

## Indian (Malankara) Orthodox Church

### Risk Assessment – Visits to Churches for Worship during Covid-19 period

**Parish: St Stephen's Indian Orthodox Church, Birmingham.**

**Review Date: 05/07/2020**

**Responsible Person: Vicar/ Managing Committee**

**Assessed By: A J Thomas**

This risk assessment assesses the health risk (of Covid-19) to our members as a result of visiting our congregational worship place. This risk assessment and mitigation actions puts controls in place to manage risks for attendees of worship. The aim of this risk assessment is to safely enable resuming spiritual and worshipping activities by St Stephen's Indian Orthodox Churches Birmingham in line with the easing of Lock down measures during the pandemic period following Government guidelines.

The risk assessment considers and implements all Government and Public Health England guidance and all mitigating measures are derived from this. Anyone classed as clinically vulnerable/extremely vulnerable under the Government Guidelines should not be travelling to or visiting to Church or any other congregational worship places.

Visit to Church for worship should be controlled and restricted by appointment and a log of attendance will be maintained by the Parish Trustees for monitoring and records. Social distancing as per govt guidelines should be strictly followed and person to person contact will be avoided. Any materials subject to human contact will be thoroughly cleaned or appropriately quarantined before the contact of the next person. Members of a house hold should be considered as one cluster and can be used to separate a different location to other people in achieving the required distancing.

All personnel including clergies visiting the Church to attend public worship or private prayers should always wear necessary PPE which includes hand gloves, face masks, shoe covers and hand sanitizers. If by any circumstance someone not able to provide it by themselves they may contact the Parish office bearers and request for the PPE prior to enter the Church Premises.

This risk assessment for COVID 19 Pandemic is based on the guidance issued by UK government Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government on 12 June 2020 for safe use of places of worship during the pandemic. This Risk assessment is a live document and when the lockdown restrictions are varied in area, the measures will be applied and incorporated into this risk assessment.

A Parish level guidance document will be issued to all members and the Parish trustees will manage the implementation of the guidelines for the use the Church premises.

What are the Hazards?	Who might be harmed and How?	Existing measures to minimise the risk?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who need to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Completion Date
Transmission of Covid-19 due to large number of people attend the service	Clergies, church attendees, members of the public, Family members of clergies and attendee's, civil work colleagues	<p>Avoid church visits where possible, these should not be undertaken unless absolutely necessary</p> <p>The use of Internet technology such as live streaming of worship (You tube / Zoom streaming) in place</p> <p>The numbers of those attending should be minimal and should be controlled by the Church administration.</p> <p>Avoid public transport and use private vehicle for the individual or members of the family living together for travel to and from the Church</p> <p>Ensure you have an adequate supply of hand sanitizer for your journey to and from the Church</p> <p>Children's under the age of 10 is not permitted visit the church for service.</p>	<p>Introduce a pre booking system for Parishioners to attend the service so attendance will be controlled.</p> <p>Consider to divide total Parish in to 4 groups based on membership number and provide opportunity for each group to attend the service on each Sunday. (Maximum of 30 members)</p> <p>Only individual or members living together will use the vehicle and cleaning of the vehicle after and before use/ Ongoing</p>	<p>Vicar/ managing Committee</p> <p>Vicar/ managing Committee</p> <p>Attendees</p>		

		<p>Members over the age of 65 and those who are at very high risk due to medical reason won't be encouraged to attend the service.</p> <p>Do not travel if you or members of your household are unwell and display COVID-19 symptoms- in this circumstance follow govt guidelines for testing</p>				
<p>Transmission of Covid-19 by not maintaining Social distancing when using the Church building</p>	<p>Priests/ Clergies, Church Attendees, Family members of Clergies and Attendees</p>	<p>Follow and implement guidelines for social distancing and maintain 2 meters or at least 1+meter distancing in the Church building.</p> <p>Entrance and exit of the building will be restricted through designated doors and will be controlled to one by one</p> <p>Entry &amp; Exit from the building will be through different doors and no more than one person will be at any door at any point of time</p> <p>All entry and exit doors clearly marked</p> <p>1 to 2 meters marked on the floor with Yellow tape to remind members to follow social distancing</p>	<p>Posters and notices for reminding social distancing requirement will be displayed.</p> <p>Members will be asked to complete a form for track and trace purpose by collecting their name, contact details and other information prior to entering to the church building.</p> <p>Hand washing posters will be posted on toilets and at hand washing facilities.</p> <p>Sufficient quantity of personal hygienic and cleaning materials will be provided.</p>	<p>Managing Committee</p> <p>Managing Committee</p> <p>Managing Committee</p>		

		<p>Members will be given designated earmarked spaces for worship.</p> <p>Provision of Hand sanitizers, Face masks, wash soaps, warm water etc will be provided for the attendees</p> <p>Number of available toilets will be restricted common</p> <p>Necessary toilet cleaning and hand washing materials will be available for the use of members after every use of the toilet.</p> <p>Only limited area of the Church building will be opened for worship. And only minimum amount of furniture will be provided in the worship area</p> <p>Church building will be opened only for worship during restricted planned duration.</p>	<p>Attendees will dispose the face masks before entering the building and use a new face mask provided at the entrance before entering the common place of worship</p> <p>Attendees will be encouraged to use the hand sanitizer before entering to the main church hall.</p> <p>Toilets will be thoroughly cleaned in the beginning and end of each worship service. After every use, toilet seats and common places of the area will be cleaned. This includes frequent disinfection of door handles, push bar and push pads of the doors</p> <p>Only limited area will be open for attendees to access and rest of the area will be locked off.</p> <p>No social activities, refreshments or any other functions except liturgical worship will be allowed in the Church building.</p>	<p>Managing Committee</p> <p>Attendees</p> <p>Managing Committee</p> <p>Managing Committee &amp; attendees</p> <p>Attendees</p> <p>Managing Committee</p>		
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			After the worship service all the attendees should dispersed immediately and no socializing will be encouraged.	Vicar/ Managing Committee		
Transmission of Covid 19 by physical contact	Priests/ Clergies, Church Attendees, Family members of Clergies and Attendees	<p>Face masks will be encouraged to wear throughout the mass. Choir singing is suspended and individual singing and chanting in low pitch</p> <p>Social distancing will be maintained in the Altar. Always a minimum 1+meter distance will be maintained in the Altar Ensure that Private Prayer books will be used.</p> <p>Use of Sacramental Objects is controlled and restricted</p> <p>One responsible individual will do the Altar setting and sacramental arrangements in the Altar</p> <p>Offertory and money transactions will be avoided and inside the Church building</p>	<p>Attendees will encourage to wear face masks while attending the service. Group singing and chanting will not be done and attendees should sing/ chant /say prayers in low pitch to avoid displacement of aerosols.</p> <p>Maximum three Altar Assistants will be permitted at any point of time in the Altar. Personal assistants to Priests and standing with candles near the priest will be avoided.</p> <p>Priests, Attendees and Altar Assistants shall bring prayers books, any other materials for their worship and should bring those back home. These materials should not be left in common places.</p>	<p>Vicar/ managing Committee</p> <p>Vicar/ managing Committee</p> <p>Vicar/ managing Committee</p>		

		<p>All service books owned by the church will be removed from the church hall to avoid its usage.</p>	<p>Only unavoidable sacramental objects will be used  Oil lamp will be removed from the place of worship.  Lighting of the candles will not be allowed for attendees  Any wooden or metal items including microphones used/ touched will be handled by only one individual on the same day and he should clean it after the use. The same item will be kept in quarantine for next 72 hours before the next use by another person.</p> <p>Altar setting will be done by the Priest by himself prior to worship and no other person will touch the Chalice and all other the sacramental ornaments on the Altar.</p> <p>No offertory collection will be taken place as part of the worship. Members should be encouraged to use online money transactions. If unavoidable money can be deposited in a closed envelope which will be quarantined for 72 hours and then will be managed in a controlled</p>	<p>Vicar/  managing  Committee</p> <p>Vicar</p>		
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			manner by the Trustees in strict environment and by using appropriate PPE	Trustee		
Potential transmission of Covid-19 during Holy Sacraments and worships	Priests/ Clergies, Attendees, Altar Assistants, Families of Clergies Altar Assistants and Attendees	<p>Person to Person contacts is avoided.</p> <p>Priest blessing on Faithfull's forehead will not be encouraged.</p> <p>Holy Confession and Holy Absolution is restricted.</p> <p>Holy Communion will be given in unavoidable circumstances in restrictions and with prior agreement.</p>	<p>Kiss of Peace during the Holy Liturgy will be avoided and bowing of heads will be practised</p> <p>Blessing given by the priest by touching will be avoided and instead wooden cross will be used without touching the body of the other person. A general benediction would be considered with the permission of Diocesan Metropolitan for this Pandemic time.</p> <p>Single use disposable cups will be in use for water after holy sacrament Unless it is very necessary, Holy Confession and Holy Absolution will not be given to faithful. If unavoidable the Priest and the faithful will wear appropriate PPE and face protections to carry out the sacrament</p>	<p>Vicar</p> <p>Vicar</p>		

			<p>Unless it is very necessary, Holy communion is not encouraged at these times of the Pandemic.</p> <p>Members with special occasion will be prioritised to have the holy sacrament ( Birthday / Wedding anniversary etc.)</p> <p>Necessary care will be taken by the Priest that no body to body or body to material contact is taken place during the administration</p>			
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