

RESUMING OUR TRANSITION TO RESILIENCE FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

On **11 March 2022**, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce (MTF) announced that Safe Management Measures (SMMs) would be streamlined from 15 March 2022 to a set of five core parameters – group sizes, mask-wearing, workplace requirements, safe distancing and capacity limits (see Annex A), so that it will be easier for everyone to comply with them on a daily basis and do our part as we transition to a COVID-19 resilient nation.

2. This document provides the conditions under which religious organisations (ROs) are permitted to carry out activities in places of worship from 15 March 2022.
3. The key changes affecting religious activities from 15 March 2022 are:
 - a. Safe distancing is encouraged but will not be required between individuals or groups for all mask-on religious activities.
 - b. 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 of 5 persons for worship services and other religious activities.
 - c. Event size limits and zoning requirements for congregational worship services and other mask-on religious activities will be removed. Such activities (except classes, which are capped at 1,000 persons) involving more than 1,000 persons are capped at 50% of the venue's capacity.

Annex B 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.**¹
5. We will **remove event size limits** for all congregational and other worship services at places of worship from **15 March 2022**.
 - a. For worship services involving **more than 1,000 worshippers**, the number of worshippers should not exceed **50% of the venue's capacity**. For example, a worship service with 1,200 worshippers will need to be held at a venue that can accommodate at least 2,400 worshippers; otherwise, the worship service would have to be capped at 1,000 worshippers.
6. From **15 March 2022**, **worshippers no longer have to be segregated into zones.**
 - a. Worshippers can be seated, with no need for safe distancing between each worshipper (for mask-on activities). Nevertheless, safe distancing is encouraged.
 - b. ROs must avoid chokepoints and spread crowds as evenly as possible.
7. From **15 March 2022**, unvaccinated children aged 12 years and below (i.e. born in 2010 or later²) need **not** be from the same household to be included within a group of 5 persons for congregational and worship services.

¹ 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. Persons who have recovered from COVID-19 and have completed their primary series vaccination do not require an additional booster dose at this point in time. For more information, refer to <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/vaccination>.

² 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.

8. ROs should continue to observe the following SMMs for worship services:
- a. All persons present (except children below 6 years of age) must **wear a face mask at all times**.³ Face shields are not permitted as substitutes for face masks. Young children are still strongly encouraged to use a mask, especially when they are in a group setting (e.g. attending worship service).
 - b. **No singing by worshippers**, even with their masks on.
 - c. **Live performance elements are permitted during the worship service at places of worship**, with the following SMMs (see Annex C for details).
 - i. **Up to 50 persons** are allowed to be involved in/support the **conduct of the worship service**. This includes persons on-stage, backstage or off-stage.
 - ii. **Up to 20 persons who are involved in the conduct of the worship service may unmask** at any given time, of which **up to 20 persons can be unmasked for singing or playing of wind/brass instruments**. Persons should only unmask when required to perform their duties.
 - iii. **Persons unmasked** for singing or playing of wind/brass instruments must obtain a **negative result** on an ART test, taken within 24 hours before the end of the live performance.⁴
 - iv. There must be at least a 1 metre setback between persons involved in the conduct of live performance elements and worshippers.
 - v. Masked singing will be treated in the same way as unmasked singing (i.e. masked singers will count towards the maximum number allowed to unmask for singing and/or playing of wind instruments).
 - vi. **Static performers (i.e. in the same position throughout the live performance) may be in groups of 5 persons**
 - No need to maintain safe distance from other groups if there are no persons singing and/or playing wind/brass instruments.
 - From **15 March 2022**, 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.

³ 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.

⁴ From 1 February 2022, unmasked performers may obtain a negative result on an ART test, conducted by an MOH-approved test provider or self-administered. A self-administered test must be supervised onsite or virtually by the RO's live performance organiser. ROs are to keep records of unmasked singers/persons playing wind/brass instruments and their ART test results.

- d. Worshippers are encouraged not to share **prayer and other common items** (e.g. holy books, passing of offertory baskets, prayer mats) and to bring along their personal prayer items instead, where required.

Private Worship

9. Based on the prevailing measures for social gatherings, **ROs can continue to allow one group of up to 5 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.

10. 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

11. ROs may continue to use places of worship to conduct marriage solemnizations with VDS. From **15 March 2022**, the number of participants will be similar to the conditions stated in para 5.⁵

Funerals

12. From **15 March 2022**, funerals, funeral wakes or funeral processions held during or before the burial or cremation of the deceased in places of worship will be **allowed without VDS**, with similar capacity conditions as worship services (see para 5) and the following SMMs:

- a. Attendees must remain masked at all times.
- b. There must not be any reception with food and drinks.

13. ROs must continue to comply with prevailing SMMs listed on MTI's website⁶ for these funerary-related activities.

14. Funerary-related activities at places of worship may continue to involve live instrumental music (non-wind/brass) with the necessary SMMs in place (see Annex D). Persons involved in/supporting the live instrumental music segment should be kept to the minimum. No other performances (e.g. singing, dance, variety act) are allowed.

⁵ 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 or 5 non-resident visitors (whichever is higher).

⁶ Refer to SMMs for Funeral Events at: <https://www.gobusiness.gov.sg/safemanagement/sector/>

15. Visits to columbaria at places of worship **for up to 5 persons will continue to be allowed without VDS**. Visits should be kept as short as possible.

Other Religious Activities

16. From **15 March 2022**, we will **remove event size limits for religious rites that are not part of a worship service, and other religious activities (e.g. pastoral services)**. See [para 5](#) for conditions on the capacity for these activities.

17. From **15 March 2022**, **mask-on classes⁷ may involve up to 1,000 persons (including tutors/instructors), subject to prevailing fire safety and room capacity requirements.⁸**

Recording and Broadcast of Religious Services and Prayers

18. 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. **ROs can have up to 50 persons on-location for these productions, of which up to 20 persons can be unmasked at any one time.** All 20 unmasked performers may sing or play instruments which require intentional expulsion of air at any given time, if all performers and crew are fully vaccinated.
- b. Masked singing will be treated in the same way as unmasked singing (i.e. masked singers will count towards the maximum number allowed to unmask for singing and/or playing of wind instruments).
- c. **Static performers (i.e. in the same position throughout the live performance) involved in this production may be in groups of 5 persons with**
 - i. No need to maintain safe distance from other groups if there are no persons singing and/or playing wind/brass instruments
 - ii. From **15 March 2022**, 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.

⁷ From **18 February 2022**, religious and supporting workers (including volunteers) conducting in-person religious classes for children aged 12 and below more frequently than once a month are no longer required to undergo Fast and Easy Testing (FET). From 18 February 2022, Rostered Routine Testing regime will focus only on settings catering to vulnerable groups, including 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.

⁸ Refer to MOE's advisory on SMMs for private tuition and enrichment at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/faqs-covid-19-infection>

- d. The production team must also put in place safe management measures, and thorough cleaning of technical equipment. There shall be no audience.

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. **Up to 50% of employees who are able to work from home can continue to be at the workplace at any point in time, provided they are fully vaccinated.**
- 21. From **15 March 2022**, **social gatherings at workplaces will be allowed to resume with no more than 5 persons for each social gathering.**
- 22. Religious workers and administrative staff should continue to comply with prevailing workplace SMMs stipulated by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM).⁹
- 23. From **15 March 2022**, there will be **no restrictions on cross-deployment of employees across workplaces**, although employers may continue to do so for the purpose of ensuring business continuity.

TRACETOGETHER AND SAFEENTRY

- 24. 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 for more information.

MANDATORY SUBMISSION OF SAFE MANAGEMENT PLANS (SMP)

- 25. **ROs must acknowledge through the CPRO website the new conditions for religious activities imposed before commencing the activities from 15 March 2022.** The detailed requirements and format for submitting the acknowledgement form can be found at www.cpro.gov.sg.
- 26. 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.

⁹ For more information, please refer to MOM's advisory at <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19>.

STRIDING INTO RESILIENCE

27. We thank ROs for their continued efforts and understanding during this Transition Phase. Our current measures serve as important safeguards to protect our healthcare system during this period as we continue to lead our daily lives normally. We will need the continued cooperation of the ROs to encourage their followers to get vaccinated and booster doses promptly, comply with the prevailing safe management measures, and exercise personal responsibility to self-test before attending large worship services and other religious activities or interacting with vulnerable groups such as seniors or children.

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

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH

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

FIVE CORE PARAMETERS TO RESET OUR SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES (SMMs)

Parameter	Current Posture
(1) Group size	5
(2) Mask-wearing	Required indoors and outdoors
(3) Workplace requirements	50% of those who can work from home may return to office
(4) Safe distancing	1m when mask off, between individuals or groups
(5) Capacity	For settings/events for up to 1,000 persons – no 1m safe distancing required so long as persons are mask-on.
	For larger settings/event for >1,000 persons – capped at 50% of venue's capacity or 1000 persons (whichever is higher), 1m safe distancing with mask on. ¹⁰
	Premise operators to avoid chokepoints and prevent crowding/bunching.

¹⁰ For example, for a 1,200 pax event, the event would need to be held at a venue which accommodates 2,400 pax, or the event size would have to be capped at 1,000 pax.

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

Religious Activity	Measures for the Transition Phase	
	From 1 February 2022	From 15 March 2022
Permissible Group Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group size of up to 5 persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change
Congregational and Worship Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Up to 1000 worshippers</u>, in zones holding no more than 100 worshippers each. All worshippers, religious and supporting workers are vaccinated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No zoning requirement. No capacity limit for smaller worship services involving up to 1000 worshippers. Worship services involving more than 1000 worshippers will be capped at 50% of the venue's capacity or 1,000, whichever is higher.
Live performance elements during congregational and other worship services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to VDS Unmasked performers may obtain a negative result on an ART test, conducted by an MOH-approved test provider or self-administered. A self-administered test must be supervised onsite or virtually by the RO's live performance organiser. ROs are to keep records of unmasked singers/persons playing wind/brass instruments and their ART test results. 	<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"> Safe distance is not required between groups if all performers are masked.

Religious Activity	Measures for the Transition Phase	
	From 1 February 2022	From 15 March 2022
		<p><i>Singing or playing instruments that require intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unmasked performers may be in groups of the prevailing social group size with no need to maintain safe distance between group members. However, the group of unmasked performers must maintain at least 1m safe distance from other groups.
Other Religious Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious rites limited to <u>50 worshippers</u> at any one time, in groups of 5 Religious classes can be held for up to 50 persons, inclusive of teachers and support staff, without VDS. Other activities are subject to VDS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No limit on participants for smaller mask-on activities with up to 1000 participants. 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. Mask-on classes may involve up to 1,000 persons (including tutors/instructors), subject to prevailing fire safety and room capacity requirements.

Religious Activity	Measures for the Transition Phase	
	From 1 February 2022	From 15 March 2022
Marriage Solemnizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to VDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No limit on participants for smaller solemnizations with up to 1000 participants. • Larger solemnizations for more than 1000 persons are capped at 50% of the venue's capacity or 1000 participants, whichever is higher. <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"> • Static performers on stage may be in groups of <u>5 persons</u>, with no need to maintain safe distance within the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no need to maintain safe distance between groups.

SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES INVOLVING LIVE PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

Parameter	Safe Management Measures
Persons involved in/supporting ¹¹ live performance elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not more than 50 persons (whether on-stage, backstage or off-stage). • A maximum of 50 persons are allowed to be involved in/support the conduct of the worship service. This includes persons on-stage, backstage or off-stage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No more than 20 persons may be unmasked at any given time (subject to safe distancing capacity of the premises) ○ 20 persons can be unmasked for singing or playing of wind/brass instruments. • Additionally, persons unmasked for singing or playing of wind/brass instruments must undergo ART¹² with results valid through the duration of the service for which they are unmasked for this purpose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As a best practice, singers should try not to position themselves directly opposite each other and are encouraged to sing away from each other ○ As a best practice, individuals playing wind or brass instruments should ensure that these instruments are fully intact, and refrain from practice sessions involving only parts of the instrument (e.g. mouthpiece buzzing, playing with just the lead pipe) to prevent droplet transmission. Liquids from instruments (i.e. condensation and saliva) should be collected and disposed of hygienically after the practice session or worship service/religious rite. • Masked singing will be treated in the same way as unmasked singing (i.e. masked singers will count towards the maximum number allowed to unmask for singing and/or playing of wind instruments)

¹¹ E.g. audio crew or videographer.

¹² The ART must be (i) conducted by an MOH-approved test provider or (ii) conducted by a self-administered test that is supervised onsite or virtually by the religious organisation's live performance organiser.

Parameter	Safe Management Measures		
Safe distance		Static persons (i.e. in the same position throughout the live performance / digital production)	Persons who move on stage or on camera during the live performance / digital production
	Not singing or playing wind/brass instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performers may be in groups of the prevailing social group size with no need to maintain safe distance between group members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
	Singing or playing wind/brass instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 15 March 2022, 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unmasked performers must maintain 1 metre safe distance from others.

Parameter	Safe Management Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A safe distance of 1m is to be maintained between audiences and unmasked performers at all times. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 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. ○ 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.
Responses from worshippers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worshippers are to remain masked (includes when giving verbal responses) • All other safe management measures for worshippers continue to apply
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • All technical equipment (e.g. camera, lights) should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each session, and between each user.

A summary of the allowances and requirements for activities involving unmasking for singing and/or playing of wind/brass instruments are outlined below for easy reference.

Activity	Total number of persons allowed	Total number of persons allowed to unmask	Total number of persons allowed to unmask for singing and/or playing of wind/brass instruments	Requirements
Live performance elements as part of worship service	50	20	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All involved in the live performance must be vaccinated. b. Those unmasked for singing and/or playing of wind/brass instruments must have a valid ART through the performance.
Rehearsals for live performance elements	50	20	20	All involved in the rehearsal for the live performance must be vaccinated.
Recording and broadcasting of religious services and prayers	50	20	20	All involved in the recording and broadcasting service must be vaccinated.

SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES INVOLVING LIVE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Parameter	Safe Management Measures
Persons involved in/supporting ¹³ the live instrumental music segment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep to the minimum required • Persons must be masked at all times
Safe distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Static persons (i.e. in the same position throughout the live performance) involved in the conduct of live instrumental music may be in groups of the prevailing social group size with no need to maintain safe distance between group members.
Responses from attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees are to remain masked and can give spoken responses (no singing)
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • All technical equipment (e.g. camera, lights) should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each session, and between each user.

¹³ E.g. audio crew or videographer.