



COVID-19 Guidance for Delaware's Amish Communities

WHAT IS COVID-19?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. Patients with COVID-19 have experienced mild to severe respiratory illness, including fever, cough, shortness of breath, body aches and sore throat.

HOW DOES COVID-19 SPREAD?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. A person can also get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes.

LIMITING GROUP EVENTS

Large events and mass gatherings can contribute to the spread of COVID-19 in the United States via travelers who attend these events and introduce the virus to new communities. The CDC guidance for gatherings while the virus is spreading is for groups to:

- Cancel events with more than 50 individuals. Delaware Governor John Carney's State of Emergency also restricts gatherings to no more than 50 people.
- Cancel gatherings of more than 10 people of primarily higher-risk populations, which includes individuals older than 60 and those with serious chronic medical conditions (such as heart disease, diabetes or lung disease).

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHURCHES

The CDC recommends the following tips for churches and community gathering spaces:

- Wipe down everything touched by churchgoers, such as door handles, pew tops and railings with cleaning products.
- Avoid hugs and handshakes. Just wave or bow.
- Encourage people to wash their hands. Consider posting reminders throughout the church and the community. Free shareable resources on handwashing are available from the CDC.
- Make hand sanitizers available throughout the church.
- Place tissue boxes in every pew.
- Review your church's emergency operations plans and communication plans.
- Discourage panic and fear.
- Don't spread false information.
- Encourage congregation members to seek information only from reliable sources such as the CDC and the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services.

IF YOU GET SICK

The best way to prevent illness from spreading within a family or community is to avoid exposure. Individuals who become ill should isolate themselves from others in the community and the home. You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ridesharing or taxis.

- If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the health care provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- **Avoid contact with animals.** When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals and livestock while you are sick.
- **Practice respiratory etiquette** (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or sleeve).
- **Practice frequent, proper handwashing** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Perform routine environmental cleaning.** Routinely clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, countertops, etc.). Cleaning and disinfection products should include at least 70% alcohol or, if using a bleach solution, dilute 1/3-cup bleach per gallon of water. Other EPA-registered household disinfectants could also be used.
- **Follow isolation guidelines.** Even if you are feeling better, remain at home for at least seven days from when symptoms are no longer present; during the first three days, continue to isolate at home, and during the remaining four days while you may go out, avoid large gatherings, work, church or school, and distance yourself (six feet apart) from others.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Delawareans with general questions about COVID-19 or their exposure risk can call the Division of Public Health's Coronavirus Call Center at 1-866-408-1899, or 711 for individuals who are hearing-impaired, from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

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