



HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

STATE HEADQUARTERS

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COVID-19 Memo #7





Directives, Recommendations and Guidelines from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Headquarters including Reopening Information and Resources (May 24, 2020)

We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude for your diligence, understanding, patience, and cooperation as we continue to adjust and adapt to our ever changing circumstances due to COVID-19.

Information from the State of Hawaii Governor’s Office states that we are in the “Act With Care” Phase.

Impacts to Daily Life from Stabilization to Resilience

(Impact level may vary by County)

Impact to Daily Life	STAY AT HOME (Major Disruption)	SAFER AT HOME (Moderate Disruption)	ACT WITH CARE (Minor Disruption)	RECOVERY (Minimal Disruption)	NEW NORMAL (No Disruption)
 Face Coverings	 Follow recommended Safe Practices				
 Stay at Home	Stay at home except for essential activities	High-risk populations* and kūpuna recommended to stay at home		High-risk populations and kūpuna exercise caution when in public	
 Gatherings	No gatherings	No gatherings over 10 and maintain >6ft physical distance	Gatherings up to 50 and maintain >6ft physical distance	Maintain >6ft physical distance	

*High-risk populations are currently defined by CDC as: persons 65 years of age and older; people of all ages with underlying medical conditions (particularly not well controlled), including people with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma, people who have serious heart conditions, people who are immunocompromised, people with severe obesity, people with diabetes, people with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis, and people with liver disease; people who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility.

Updates for Kauai County and City and County of Honolulu (Oahu)

According to the Kauai County Mayor’s office, as of May 22, 2020, religious entities may reopen on Kauai. In the Mayor’s Proclamation, it says:

Places of worship

- Faith Based Worship in accordance with the CDC Interim Guidance for Administrators and Leaders of Community and Faith Based Organizations to Plan, Prepare, and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 or any updated CDC guidance

According to the City and County of Honolulu Mayor's Office for Oahu, as of May 23, 2020:

12. In-person spiritual services. Starting May 23, 2020, in-person spiritual services may be conducted provided all of the following are implemented:
 - a. All persons present at the service must maintain six (6) feet of physical distance between others, except members of the same household or living unit. Organizers are encouraged to limit the number of persons attending their in-person spiritual services to ensure this physical distancing requirement is met.
 - b. Organizers and employees are strongly encouraged to develop and implement appropriate COVID-19 mitigation plans and procedures for their respective in-person services, which should include, but are not limited to, addressing the following issues:
 - i. Usage of face coverings.
 - ii. Safeguards for higher risk populations consistent with CDC guidance, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Higher-Risk>.
 - iii. Persons who are sick.
 - iv. Personal hygiene.
 - v. Usage of hand sanitizer and sanitizing products.
 - vi. Cleaning and disinfection.
 - vii. Online and remote access and/or drive-in services.
 - viii. Signage.
 - ix. Limiting community sharing of worship materials and other frequently touched items.
 - c. Organizers and employees of in-person spiritual services must follow to the greatest extent possible current COVID-19 related: City guidelines; State of Hawaii guidelines' CDC guidelines (available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>), and their respective spiritual organizations' guidelines.

(Approved by GOV/HI-EMA 5/21/20);

For Temples on Oahu and Kauai, because of reopening temple offices may reopen beyond Minimum Basic Operations. However, safety procedures like physical distancing and so forth must be followed. Also, the temple columbarium may reopen, but likewise physical distancing and other safety procedures including minimizing the use of shared worship materials like incense including matches and lighters, and nenju to help prevent the spread of the virus.

We anticipate that Maui County (date not clear) and Hawaii County (June 1) will also be able to reopen on a limited basis soon too. Thus, what becomes essential is careful planning and preparing before, during and after reopening. We have gathered some information and resources which we hope will be helpful.

A Checklist* for Reopening

1. Create Temple Reopening Task Force (minister and lay leaders)
2. Work on Temple Reopening Plans and Procedures. Please refer to CDC guidelines and information found at [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning](#)

3. Create a team or teams of volunteers to assist in making sure that safety procedures are followed especially when multiple groups are on the temple campus and/or facilities.
4. Gather necessary supplies such as: disposable facial masks, general cleaning and disinfectant supplies, wipes, hand sanitizers, disposable gloves, etc. Recommended Resource: [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
5. Enforce physical distancing (social distancing) at all times.
6. Promote healthy hygiene practices
7. Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and, if possible, ventilation. See CDC Guidelines for tips [CDC Cleaning tips](#)
8. Post informational signs related to COVID-19 around temple campus. Recommended Resource: [CDC Print Resources](#)
Take steps to minimize community sharing (or usage) of worship materials such as service books, gatha books, nenju and incense including lighters & matches. The temples may want to utilize the [online Jodo Shinshu Service Book](#).
9. Reminder: Group or congregational chanting and singing is considered a high risk activity
10. Refrain from having coffee hour or gathering for refreshments after a service
11. Create an Emergency Operations Procedures, in case someone (employee, member and/or visitor) becomes ill or infected.
Some guidelines on what to do if someone gets COVID-19:
 - a. Coordinate with local health officials
 - b. Clean and disinfect thoroughly
 - c. Implement strategies to continue essential services for the people you serve.
 - d. Communicate with staff, volunteers, members, and the people you serve.
 - e. Make decisions in consultation with local health officials about extending the closure of, or limiting access to, the facility.
12. Please be aware of any changes to Federal, State & County guidelines.
*Checklist may not be exhaustive.

It is promising that more sectors of our community have been given the green light to reopen including religious entities. However, let us remain vigilant, be flexible, and move forward with caution. Let us not rush into reopening. Good planning and being prepared to reopen is essential. As the saying goes "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Again, thank you for your cooperation, understanding and continued effort to protect our temples and safeguard the health and lives of our Sangha members and larger community.

Respectfully,

Rev. Eric Matsumoto, Bishop and Dr. Warren Tamamoto, State President