

# ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF THE BRITISH ISLES AND IRELAND

## Covid-19 Risk Assessment Checklist for Orthodox Parishes when Buildings are used for Private Prayer

### Risk Assessment Template

The government has announced that places of worship can open for private individual prayer (NOT SERVICES OR GROUP PRAYER) as from 13<sup>th</sup> June 2020. This Risk Assessment Template has been prepared for use by clergy and appropriate senior church officers to ensure, as far as possible, a safe environment for individuals and household groups entering church for private prayer. "Household groups" are strictly those living in the same house, not wider family living elsewhere. The content of the Risk Assessment Template has been prepared from existing [Government Instructions \(12th June 2020\)](#) and useful documentation from other religious bodies, where these are relevant to the Orthodox context. This document will be updated from time to time.

Area of Focus	Controls Required	Additional Information	Action by Whom?	Completed: Date and Name
<b>Preparation of the Church for: Private Prayer:</b>  <i>(some of these provisions would apply to churches in normal times)</i>	One point of entry to the church building clearly identified and, if possible, a different exit point.			
	Assess the building's physical environment and furnishings to determine necessary measures to ensure social distancing and public hygiene.	If the building is hired, please work with the property owner.		
	Make sure that signage is clear, up to date and installed for maximum intelligibility and impact, using multiple languages if necessary.	Signage should be to a professional standard.		
	Ensure that all toilet facilities are either locked or cordoned off, with appropriate signage.			
	Ensure that any kitchen facilities are either locked or cordoned off, with appropriate signage.			
	Have hand sanitisers available for people to use on entry and exit of the church building and elsewhere in the nave for ease of access.	Sanitising gels must be at least 60% alcohol content.		

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<b>Procedures, Roles and Training</b>	The final responsibility for maintaining the necessary safety Protocols lies with the clergy and Council of the parish.	Remember that there are insurance and legal implications.		
	In the circumstances of this pandemic there should be at least two priests and/or stewards on duty when the church is open.			
	Recruit and train the requisite number of stewards who will have supervision of the premises when open and who will assist parishioners to comply with these protocols.  All on duty must themselves, of course, conform to the regulations.			
	Keep records and contact details of people entering the building.  This information may be required by the authorities for the government's Test and Trace system to control any local outbreaks.  Such data retention should conform to the parish's GDPR policy and provisions.	Review GDPR provisions and communicate the provisions here to parishioners.		
	Confirm who has responsibility for assessing whether the church can be cleaned "in-house" according to normal protocols or whether professional cleaners need to be employed.	See the section below on: "Cleaning a Possibly Contaminated Church"		

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	<p>Routine in-house cleaning must be completed using N95 or FFP3 grade masks, disposable gloves, aprons and cleaning materials with specifications designed to deal with COVID-19.</p> <p>Routine cleaning should take place after each use of the building.</p>	<p>Make sure the parish has adequate stocks of PPE and cleaning materials according to specification.</p>		
	<p>Regularly review all hygiene protocols to ensure that they comply with government and public health guidance and communicate these clearly to parish members.</p>			
	<p>Keep doors and windows open (taking fire safety and security issues into consideration).</p>			
	<p>Confirm modified evacuation procedures in the case of an emergency.</p>			
	<p>Direct all users to leave the building by a separate exit, if available, to avoid bottlenecks and contraflows.</p>			
	<p>Ensure that the church's public media (websites, Facebook etc) has up to date information, including links to Archdiocesan policies.</p>			
<p><b>Cleaning a Possibly Contaminated Church</b></p>	<p>Close the building for 72 hours with no access permitted - unless security has been breached - in which case full PPE must be worn.</p>			

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	When the building has been quarantined for 72 hours, bring in professional COVID-19 cleaners. Church cleaners must not perform a deep clean.			
<b>Insurance and Legal Protection</b>	Consult your Insurance Company or Broker to establish possible cover for costs and damages should anyone pursue a claim for negligence in the performance of your duties in the parish and church	The Archdiocesan Insurance policy does NOT cover parish liabilities of any kind. It only covers strictly Archdiocesan functions as performed by Archdiocesan Trustees and Officers.		
<b>Parish Specific Measures</b>				

Date of Review	Date of Compliance	2 Initials		Date of Review	Date of Compliance	2 Initials		Date of Review	Date of Compliance	2 Initials