

## EASING OF SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

On **24 March 2022**, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce (MTF) announced the further easing of community safe management measures (SMMs) from **29 March 2022** (see Annex A).

2. This document provides the conditions under which religious organisations (ROs) are permitted to carry out activities in places of worship from **29 March 2022**.

3. The key changes affecting religious activities from **29 March 2022** are:

- a. The permissible group size for social gatherings will be increased from 5 persons to **10 persons for mask-off activities**.
- b. Mask-wearing will continue to be required for indoor settings but will be optional in outdoor settings (see Annex B). Nonetheless, we encourage individuals to wear their masks even when outdoors for personal protection and to protect others, especially in crowded areas.
- c. **Up to 75%** of employees who are able to work from home can now return to the workplace, an increase from the current limit of 50%.
- d. The capacity limit of 50% for congregational worship services and other mask-on religious activities involving more than 1,000 persons will be **increased to 75%**.
- e. **Congregational singing and chanting (with masks on) will be allowed.**
- f. There will be **no restrictions on the number of performers and crew, or the number of performers allowed to unmask for live performances**. In addition, performers who are singing and playing wind instruments in front of an audience will no longer need to conduct additional testing. However, other SMMs for mask-off activities, such as the 1m safe distancing requirement and the prevailing group size must continue to be complied with. All performers and crew must be fully vaccinated.
- g. ROs can allow one group of up to **10 persons** (regardless of vaccination status) at any one time to conduct private worship in the place of worship.
- h. **Consumption of Food and Beverages will be allowed** in places of worship, with **1 metre safe distancing** between individuals or groups of no more than **10 persons per group and with Vaccination-Differentiated SMMs (VDS)**. Food must be **served individually**, with individuals **stationary** (e.g., seated) while consuming their meals.

Annex C summarises the above changes. Please see the following sections for the detailed conditions for various permitted religious activities.

## RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

### Worship Services

4. ROs must continue to implement vaccination-differentiated safe management measures (VDS) for all congregational and other worship services. This means that **all participants (worshippers, religious and supporting workers) must be fully vaccinated.**<sup>1</sup>
5. From **29 March 2022**, the capacity limit of 50% for congregational worship services and other mask-on religious activities involving more than 1,000 persons will be increased to **75%**.
6. There is no need for safe distancing between each worshipper for mask-on activities. Nevertheless, safe distancing is encouraged.
  - a. ROs should avoid chokepoints and spread worshippers as evenly as possible.
7. ROs must adopt the following SMMs for worship services:
  - a. For indoor settings, all persons present (except children below 6 years of age) must **wear a face mask at all times.**<sup>2</sup> Face shields are not permitted as substitutes for face masks. Young children are still strongly encouraged to use a mask, especially in crowded areas. Mask-wearing will be optional in outdoor settings. However, we encourage individuals to wear their masks even when outdoors for personal protection and to protect others, especially in crowded areas.
  - b. From **29 March 2022**, singing by worshippers is allowed, with their masks on.
  - c. **Live performance elements are permitted during the worship service at places of worship**, with the following SMMs (see Annex D for details).

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<sup>1</sup> From 14 February 2022 onwards, persons aged 18 years and above who have completed the primary vaccination series of COVID-19 vaccines and are eligible for booster vaccination will be considered as fully vaccinated for 270 days after the last dose in their primary vaccination series. The same will apply to persons aged 12-17 years old from 14 March 2022. For more information, refer to <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/vaccination>. From 15 March 2022, unvaccinated children aged 12 years and below (i.e. born in 2010 or later need **not** be from the same household to be included within a group for congregational and worship services. A grace period has been extended to children born in December 2009 to allow them sufficient time to get fully vaccinated. Children born in 2009 who will turn 13 in 2022 will need to be fully vaccinated to enter venues and participate in activities with VDS from 1 March 2022. Please refer to the MOH Press Release on 2 December 2021 for more details.

<sup>2</sup> Children 12 years and below, as well as persons who have health conditions that may result in breathing or other medical difficulties when a mask is worn for a prolonged period of time, may wear a face shield in lieu of a face mask.

- i. From **29 March 2022**, there will be no restrictions on the number of performers and crew, or the number of performers allowed to unmask for live performances.
- ii. From **29 March 2022**, performers who are singing and playing instruments requiring intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments) in front of an audience will no longer need to conduct additional testing. However, there can be no singing or playing of such instruments, unless all performers and crew, are fully vaccinated or exempted from VDS. If these conditions are met, all unmasked performers may sing and play instruments that require intentional expulsion of air.
- iii. There must be at least a 1 metre setback between persons involved in the conduct of live performance elements and worshippers.
- iv. **From 29 March 2022**, static performers (i.e., in the same position throughout the live performance) may be in **groups of 10 persons**:
  - There is no need to maintain safe distance from other groups if there are no persons singing and/or playing wind/brass instruments.
  - If all performers in the group are masked, they need not maintain safe distance from other groups (e.g., worshippers, religious workers) at the event. If there are any unmasked performers in the group, they must maintain at least 1m safe distance from other groups.
- d. Worshippers should not share **prayer and other common items** (e.g., holy books, passing of offertory baskets, prayer mats) and should bring along their personal prayer items instead, where required.

### **Private Worship**

- 8. Based on the prevailing measures for social gatherings, from **29 March 2022**, **ROs can allow one group of up to 10 persons (regardless of vaccination status) at any one time to conduct private worship in the place of worship.**
  - a. Private worshippers must remain masked at all times.
  - b. Private worshippers may interact with a religious worker who is fully vaccinated.
- 9. There should be no mingling between the private worship group and persons involved in worship services and other religious activities, which are subject to VDS.

## **Marriage Solemnizations**

10. ROs may continue to use places of worship to conduct marriage solemnizations with VDS. From **29 March 2022**, the maximum number of participants in marriage solemnizations conducted by ROs will be similar to the capacity conditions stated in para 5.<sup>3</sup>

## **Funerals**

11. From **29 March 2022**, funerals, funeral wakes or funeral processions (without VDS) held during or before the burial or cremation of the deceased in places of worship will be **allowed with similar capacity conditions** as worship services (see para 5) and the following SMMs:

a. For indoor settings, attendees must remain masked at all times. For outdoors, attendees are advised to be masked. If mask-off, safe distancing of 1m between individuals or groups is required.

b. There must not be any reception with food and drinks.

12. ROs must continue to comply with prevailing SMMs listed on MTI's website<sup>4</sup> for these funerary-related activities and check the guidelines for any further updates.

13. From **29 March 2022**, visits to columbaria at places of worship **for up to 10 persons will be allowed without VDS**. Visits should be kept as short as possible.

## **Other Religious Activities**

14. VDS will continue to apply for other religious activities. From **29 March 2022**, **religious rites that are not part of a worship service, and other religious activities (e.g. pastoral services)** will be **allowed with similar capacity conditions**. See para 5 for conditions on the capacity for these activities.

15. Mask-on classes (without VDS) can proceed without being subject to any capacity limit, subject to prevailing fire safety and room capacity requirements.<sup>5</sup>

16. From **29 March 2022**, Rostered Routine Testing regime will cease for those involved in the conduct of religious activities.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to ROM/ROMM's guidelines and the SMMs for Marriage Solemnizations at: <https://www.marriage.gov.sg>. For home solemnisations, there can be up to 10 attendees, similar to home visitation rules.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to SMMs for Funeral Events at: <https://www.gobusiness.gov.sg/safemanagement/sector/>

<sup>5</sup> Refer to MOE's advisory on SMMs for private tuition and enrichment at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/faqs-covid-19-infection>

<sup>6</sup> These include settings with children below 5 years old i.e. staff as well as third-party vendors in preschools, Early Intervention centres, and Private Education Institutions with children less than 5 years old.

## **Recording and Broadcast of Religious Services and Prayers**

17. ROs can continue to support the religious needs of their communities via remote means such as recording and broadcast of religious services and prayers.

- a. From **29 March 2022**, there will be no restrictions on the number of performers and crew, or the number of performers allowed to unmask.
- b. From **29 March 2022**, performers who are singing and playing instruments requiring intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments) in front of an audience will no longer need to conduct additional testing. However, there can be no singing or playing of such instruments, unless all performers and crew, are fully vaccinated or exempted from VDS. If these conditions are met, all unmasked performers may sing and play instruments that require intentional expulsion of air. However, other SMMs for mask-off activities, such as the 1m safe distancing requirement and the prevailing group size must continue to be complied with.
- c. From **29 March 2022**, static performers (i.e. in the same position throughout the live performance) involved in this production may be in groups of **10 persons** with
  - i. There is no need to maintain safe distance from other groups if there are no persons singing and/or playing wind/brass instruments
  - ii. If all performers in the group are masked, they need not maintain safe distance from other groups. If there are any unmasked performers in the group, they must maintain at least 1m safe distance from the next group on camera.
- d. The production team must also put in place safe management measures, and thorough cleaning of technical equipment.
- e. From **29 March 2022**, there can be an audience subject to the capacity conditions in para 5.

## **CONSUMPTION OF FOOD & BEVERAGES**

18. From **29 March 2022**, consumption of Food and Beverages (F&B) with VDS is allowed in places of worship. This includes communal meals served by community kitchens in places of worship.

- a. The capacity limit for communal meals involving more than 1,000 persons will be 75%.

- b. F&B must be **served in individual portions**, and individuals must be **stationary** (regardless of whether they are seated or standing).
- c. Participants should put on their masks as soon as they have finished eating or drinking.
- d. As F&B consumption is a mask-off activity, participants (fully vaccinated) must comply with **1 metre safe distancing** between individuals or groups of no more than 10 persons per group.
- e. There should be no intermingling between groups.

## DEPLOYMENT OF MANPOWER

- 19. ROs should primarily engage their religious workers and staff to support the permitted religious activities but can deploy volunteers to support if necessary.
- 20. From **29 March 2022**, **up to 75% of employees who are able to work from home can now return to the workplace**, an increase from the current limit of 50%.
- 21. From **29 March 2022**, **social gatherings at workplaces will be allowed to resume subject to prevailing SMMs**. Religious workers and administrative staff should continue to comply with prevailing workplace SMMs stipulated by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and check MOM's guidelines for any further updates.<sup>7</sup>

## TRACETOGETHER AND SAFEENTRY

- 22. TraceTogether-only SafeEntry, where the TraceTogether App or Token is required for SafeEntry check-ins, is **required at all venues that are required to implement SafeEntry**. ROs must make the necessary preparations to accept check-ins by the TraceTogether App or Token. ROs can refer to [www.safeentry.gov.sg](https://www.safeentry.gov.sg) for more information.

## MANDATORY SUBMISSION OF SAFE MANAGEMENT PLANS (SMP)

- 23. **ROs must acknowledge through the CPRO website the new conditions for religious activities imposed before commencing the activities from 29 March 2022**. The detailed requirements and format for submitting the acknowledgement form can be found at [www.cpro.gov.sg](https://www.cpro.gov.sg).

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<sup>7</sup> For more information, please refer to MOM's advisory at <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19>.

24. MCCY reserves the right to suspend a RO's activities if there are gaps in the SMP submitted and until the necessary rectifications are made. ROs are responsible for the implementation of SMMs and action could be taken for lapses and breaches. Should there be any confirmed COVID-19 cases linked to a RO's premises or place of worship, the premises may be closed for a period of time as determined by the authorities.

## **TOWARDS COVID-19 RESILIENCE**

25. We thank ROs for their continued efforts and understanding during this Transition Phase. As we ease the SMMs for religious and other community activities, it will be even more important for everyone to stay vigilant and disciplined in our fight against COVID-19. We will need the continued cooperation of the ROs to comply with the prevailing safe management measures, and religious communities to exercise personal responsibility.

26. MCCY will continue to work closely with our ROs for a COVID-19 resilient environment for religious activities.

## **MINISTRY OF CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH**

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For more information and FAQs on COVID-19 for the religious sector, please visit [www.cpro.gov.sg](http://www.cpro.gov.sg) or contact MCCY's Crisis Preparedness for Religious Organisations Programme Office ([cpro@mccy.gov.sg](mailto:cpro@mccy.gov.sg)).

**FIVE CORE PARAMETERS TO STREAMLINE  
OUR COMMUNITY SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES (SMMs)**

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Current Posture</b>
<b>(1) Group sizes</b>	10 (No group size for mask-on settings)
<b>(2) Mask-wearing</b>	Required indoors Optional outdoors
<b>(3) Workplace requirements</b>	75% of those who can work from home may return to office
<b>(4) Safe distancing</b>	1m when mask-off, between individuals or groups
<b>(5) Capacity</b>	75% for large settings and event sizes of >1,000 pax, where there is no 1m safe distancing
	Premises operators/event organisers to avoid chokepoints and spread crowds as evenly as possible.



## GUIDELINES ON INDOORS AND OUTDOORS SETTINGS

<b><u>Setting</u></b>	<b><u>Examples (not exhaustive)</u></b>
<b>Indoors:</b> Mask-wearing required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Air-conditioned spaces</li><li>• Within office buildings, shopping malls, lifts</li><li>• Within public transport such as buses and trains</li><li>• Within hawker centres, coffeeshops, wet markets</li><li>• Within HDB retail shops and other shophouses</li><li>• Within classrooms and libraries</li></ul>
<b>Outdoors:</b> Mask-wearing optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HDB void decks, HDB retail shop walkways, five-foot ways</li><li>• Bus stops and naturally ventilated bus interchanges</li><li>• Open unenclosed spaces such as parks, fields, nature trails</li><li>• Open-air sheltered walkways and bridges</li></ul>

### SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES IN SMMS FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN THE TRANSITION PHASE

Religious Activity	Measures for the Transition Phase	
	From 15 March 2022	From 29 March 2022
Permissible Group Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group size of up to 5 persons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group size of up to 10 persons for mask-off activities</li> </ul>
Congregational and Worship Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No zoning requirement.</li> <li>No capacity limit for smaller worship services (with VDS) involving up to 1000 worshippers.</li> <li>Worship services involving more than 1000 worshippers will be capped at 50% of the venue's capacity or 1,000, whichever is higher.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship services involving more than 1000 worshippers will be capped at 75% of the venue's capacity or 1,000, whichever is higher.</li> </ul>
Live performance elements during congregational and other worship services	<p><i>Not singing or playing instruments that require intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe distance is not required between groups if all performers are masked.</li> </ul> <p><i>Singing or playing instruments that require intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The unmasked performers may be in groups of the prevailing social group size with no need to maintain safe distance between group members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performers (fully vaccinated) who are singing and playing instruments requiring intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments) in front of an audience will no longer need to conduct additional testing.</li> </ul>

Religious Activity	Measures for the Transition Phase	
	From 15 March 2022	From 29 March 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• However, the group of unmasked performers must maintain at least 1m safe distance from other groups.</li> </ul>	
Other Religious Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No limit on participants for smaller mask-on activities (with VDS) with up to 1000 participants.</li> <li>• If there are more than 1000 participants, the mask-on activity is capped at 50% of the venue's capacity or 1000 participants, whichever is higher.</li> <li>• Mask-on classes (without VDS) may involve up to 1,000 persons (including tutors/instructors), subject to prevailing fire safety and room capacity requirements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there are more than 1000 participants, the mask-on activity is capped at 75% of the venue's capacity or 1000 participants, whichever is higher.</li> <li>• Mask-on classes (without VDS) can proceed without being subject to any capacity limit, subject to prevailing fire safety and room capacity requirements</li> </ul>

Religious Activity	Measures for the Transition Phase	
	From 15 March 2022	From 29 March 2022
Marriage Solemnizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No limit on participants for smaller solemnizations (with VDS) with up to 1000 participants.</li> <li>Larger solemnizations for more than 1000 persons are capped at 50% of the venue's capacity or 1000 participants, whichever is higher.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Larger solemnizations for more than 1000 persons are capped at 75% of the venue's capacity or 1000 participants, whichever is higher.</li> </ul> <p><i>Refer to the Registry of Marriages and Registry of Muslim Marriages for the detailed SMMs for marriage solemnizations.</i></p>
Recording and Broadcasting Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Static performers on stage may be in groups of <u>5 persons</u>, with no need to maintain safe distance within the group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Static performers on stage may be in groups of <u>10 persons</u>, with no need to maintain safe distance within the group.</li> <li>Performers (fully vaccinated) who are singing and playing instruments requiring intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments) in front of an audience will no longer need to conduct additional testing.</li> </ul>

### SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES INVOLVING LIVE PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

Parameter	Safe Management Measures		
Safe distance		<b>Static persons (i.e. in the same position throughout the live performance / digital production)</b>	<b>Persons who move on stage or on camera during the live performance / digital production</b>
	Not singing or playing wind/brass instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performers may be in groups of the prevailing social group size with no need to maintain safe distance between group members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They do not need to maintain a minimum safe distance from others but should keep close contact with others to as short a duration as possible.</li> </ul>
	Singing or playing wind/brass instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If all performers in the group are masked, they need not maintain safe distance from other groups. If there are any unmasked performers in the group, they must maintain at least 1m safe distance from other groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unmasked performers must maintain 1 metre safe distance from others.</li> </ul>

Parameter	Safe Management Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A safe distance of 1m is to be maintained between audiences and unmasked performers at all times.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Venues without a clearly defined stage area should have floor markings to mark out the 1m safe distance between audience and unmasked performers and ensure that the safe distance is observed.</li> <li>○ If the live performance is taking place on a stage which places unmasked performers at a higher vantage point, a longer safe distance is encouraged, due to the trajectory of droplet projection.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Responses from worshippers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worshippers are to remain masked (includes when singing or giving verbal responses)</li> <li>• All other safe management measures for worshippers continue to apply</li> </ul>
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of all other equipment (e.g., props, musical instruments and microphones) should be avoided as far as possible. If this cannot be done, the equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and/or disinfected before handled or used by others.</li> <li>• All technical equipment (e.g., camera, lights) should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each session, and between each user.</li> </ul>