

Issued on 20 July 2021

PHASE TWO (HEIGHTENED ALERT) TIGHTER MEASURES FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

On 20 July 2021, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce announced tighter measures to be put in place from 22 July through 18 August 2021 to mitigate the risk of further community spread of COVID-19. This document provides the conditions under which religious organisations (ROs) are permitted to carry out activities in places of worship during this period of Phase Two (Heightened Alert).

PHASE TWO (HEIGHTENED ALERT)

2. Under Phase Three (Heightened Alert) that began on 14 June 2021, ROs were allowed to have (a) congregational and other worship services at up to 250 worshippers with pre-event testing (PET), (b) live performance elements (i.e. singing and playing of wind/brass instruments), (c) increased capacity for recording and broadcasting services, (d) solemnizations at up to 250 persons with PET, and (e) other non-congregational religious activities.

3. Under Phase Two (Heightened Alert), from 22 July through 18 August 2021, tighter measures will apply to religious activities. To reduce risks of community transmission, indoor “mask-off” activities will cease during this period. Similar to community-wide measures, we will also reduce the current permissible group size from up to 5 persons, to up to 2 persons. The new measures are as follows:

- a. Congregational and other worship services will be limited to 100 worshippers (decrease from 250 worshippers today)
 - i. Up to 50 worshippers without PET;
 - ii. Up to 100 worshippers with PET for all attendees;
- b. No singing and playing of wind/brass instruments for live performance elements;
- c. Suspension of all other non-congregational religious activities, except for religious rites; and
- d. Reduced capacity for marriage solemnizations.

Annex A summarizes the key changes for ROs going from Phase Three (Heightened Alert) to Phase Two (Heightened Alert).

Worship Services

4. **ROs may continue to conduct congregational and other worship services at places of worship without PET for up to 50 worshippers at a time**, subject to safe management measures and the safe capacity of the premises. Religious and supporting workers should be kept to a minimum. From 22 July 2021, **worshippers**

can participate in worship services in groups of no more than 2 persons (decrease from 5 persons today).

5. ROs can conduct congregational and other worship services, for more than 50 and **up to 100 worshippers at a time, only if there is PET for all worshippers**¹.

- a. Worshippers who have been vaccinated², or have an exemption notice³, do not need to undergo PET.
- b. Religious and supporting workers, and volunteers who have extended interaction with worshippers during the worship service, will need to undergo PET. Those who have been vaccinated, or have an exemption notice, do not need to undergo PET.

Annex B contains the detailed PET requirements for compliance.

6. For congregational and other worship services exceeding 50 worshippers and up to 100 worshippers with PET, **worshippers have to be segregated into zones holding no more than 50 worshippers each.**

- a. As there should be no mingling of individuals across zones, each zone must be completely separated from another by either a physical solid partition (at least 1.8m high if not floor-to-ceiling, from wall-to-wall); or at least 3m physical spacing demarcated by continuous physical barriers (e.g. rope barrier).
- b. There must either be a separate ingress/egress for each zone or staggered entrance/exit timings so that worshippers from different zones do not mix with one another during entry/exit.
- c. ROs must also take reasonable steps to ensure that worshippers do not cross the physical barrier (where applicable) or enter another zone that they are not assigned to.

¹ This excludes (i) individuals entering or remaining at the venue solely to work as a permitted enterprise or permitted enterprise worker, for or with the place of worship, and (ii) supporting workers/ volunteers who only have transient contact with worshippers (e.g. ushers). Religious workers or volunteers with extended interaction with worshippers during a service must undergo PET.

² "Vaccinated" for purposes of this document means that the individual has completed the full vaccination regimen in Singapore by the administration of an approved vaccine (i.e. the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine) by a recognised vaccination provider **and** has had sufficient time to develop sufficient protection (i.e. two weeks or more have passed after the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine), or is a recovered individual who has had one dose of an approved vaccination by a recognised vaccination provider (i.e. the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine) **and** has had sufficient time to develop sufficient protection (i.e. two weeks or more have passed after the dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine).

³ The exemption notice refers to a PET exemption notice with a relevant validity period. It must be issued 270 days from the date of the earliest PCR+ result performed in Singapore or 270 days from overseas PCR+ result if a Serology-positive (S+) result is obtained in Singapore.

7. ROs should continue to observe the following safe management measures for worship services (including services conducted with PET):

- a. Keep worship services to **as short a duration as possible**. There must be no reception or mingling between worshippers, before, during or after each worship service.
- b. All persons present (except children below 6 years of age) must **wear a face mask at all times**.⁴ 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).
- c. **Live performance elements are permitted during the worship service at places of worship**, with the following safe management measures (see Annex C for details).
 - i. A maximum of 30 persons are allowed to be involved in/support the conduct of the worship service. This includes persons on-stage, backstage or off-stage.
 - ii. **Unmasking will not be permitted**. To ensure the safety of worshippers, **singing or playing of wind/brass instruments will also not be permitted**.
 - iii. Singing (with or without the mask on) is not allowed.
 - iv. Masks must be worn when speaking during congregational and other worship services. A face shield is not a permitted substitute for a proper mask.
 - v. There must be at least a 3-metre setback between persons involved in the conduct of live performance elements and worshippers.
 - vi. Minimise the duration of live performance elements for congregational and other worship services.
- d. There should be **no sharing of prayer and other common items** (e.g. holy books, passing of offertory baskets, prayer mats) as this increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Worshippers are to bring along their personal prayer items instead, where required.
- e. Places of worship with reduced air circulation (e.g. enclosed prayer spaces, air-conditioned worship hall) should, where possible, open doors and windows to naturally **ventilate the space after each use**⁵.

⁴ Children twelve 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.

⁵ Refer to: <https://www.nea.gov.sg/media/news/news/index/good-hygiene-and-improved-ventilation-to-further-reduce-the-risk-of-covid-19-transmission>

Marriage Solemnizations

8. **From 22 July 2021**, ROs may continue to use places of worship to conduct marriage solemnizations where:

- a. **Solemnizations involving up to 50 attendees (including bride and groom): PET will not be required.**
- b. **Solemnizations involving 51 to 100 attendees (including bride and groom): PET will be required for all attendees.**⁶
- c. These activities are subject to safe management measures and the safe distancing capacity of the premises. The caps at paragraphs 8(a) and (b) exclude the solemnizer and religious and supporting workers, whose numbers should be kept to a minimum.
- d. If the total number of attendees is more than 50 (including the wedding couple), they must still be segregated into zones of up to 50 persons each (see paragraph 6 for zoning requirements). An individual attending the solemnization must remain within his or her respective assigned zone and must not enter an unassigned zone.
- e. Attendees must maintain a 1-metre safe distance between groups except a core “wedding party”⁷, which is allowed to comprise up to 20 persons (including the couple and their two witnesses). There should be no intermingling or mixing between groups nor between the “wedding party” and these other groups.
- f. There must not be any reception with food and drinks, or wedding celebrations that are not essential religious rites.
- g. ROs must also comply with prevailing safe management measures stipulated on the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)’s website⁸.

9. Although solemnizations at places of worship⁹ may continue to involve live instrumental music (non-wind/brass) with the necessary safe management measures in place (see Annex D), **we strongly encourage this to be suspended or the duration be shortened during this period of heightened alert**. The number of 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.

⁶ For further details on PET requirements, refer to: <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/pet>.

⁷ Besides the couple and their two witnesses, the core wedding party can comprise a group of close family and/or friends who are required or expected to interact with one another during the course of the solemnization.

⁸ Refer to Safe Management Measures for Marriage Solemnizations and Wedding Receptions at: <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg/safemanagement/sector>.

⁹ Should ROs conduct solemnizations at third-party premises, live instrumental music (non-wind/brass) is permitted only at indoor third-party premises. ROs may also be subject to other safe management measures as stipulated by the premises owner.

10. ROs are strongly encouraged to continue offering video link solemnizations as an option for couples.

Funerals

11. **Funerals, wakes, installation of niches and post-funeral rites¹⁰ at places of worship can involve not more than 20 attendees at any time, and in groups of no more than 2 persons** (excluding religious and supporting workers, whose numbers should be kept to a minimum), subject to safe management measures and the safe capacity of the premises.

- a. There must not be any reception with food and drinks.
- b. ROs must also comply with prevailing safe management measures listed on MTI's website¹¹.

12. Funerary-related activities at places of worship¹² may continue to involve live instrumental music (non-wind/brass) with the necessary safe management measures 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.

13. **Visits to columbaria at places of worship** should be kept as short as possible, with no mingling between groups of no more than 2 persons (decrease from 5 persons today).

Other Religious Activities

14. **From 22 July 2021, religious rites which are not part of a worship service are limited to only 2 worshippers at any one time.** Religious and supporting workers involved in the conduct of these rites should be kept to a minimum.

15. **All other religious activities (e.g. religious classes for adults and children) will be suspended.**

Recording and Broadcast of Religious Services and Prayers

16. ROs are encouraged to continue supporting the religious needs of their communities via remote means such as recording and broadcast of religious services and prayers. From 22 July 2021, **ROs can have up to 15 persons on-location for these productions, of which up to 10 persons can be unmasked at any one time, with no more than 2 persons unmasked for singing and/or playing wind/brass instruments. Those singing and/or playing wind/brass instruments must**

¹⁰ This refers to funerary memorial events for deceased persons.

¹¹ Refer to Safe Management Measures for Funeral Events at: <https://covid.gobusiness.gov.sg/safemanagement/sector>.

¹² Live instrumental music (non-wind/brass) is also permitted for funerals/post-funeral rites held at permitted indoor/outdoor third-party premises. ROs may also be subject to other safe management measures as stipulated by the premises owner.

maintain 2 metres between all other individuals. All other persons present must maintain a 1 metre separation. The time spent on-location for this activity should be kept as short as possible. The production team must also put in place safe management measures, including no-cross deployment between locations, and thorough cleaning of technical equipment. There shall be no audience.

17. ROs who wish to use their premises for digital recording or broadcast are required to **notify through the CPRO website** of (i) the planned dates of the digital productions; (ii) venue; and (iii) confirmation of adherence to the performers and crew limits, *before* conducting the digital productions.

SAFE CAPACITY IN THE PLACE OF WORSHIP

18. All the permitted religious activities in paragraphs 6 to 15 (i.e. excluding congregational and other worship services) can continue to take place concurrently, subject to a total premises cap of **100 persons**¹³ – subject to safe management measures, and the safe distancing capacity of the premises – and only if these activities can be conducted safely at separate locations within the place of worship, with no interaction between worshippers while entering, exiting or while in the premises.

19. **ROs are strongly encouraged to support the religious needs of their communities through remote means, as far as possible, in line with national guidelines to reduce social interactions, and thus minimise risk of COVID-19 transmission.**

- a. ROs should consider reducing other concurrent activities when congregational and other worship services are ongoing, so that there is a smaller total number of people on the premises at any one time, which will help to minimise the risk of large clusters from forming.

DEPLOYMENT OF MANPOWER

20. ROs should **primarily engage their religious workers and staff to support the permitted religious activities but can deploy volunteers to support if necessary.** The number of personnel involved in conducting each permitted activity should be kept to a minimum.

¹³ This total cap is the combined number of persons participating in the various permitted activities (excluding congregational and other worship services) on the premises at any one time, excluding religious and supporting workers. Respective caps on the individual activities will continue to apply.

21. **Telecommuting remains the default for workplaces**, so as to minimise the number of on-site religious workers and staff. The religious workers and administrative staff should comply with prevailing workplace safe management measures stipulated by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM).¹⁴ Restrictions against cross-deployment¹⁵ across worksites remain in place.

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**¹⁶. **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 FAQs, or more information on how to set up TraceTogether-only SafeEntry for their premises.

23. To provide quicker and more seamless check-in using the TraceTogether App or Token, **all ROs conducting congregational and worship services are required to deploy the SafeEntry Gateway (SEGW) at their main entrances from 15 June 2021.** ROs may deploy either the physical SEGW Box or use the SEGW function found in the latest version of the SafeEntry (Business) App based on their needs [Refer to <https://go.gov.sg/gateway-overview> for more information].

MANDATORY SUBMISSION OF SAFE MANAGEMENT PLANS

24. **ROs must acknowledge through the CPRO website the new conditions for religious activities** imposed from 22 July through 18 August 2021 before commencing the activities. ROs that have not submitted their Safe Management Plans (SMPs) previously for Phase 3 will need to submit their plans, **at least 2 days** before commencing any activities outlined above. The detailed requirements and format for submitting these SMPs can be found at www.cpro.gov.sg.

25. 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 safe management measures 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.

¹⁴ Refer to: <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19/requirements-for-safe-management-measures>.

¹⁵ If cross-deployment cannot be avoided (e.g. due to the nature of the job), additional safeguards must be taken to minimise the risk of cross-infection (e.g. systems are in place to ensure no direct contact with the cross-deployed personnel). ROs will be required to demonstrate that cross-deployment or interaction between employees is critical for business operations, when requested by MOM or MCCY.

¹⁶ To help ease the transition, scanning of barcodes on personal IDs will be retained until 31 May 2021.

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE SINGAPORE COVID-SAFE

26. The tightening of measures for religious activities reflect the seriousness of the current COVID-19 situation. We will have to remain vigilant and regularly refine our safe management measures in order to minimise the risk of COVID-19 transmission. MCCY will continue to work with our ROs to ensure a COVID-19 safe 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 at cpro@mccy.gov.sg.

ANNEX A

**SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN PHASE TWO
(HEIGHTENED ALERT)**

| Religious Activity | Allowances during Phase Three (Heightened Alert) | Allowances during Phase Two (Heightened Alert) |
|--|--|--|
| Congregational and Worship Services | <p>Up to 50 worshippers, without pre-event testing</p> <p>For more than 50 worshippers, and up to 250 worshippers, in zones holding no more than 50 worshippers each, with pre-event testing for all worshippers</p> | <p>Up to 50 worshippers, without pre-event testing</p> <p>For more than 50 worshippers, and up to 100 worshippers, in zones holding no more than 50 worshippers each, with pre-event testing for all worshippers</p> |
| Live performance elements during congregational and other worship services | <p>Up to 30 persons allowed to be involved in/ support the worship service.</p> <p>10 allowed to unmask, of which 2 can be unmasked for singing or playing of wind/brass instruments.</p> | <p>Up to 30 persons allowed.</p> <p>Unmasking, singing and playing of wind/brass instruments are not allowed.</p> |
| Other Religious Activities (e.g. religious rites, classes) | <p>Religious rites and other religious activities (e.g. pastoral services, religious classes) allowed, so long as they are conducted in gatherings not exceeding 50 persons. This is also subject to the total premises cap of 150 persons</p> | <p>Religious rites limited to only 2 worshippers at any one time.</p> <p>All other religious activities (e.g. religious classes) are not allowed.</p> |
| Marriage Solemnizations | <p>Up to 50 attendees without pre-event testing</p> <p>For more than 50 attendees and up to 250 attendees with pre-event testing for all attendees</p> | <p>Up to 50 attendees without pre-event testing</p> <p>For more than 50 attendees and up to 100 attendees with pre-event testing for all attendees</p> |
| Recording and Broadcasting Services | <p>Up to 30 persons allowed on-location. Of these, 10 allowed</p> | <p>Up to 15 persons allowed on-location. Of these, 10 allowed to</p> |

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| | to unmask, of which 2 can be unmasked for singing and/or playing of wind/brass instruments | unmask, of which 2 can be unmasked for singing and/or playing of wind/brass instruments Notify CPRO before conducting the digital session. |
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REQUIREMENTS FOR PRE-EVENT TESTING (PET)

Where PET is required, the following must be complied with:

- a. ROs must ensure that all worshippers (except where paragraph (b) below applies) obtain a negative COVID-19 test result before they may be admitted into the venue where the service is being held.¹⁷
 - i. The test must be an MOH-approved COVID-19 test (either an Antigen Rapid Test (ART) or Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test) administered by an approved test provider.¹⁸
 - ii. The test results are only valid for 24 hours from the time an individual registers at the testing premises to take the test. The RO must ensure that the result of the test is valid until the **end** of the worshipper's participation in the worship service.
 - iii. The worshipper must be able to produce proof of the test result, which are either (i) Check-in Successful banner (displayed on the SafeEntry (Business) application upon scanning with TraceTogether App/Token), (ii) COVID-19 Test Result Notice (ART), (iii) COVID-19 Test Result Notice (PCR), or (iv) Patient Risk Profile Portal (PRPP) ART Result Slip.
- b. The requirements for PET in paragraph (a) above do not apply to worshippers who have been vaccinated¹⁹ or produce an exemption notice²⁰. Before being admitted into the venue where the service is being held, the worshipper must produce valid documentation of either their vaccination or exemption notice which must remain valid until the end of the worshipper's participation in the service.
- c. Where PET is required for a service, ROs must prominently display signs at each point of entry and exit (including emergency exit) to the venue where the service is being held, to indicate:

¹⁷ For further details on PET requirements, refer to: <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/pet>.

¹⁸ Refer to: <https://www.moh.gov.sg/licensing-and-regulation/regulations-guidelines-and-circulars/details/list-of-covid-19-swab-providers>.

¹⁹ "Vaccinated" for purposes of this document means that the individual has completed the full vaccination regimen in Singapore by the administration of an approved vaccine (i.e. the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine) by a recognised vaccination provider **and** has had sufficient time to develop sufficient protection (i.e. two weeks or more have passed after the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine) or is a recovered individual who has had one dose of an approved vaccination by a recognised vaccination provider (i.e. the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine) **and** has had sufficient time to develop sufficient protection (i.e. two weeks or more have passed after the dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine).

²⁰ The exemption notice refers to a PET exemption notice with a relevant validity period. It must be issued 270 days from the date of the earliest PCR+ result performed in Singapore or 270 days from overseas PCR+ result if a Serology-positive (S+) result is obtained in Singapore.

- i. The space is a restricted place²¹, and the duration for which it will be a restricted place (i.e. the duration of the service). ROs must clearly mark the boundaries of the restricted place (e.g. though fencing, rope, signs, walls, partition, screen).
 - ii. That entry and remaining within the restricted place is allowed only to individuals with a cleared status (i.e. have a valid negative COVID-19 test result notice, valid documentation of vaccination or exemption notice).
- d. ROs are to highlight to worshippers attending services beyond 50 and up to 100 worshippers that entry into the venue where the service is being held will be denied to worshippers who do not produce the relevant negative COVID-19 test result notice, vaccination notice, or exemption notice, with the necessary validity period.

²¹ "Restricted place" means any place where PET is required in this document, before individuals with a cleared status (i.e. have a valid negative COVID-19 test result notice, valid documentation of vaccination or exemption notice) can enter.

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

| Parameter | Safe Management Measures |
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| Persons involved in/supporting ²² live performance elements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not more than 30 persons (whether on-stage, backstage or off-stage). • No unmasking, singing or playing of wind/brass instruments is not allowed |
| Safe distance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Default 1 metre safe distance applies • At least a 3-metre setback between persons involved in the conduct of live performance elements and worshippers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the stage height is at a higher vantage point in relation to the worshippers, it is encouraged for the safe distance to be more than 3 metres as the trajectory of droplet projection will likely be further ○ Premises without a clearly defined stage area should have floor markings to mark out the 3-metre boundary |
| 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"> • No sharing of equipment (e.g. musical instruments, microphones, props) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If unavoidable, equipment should be cleaned/ 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 |

²² E.g. audio crew or videographer.

**SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR
RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES INVOLVING LIVE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

| Parameter | Safe Management Measures |
|--|--|
| Persons involved in/supporting ²³ 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"> • Default 1 metre safe distance applies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Persons involved in the conduct of live instrumental music should minimise movement to ensure that the 1 metre safe distance can be adhered to at all times |
| 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"> • No sharing of equipment (e.g. musical instruments, microphones, props) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If unavoidable, equipment should be cleaned/ 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 |

²³ E.g. audio crew or videographer.