/guardians are asked to take their child's temperature before coming to the facility or upon arrival at the facility.
- Ask the parent/guardian to confirm that the child does not have fever, shortness of breath or cough.

♣ Use exclusion guidance and isolate symptomatic staff and program participants.

♣ Follow exclusion guidance and ensure staff and participants stay home when sick: **Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs (PDF)**
(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/exguide.pdf)

♣ Ensure sick policies are supportive of participants and staff staying home when sick.

♣ Have a plan if staff or participants get sick. ▪ Make a plan with parents prior to sessions around expectations if their child becomes ill while at the program. ▪ Plan to have a room or area that can be used to isolate a symptomatic staff member, volunteer, or participants while they wait to be picked up or are able to leave on their own; ensure there is enough space for multiple people placed at least 6 feet apart (in the case more than one participant becomes ill). ▪ Ensure that they have hygiene supplies available, including a cloth or disposable mask, facial tissues, and alcohol-based hand rub.

♣ If we have a participant or staff who is diagnosed with COVID-19, we will reach out to MDH or local public health agency for further direction.