

# Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Conducting Funerals

### Recent Updates:

11/3/20: Individuals who have respiratory symptoms or fever must be asked to return home. It is recommended that they call their health care provider about the need for COVID-19 testing and isolation.

Funerals and graveside services can take place with the following requirements:

- Services may be conducted outdoors, based on family preference and religious custom.
  - There is no limit on attendance for outdoor services as long as physical distancing of 6 feet between parties from the same household can be maintained.
- Arrangements are in place to make restrooms safely available to attendees at outdoor events. The site may choose to provide portable outdoor toilet and handwashing facilities and/or to make indoor restrooms available. If indoor restroom facilities are made available, the following precautions are in place:
  - A defined route is marked from the outdoor area used for the event to the indoor location of restrooms.
  - Tape or other markings are used to assure physical distancing if attendees must line up to use restrooms.
  - Attendees are encouraged to use restrooms as needed during the service or event to avoid crowding at the end.
  - Restrooms facilities are in good working order and are equipped with adequate soap and one-time use towels to permit required handwashing.
  - Restroom facilities are configured to permit physical distancing outside of walled cubicles.
  - A staff person (or staff people if there is more than one interior restroom option) wearing a cloth face covering is posted at the entrance to the restroom but at least 6 feet from the nearest arriving or departing person to monitor use of face coverings and track occupancy.
- Physical distancing rules must be followed.
  - Note that physical distancing requirements DO NOT apply to members of a single household. Individuals who live together may be seated or stand next to each other with a 6 foot space between the household group and any other attendees.
  - Funeral staff may guide attendees to spots that are 6 feet apart, use markings to define appropriate spacing or use other means to assure an adequate distance between mourners.
  - Parents or other household members must assure the safe participation of children in attendance. Depending on the child's age and family preference:
    - Children may be carried or placed in a stroller or other carrier during the service;
    - Children may be seated or stand at the side of a responsible adult; or
    - Children may be permitted to stand or sit apart from the group of mourners but close enough for careful oversight by an adult.
    - It is the responsibility of the invited family to instruct their children not to touch anyone who is not part of their household or any item that does not belong to them.

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- Staff are deployed as needed to assure appropriate physical distancing and to direct traffic flow at different stages of the event. Steps must be taken to avoid spread of COVID-19 among participants in the service.
  - Invitees must be instructed to abstain from in-person attendance at the event if they have been identified as having COVID-19, have symptoms consistent with COVID-19\* or have been exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19
  - Individuals should be verbally screened for respiratory symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing) or fever as they arrive. Individuals who have respiratory symptoms or fever must be asked to return home. It is recommended that they call their health care provider about the need for testing and isolation. For more information, visit [ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare).
  - Individuals at high risk for serious illness from COVID-19 infection (persons 65 years of age or older, people with chronic respiratory or immune conditions) are encouraged to abstain from attendance for their own protection.
    - The service may be live streamed to permit virtual participation of anyone who cannot safely attend (see webcasting resources from the [National Funeral Directors Association](#)). It may also be taped for later viewing.
  - All participants other than children under the age of 2 or individuals with conditions that prevent the use of a face covering as recommended by a health care provider are instructed to wear [cloth face coverings](#) at all times during the funeral gathering.
  - Tissues and alcohol-based hand sanitizer are to be provided for use by families and staff, and restrooms are stocked with an adequate supply of soap and paper towels. Waste bins are readily available for the disposal of tissues and paper towels.
  - People should not touch or kiss the body of someone who has died of COVID-19. If touching occurs, the person must wash their hands or use hand sanitizer prior to touching their face and anything or anyone else.
  - Outdoor settings must be used throughout the funeral and related services and events.
  - Use of shared objects should be limited when possible. Use of objects, equipment, and/or supplies that may be difficult to disinfect or make it hard to ensure physical distancing (e.g. tent walls) should be avoided.
    - If a program is provided for the event, it must be in disposable form.
    - Items that must be shared as part of a particular service are disinfected between users.
  - Self-service foods and beverages are not offered.
- The California Department of Public Health directs that “activities such as singing and chanting negate the risk-reduction achieved through six feet of physical distancing” due to an increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets.
  - These activities may be included in outdoor events with much greater physical distance or through alternative methods (such as internet streaming) that ensure individual congregation members perform these activities separately in their own homes.

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- Please review the updated LA County Guidance for Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies [here](#).

\*Symptoms of COVID-19 may include some combination of the following: fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle or body pain, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, or new loss of taste or smell. This list of symptoms is not all inclusive.

