

25 May, 1600hrs

## **COVID-19: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON GRADUAL RESUMPTION OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN PHASE 1**

### *General*

**Q1. My siblings and I live separately. Can I pray together with my siblings at the place of worship?**

- No. Worshippers may only pray in-person individually or together if they are members of the same household.
- Members of the same household refer to the people who live in the same residence as you and not family members who do not stay at the same address as you.

**Q2. Can I ask religious workers to conduct religious rites (e.g. baptism, communion, medium prayers, receive holy ash) as part of private worship?**

- No. Private worship refers only to prayers and other forms of worship that are performed by an individual worshipper alone or with his/her household group.
- In Phase One, religious workers are not allowed to conduct religious rites and ceremonies in the place of worship except for marriage solemnizations and funeral-related activities.

**Q3. I need some spiritual support. Can I approach religious workers to pray for me?**

- If this is necessary, you must ensure that safe distancing is maintained at all times between you and the religious worker.
- Prayers should be kept short and be limited to you or your household group only. It must not involve other worshippers.

**Q4. Are religious workers allowed to provide in-person religious counselling?**

- No. You should arrange for a virtual or a tele-consultation.
- If you or someone you know needs emotional or psychological support, or knows someone who needs support, you can also call the National CARE hotline at 1800-202-6868 or any of the helplines listed [here](#).

**Q5. Are columbariums in places of worship open for visitation?**

- No, columbariums in places of worship remain closed to visitors.
- The columbarium will only be open for families installing niches for their loved ones, with no more than 10 persons in attendance.

**Q6. Must I wear a mask/face shield while praying at the place of worship?**

- Yes, all worshippers entering places of worship must wear their masks or face shields at all times.

*For Religious Organisations*

**Q7. How many religious workers and staff are we allowed to deploy on-site?**

- Places of worship may deploy religious workers and staff to facilitate private worship and other permitted activities (i.e. marriage solemnizations, funeral-related activities and recording/broadcast sessions), but this group must be limited to essential tasks and kept to a minimum number.
- Religious organisations must include their manpower deployment in the Safe Management Plan that they submit to MCCY within two weeks of re-opening their place of worship and commencing the permitted activities.
- In addition to MCCY's advisory, religious organisations must comply with prevailing safe management measures at the workplace stipulated by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI).

**Q8. How do we ensure that there are no queues at places of worship?**

- Religious organisations can consider implementing an online appointment system to regulate flow of worshippers on-site.
- Beyond this, places of worship must put in place safe management measures to protect worshippers, religious workers and staff.
- These include: designating prayer areas; no sharing of prayer items; safe distancing among worshippers, religious workers and staff; sanitising the prayer area after each use; and one-way flow for entry and exit points.
- Volunteers are not allowed to be mobilised for queue management.

**Q9. Do religious organisations still need to apply to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) for a Time-Limited Exemption (TLE) prior to returning on-site to complete urgent administrative tasks that cannot be done remotely?**

- Yes, a TLE is required if religious workers or staff need to return to the RO's premises or place of worship to complete urgent administrative tasks that cannot be done remotely.
- You can apply to MTI for a TLE via <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg> one day prior to the conduct of such activities. Religious organisations are not required to inform MCCY of these TLE applications.
- These TLEs will be capped at twice per week for each religious organisation (by unique entity number).
- If additional TLEs are required, religious organisations can appeal to MCCY via [cpro@mccy.gov.sg](mailto:cpro@mccy.gov.sg) and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- For more information on the TLE, please visit <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg>
- All religious workers and staff not involved in the permitted on-site activities must telecommute as the default arrangement.

**Q10. My religious organisation needs more time to develop our safe management plans. Can we still re-open on 2 June 2020 while we prepare concurrently?**

- No. All religious organisations must implement safe management measures before re-opening their places of worship for permitted activities in Phase One. This is critical to protect their worshippers as well as religious workers and staff.
- You should not open your premises or place of worship on 2 June 2020, if the safe management plan is not in place.
- Religious organisations must submit their Safe Management Plans, including manpower deployment, to MCCY within two weeks of re-opening their place of worship and commencing the permitted activities.
- The detailed requirements and format for submitting these plans will be available at [www.cpro.gov.sg](http://www.cpro.gov.sg) from 27 May 2020.
- MCCY will conduct enforcement checks on ROs and action will be taken against ROs who do not comply with the relevant guidelines, including the cessation of operations.

**Q11. My religious organisation has already implemented the safe management plans but needs more time to submit the details to MCCY. Can I request for an extension?**

- No. Religious organisations must submit their Safe Management Plans, including manpower deployment, to MCCY within two weeks of re-opening their place of worship and commencing the permitted activities.
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