



HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

STATE HEADQUARTERS

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COVID-19 Memo #18 Directives, Recommendations and Guidelines from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Headquarters (March 3, 2022)

Recently, all Counties in the State of Hawaii have lifted all restrictions put into effect by County ordinances. However, there are still restrictions mandated by the Governor's Proclamation which are in place state-wide until March 25, 2022. Those restrictions and policy include: 1) Indoor mask wearing, 2) Safe Travels Program and 3) Testing/Vaccination Requirement for County and State Employees. Also, the Hawaii Department of Health Revised Isolation and Quarantine Policy (as of 1/3/22) is as follows:

If COVID-19 Positive Regardless of Vaccination Status

- Isolate for at least 5 days and until symptoms are gone.
- Continue to wear a mask for five days after isolation.

If exposed to COVID-19

Boosted, or fully vaccinated within past six months (or within past 2 months if J&J)

- No need to quarantine
- Wear a mask for ten days
- Get tested on day five

Neither boosted nor fully vaccinated

- Quarantine for five days
- Wear a mask for five days after quarantine
- Get tested on day five

Moving Forward

For Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, we ask that all temples and affiliates to keep abreast of federal, state and county guidelines, proclamations and ordinances and use them to guide you. Again, until March 25th, the State of Hawaii still has mandated restrictions (as listed above). More guidance will be forthcoming at the appropriate time. Please keep yourselves informed. Please note that for temples which have educational or elder care related programs there might be other mandates or recommendations from the Department of Education, Department of Health /or Department of Human Services.

Headquarters is rescinding previous recommendations such as no mass chanting and singing, special arrangements for offering of incense and non-use of service books and gatha books, etc. However, while physical distancing is not required by mandate, please consider retaining physical distancing (for a while longer) out of respect for those who wish to do so by providing such space. Matters are left to your discretion, but please let us still do what we can to minimize the spread of the virus. Temple Boards as you decide on your reopening process, it is recommended that you continue safety measures such as encouraging frequent handwashing, sanitizing of high touch areas and items, providing good ventilation as much as possible and so forth in the abundance of caution. Please be respectful of individual members' preferences particularly for indoor events as many will prefer to continue to wear masks.

Please consider your temple's ability to keep safe and the comfort level of your minister(s) and temple staff including volunteers and the temple membership in determining your timeline and procedures as you move forward.

Messages from the Mayors of each County

“We thank our entire state who came together, made tremendous sacrifices, and overcame the greatest challenge our society has faced in recent history. We thank Governor Ige, the state Department of Health, and all of our partners across the islands, for your leadership and guidance. Most of all, we thank all of you – our small business owners, essential workers, working parents, kupuna, and most especially our keiki – for your compassion and resilience to see us to this significant turning point. The ability for us to now see life beyond COVID is a testament to your collective work.” – **Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami, Kaua'i County.**

“This pandemic has tested all of us in extraordinary ways,” said Honolulu Mayor Rick Blangiardi. “I want to thank the Governor, the State Department of Health and General Hara for guiding us to this landmark point in time. But most importantly, I want to thank our residents who did all they could to demonstrate a genuine concern for taking care of themselves, their families, and their communities. I am so proud of the way we stood together over the last two years through one of the most trying times in history. The resilience of our entire state was remarkable, and it is a great credit to who we are as a people.” — **Mayor Rick Blangiardi, City and County of Honolulu.**

“Mahalo to Governor Ige, Lieutenant Governor Green, the Hawai'i Department of Health, and everyone who has helped to keep Hawai'i safe during the pandemic. Hawai'i has the lowest COVID-related death rate in the nation because of this vigilance. Hawai'i is the nation's only island state, and our geographic isolation means our considerations are different from the other states. COVID-19 is still out there, and I ask for continued patience from everyone.” – **Mayor Michael Victorino, Maui County.**

“We are excited to be moving collectively, as an island and a state, toward a new chapter for Hawai'i. Our community has worked extremely hard over the past two years to keep each other safe, and it is because of them we are able to begin shifting from response to recovery. Although COVID still remains a threat, we are confident in the will of our residents to continue doing what they know is right for all of us.” – **Mayor Mitch Roth, Hawai'i County.**

Final Thoughts

Although we are not completely out of the woods, Headquarters would like to express its deepest gratitude to temples and especially ministers and temple leaders including the lay staff and volunteers for your dedication, commitment and perseverance in maneuvering through this difficult pandemic while still providing access to the Buddha-Dharma and contributing in various ways to aid the larger community. A word of appreciation to Business Manager Derrick Inouye, Former EA Rev. Kazunori Takahashi, Current EA Rev. Daido Baba, Rev. Blayne Higa and Dean Sakamoto of the Committee on Social Concerns for their guidance, advice and input in creating the series of Memos issued by Headquarters. Finally, the Resilience Grant for purchasing of supplies and equipment for safety and sanitizing related to the Pandemic from our Committee on Social Concerns is still available for temples. Please contact your respective District Social Concerns committee member for details.

To one and all, please continue to stay safe and may the Wisdom and Compassion of Buddha-Dharma continue to guide us, the Sangha. Thank you very much.

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