



Date: 5 May 2020
Re: UPDATE #7 — Phased Reopening of Parish Offices & Summer Ministry

Approved: *+ Austin A. Vetter*

After consultation with the State of Montana, local governments and the Centers for Disease Control, Bishop Vetter issues the following requirements for the reopening of parish offices. Also included in this update is notification of the cancelation of the Summer Schedule at Legendary Lodge, OYYAM Summer Events and Parish Summer Events. These decisions are based on up-to-date data and preparedness to mitigate the risk of a resurgence of the virus. They seek to protect the most vulnerable and everyone.

DIOCESE OF HELENA PHASED REOPENING OF PARISH OFFICES

As parish offices begin a phased reopening, please ensure that your plan includes the following and follows any specific requirements of local health departments and/or Tribal governments.

A Definition of Vulnerable individuals: *Vulnerable Individuals are people over 65 years of age and/or those with serious underlying health conditions, including but not limited to high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma and those whose immune system is compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.*

Please note these guidelines for all phases: INDIVIDUALS

CONTINUE TO PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE

- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.
- Strongly consider using non-medical face coverings while in public, especially in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.

PEOPLE WHO FEEL SICK SHOULD STAY HOME

- Do not go to work or school.
- Contact and follow the advice of your medical provider.
- Follow local health department guidance on isolation and quarantine.

Phase 1: Employers/Parish Offices – may begin as soon as a parish is able to meet the requirements:

- Avoid group gatherings of greater than 10 people when social distancing cannot be maintained.

- As possible and feasible, continue allowing employees to work from home
- Some parish functions must be done at the parish office, for instance, some financial operations.
- If working from home is not possible or feasible:
 - Masks may be worn
 - Social distancing must be maintained in the workspace and in common areas
 - Consider alternate work schedules or staggered shifts
 - Minimize non-essential business travel.
 - Special accommodations should be made for members of vulnerable populations or those with vulnerable household members.
 - Ensure for the cleaning and disinfecting of the workspace.
 - See attached [CDC document](#) on guidance for developing your plan Cleaning and Disinfecting and [EPA Guidance on disinfectants](#).

Bishop Vetter will indicate when the Diocese of Helena will move to Phase 2.

Phase 2: Employers/Parish Offices

- Vulnerable populations should continue to stay at home.
- Avoid group gatherings of greater than 50 people when social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Working from home continues to be encouraged, as possible and feasible.
- If working from home is not possible or feasible, guidance from phase 1 remains.

Bishop Vetter will indicate when the Diocese of Helena will move to Phase 3.

Phase 3: Employers/Parish Offices

- Vulnerable populations should continue to stay at home.
- There is no limit on group size, although everyone should consider minimizing contact time with others and limit time spent in crowded environments.
- Full staffing of the workplace can resume
- All places of assembly can fully operate with an awareness of social distancing.

SUMMER MINISTRY 2020

Legendary Lodge:

Summer camps, programs, and retreats scheduled to take place at Legendary Lodge have been canceled up to August 8, 2020. Full refunds (no processing fee) are available for all who have registered. Legendary Lodge will contact all registrants individually.

OYYAM Summer Events and Programs:

All of the Diocese of Helena Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry (OYYAM) programs and events scheduled for Summer 2020 have been canceled.

Parish and Catholic Schools Summer Programs:

All parish and Catholic school youth programs and camps need to be canceled, including but not limited to, Vacation Bible School and Bible Camps. Please submit in writing any plans for events and activities for approval by Bishop Vetter.