

Annexes

SAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE FOR PARISHES

INTRODUCTION

This procedure outlining the risk and the mitigation requirements for the return to Public Ministry is based on material issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The procedure is concerned primarily with the risk posed by the virus in an indoor setting. While it is currently not possible to eliminate the risk of exposure to the virus, the risk of the COVID-19 virus being transmitted should be sufficiently controlled by completing the actions outlined in the risk assessment checklist.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Coronavirus is spread in minute water droplets that are expelled from the body through sneezing, coughing, talking, singing, or breathing. It can survive for a period on surfaces, from where it can be transferred to others through touch. While for the vast majority symptoms will be mild, outcomes for some from contracting the virus can be so severe it is regarded as a high-risk hazard. The impact of the virus in the Church environment can be moderated by:

- reducing the level and duration of exposure
- ensuring the required physical distancing between household groups and individuals
- practicing strict hygiene protocols
- suggesting that people at high risk from the virus should remain at home and continue to access liturgies online or on radio
- reminding people displaying symptoms or who are close contacts of those who have the virus to stay at home, from where they can continue to access liturgies online or on radio
- managing movement within the Church building and on the Church grounds
- ensuring all clergy, staff, volunteers, and contractors are aware of the administrative controls to be followed.

MITIGATION CONTROLS CHECKLIST

The implementation of mitigation measures is designed to control the risk that the gathering will facilitate COVID-19 virus transmission. Before completing the checklist, it would be useful to collect the following information in advance:

- who is doing what and how?
- where they are doing it; and
- what are they using to carry out the task?
- what is the current capacity of the building and how will this be reduced?
- Is there space outside and around the Church building to allow 2m distant queuing
- How can the queue be cut off when indoor capacity is reached?
- Can the ceremony be relayed on an outside speaker and people remain in their cars if they cannot get into the Church?

RISK REGISTER CHECKLIST

A	Understanding of the COVID-19 situation / Public Health Advice	Done
	Recruit Volunteer Coordinators and Support Team (2 Coordinators and a team for each church in Parish)	
	Ensure that Parish Personnel and Support Team know of, and are committed to complying with recognised best practices in respiratory etiquette, hand hygiene, physical distancing, sanitation practices and the latest Public health advice www.hse.ie	
B	Staff, Volunteers, Partners and Stakeholders	Done
	Determine the number of volunteers (church and carpark stewards and cleaners) required and ensure they are recruited and trained	

	Consider the requirements that may arise in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults	
C	Response & Implementation	Done
	Identify the total number of people that can be accommodated in each Church and entry/exit procedures/route	
	Source and purchase appropriate supplies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PPE (masks, gloves, aprons etc.) for Parish Personnel and Volunteers ➤ Paper towel, sanitizer, bins, soap canisters for toilets/bathrooms ➤ Hand sanitiser units for appropriate points in the church 	
	Organise and clean Sanctuary area as per Bishops Framework document	
	If safe and practical, keep doors open to avoid touching	
	Block off required number of pews/benches	
	Notify parishioners of the numbers that can be accommodated	
	Allocate space for parishioners with disabilities and their carers	
	Determine the plan for access to and movement in the sacristy and sanctuary area	
	Develop a system for cleaning/sanitizing the sacristy Sanitising of liturgical vessels Avoidance of contamination of altar breads, cruets etc. use of same vestments by more than one priest Sanitising of hand basin etc.	
	Agree the plan for scheduling of masses that allows adequate time for cleaning if more than one mass on a day and how to stagger parishioners to ensure management of people and availability of volunteers.	
	Develop cleaning schedule for the church, sacristy and toilet facilities etc.	
	Agree safe method for the distribution of Holy Communion	
	Establish a safe and secure means for receiving contributions without the need to pass bags or baskets and safe measures for counting cash	
	Develop stewarding plan for church and for outdoor areas	
	Identify and set up a suitable area for the Sacrament of Reconciliation	
D	Command, control, and coordination arrangements	Done
	Define who is responsible for decisions and actions to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel a liturgy in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak	
E	Communications	Done
	Identify a suitable person to manage communications	
	Define how to communicate new arrangements and potential risks to parishioners	
	Source and purchase signage regarding physical distancing and the movement of people	
	Have badges /sashes / hi-vis jackets for staff and volunteers where required	