



HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

STATE HEADQUARTERS

1727 PALI HIGHWAY ■ HONOLULU, HI 96813 ■ PH: (808) 522-9200 ■ FAX: (808) 522-9209

COVID-19 Memo #17 Directives, Recommendations and Guidelines from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Headquarters (August 29, 2021)

The highly contagious COVID-19 Delta variant has caused an alarming surge in cases throughout our State and Nation. The unvaccinated population is especially vulnerable. Covid-19 cases in children are also increasing across the nation. Furthermore, hospitalizations have dramatically increased resulting in our healthcare system being under tremendous strain, affecting our entire population. Please be advised that new restrictions and recommendations are in place.

HQ Recommendations:

1. Please keep updated with the latest mandates, directives, recommendations and guidelines by federal, state and county agencies. Please be aware that circumstances and conditions including restrictions and guidelines may vary from County to County and thus the importance of also checking your respective County website.

Pertinent and detailed information can be found by clicking on the following websites:

[Centers for Disease Control](#)

[State of Hawaii](#)

[State Department of Education](#)

[City and County of Honolulu](#)

[County of Kauai](#)

[County of Maui](#)

[County of Hawaii](#)

However, to simplify the information, below is a summary of restrictions for Spiritual Services and funerals by county. Please note funerals are not considered professional events. However, weddings are classified as professional events except for Hawaii County which classifies it as a social gathering.

City and County of Honolulu

Until 9/22/21, social gatherings including funerals are limited to 10 individuals indoors and 25 individuals outdoors. For Houses of Worship/spiritual services, however, up to 10 individuals per group of the same household for indoors and 25 individuals per group of the same household outdoors may gather, but capacity is limited to meeting the six feet physical distancing requirements between household groups.

Hawaii County (Big Island)

Emergency Rule No. 17, which is in effect until 10/4/21, generally, allows gathering sizes for funerals and weddings of up to 10 individuals indoors and 10 individuals outdoors. For Houses of Worship/spiritual services, the 6 feet physical distancing between households must be maintained. See County website for details.

Kauai County

Kauai uses a 6 Tier System to determine capacity for Faith-based Services including funerals and weddings which take place in a House of Worship. (Weddings and Funerals which does not take place in a House of Worship are considered either as a social gathering or a professional event.) If test positivity rate is from less than 1%-5% it is 50% and if greater than 5% it is 25%. Please check with County Office for details.

Maui County

For Houses of Worship/spiritual services including funerals, the 6 feet physical distancing between households must be maintained. Please note that some changes may be coming soon.

2. Stay home if you are not feeling well. Please stay home or work from home if you have flu-like symptoms even if they have not been confirmed as COVID-19 symptoms.
3. Please continue to follow safety measures and precautions such as physical distancing, capacity or gathering limits, wearing of masks indoors and to larger outdoor gatherings, encourage the use of sanitizers and/or frequent handwashing, refrain from sharing items, sanitization and disinfecting of used areas. Also, it is recommended that you have mitigations plans in case infection occurs. Some counties require mitigation plans to be submitted for larger and professional events.
4. Please use your discretion for inter-island traveling. However, Hawaii Kyodan State Committees, please continue to meet online for the remainder of the year (2021). If a committee needs to have an in-person meeting, please contact Headquarters, the Business Manager for consultation and arrangements.
5. Local temple leaders, especially with the recent surge in cases, please use your highest discretion taking into consideration your ability to ensure safety measures including sanitation and disinfection and mitigation plans like contact tracking, and the overall sentiment of your minister(s), membership including temple staff and/or volunteers as to whether you open or not for in-person services, events and activities. If you do open, it would be recommended that you have a backup plan in the event the original plan can be implemented. If your temple is not ready to reopen, please consider continuing to provide online spiritual services, meetings and events. Another possibility is a hybrid presentation of limited in-person attendance and online attendance for services, meetings and events.

Vaccination Update

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii **highly recommends** that every eligible person except those with medical exemptions consider getting vaccinated. As of August 23, 2021, the COVID-19 Pfizer Vaccine has been fully approved by the FDA. The full approval by the FDA of other vaccines is also anticipated. While, it is an individual choice to be vaccinated or not, the decision has consequential effects on others around you and for yourself. If you have specific questions or concerns about the COVID-19 vaccines and your health, please consult with your healthcare provider.

For further information on vaccinations such as updates, registration details including finding the nearest free vaccination site to you, please check the following websites:

[State Department of Health Vaccine Information](#)

[City and County of Honolulu](#)

[County of Kauai](#)

[County of Maui](#)

[County of Hawaii](#)

Announcement from HHMH Committee on Social Concerns-COVID-19 Resilience Grant

The HHMH Committee on Social Concerns announces the availability of a COVID-19 Resilience Grant. It has been created to help ensure temples can safely operate during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. This grant can be used to assist in the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (masks, gloves, etc.) as well as cleaning and disinfecting supplies used to reduce the risk of infection. Any temple affiliated with Hawaii Kyodan may apply to receive one (1) grant of up to a maximum of \$500.00. To apply, submit a letter indicating the amount requested and detailing how grant funds will be used. The letter must be signed by Temple President or Minister. Mail to Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, Committee on Social Concerns, Attn: Rev. Blayne Higa, 1727 Pali Highway, Honolulu, HI 96813. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis as they are received. The deadline to apply is January 31, 2022.

Closing Thought

The highly contagious nature of the Delta variant with its devastating impact on especially the unvaccinated and the strain that it is causing on our healthcare professionals and facilities is a dire concern for all of us. While being concerned about the safety and well-being of one and all, let us remember to be respectful of others and be mindful of not being overwhelmed by fear and swayed by misinformation. Thank you for tirelessly endeavoring to keep our temples and community operating and safe and your continued effort to share the Buddha-Dharma in the spirit of Sangha. Lastly, let us go to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for guidance!

In gassho,
Rev. Eric Matsumoto, Bishop & Dr. Warren Tamamoto, State President,
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii