

FURTHER EASING OF SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

On **22 April 2022**, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce (MTF) announced the adjustment of the Disease Outbreak Response System Condition (DORSCON) level from Orange to Yellow and the further easing of community safe management measures (SMMs) from **26 April 2022** (see Annex A).

2. This document provides the conditions under which religious organisations (ROs) are permitted to carry out activities in places of worship from **26 April 2022**.

3. The key changes affecting religious activities from **26 April 2022** are:

- a. **There will no longer be a group size limit.**
- b. **All employees who can work from home may now return to the workplace**, an increase from the current limit of 75%.
- c. **Safe distancing will no longer be required** between individuals.
- d. **The capacity limit of 75%** for congregational worship services and other mask-on religious activities involving more than 1,000 persons **will be removed**.
- e. **Vaccination-Differentiated SMMs (VDS) will be removed from congregational worship services and other mask-on religious activities except for activities involving more than 500 persons at any one time.**
- f. **Singing in religious classes with masks on will be allowed.**
- g. There will be **no restrictions** on the number of performers and crew, or the number of performers allowed to unmask **for live performances** (including for singing or playing instruments that require intentional expulsion of air).
- h. **Food and Beverages** served during activities in places of worship need **not** be served in individual portions, and it is encouraged for individuals to be stationary while consuming their meals. Safe distance will **not** be required between individuals. Self-serve buffet formats are not allowed. **VDS will apply where the activity exceeds 500 persons.**

Annex B summarises the above changes. Please see the following sections for the detailed conditions for various permitted religious activities.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Worship Services

4. From **26 April 2022**, VDS will be removed from congregational and other worship services **except** for services involving more than **500 persons** at any one time.
 - a. For services involving more than 500 persons (excluding religious workers, performers and supporting workers), **worshippers must be fully vaccinated¹** and ROs have to conduct VDS entry checks.
5. Previously, congregational worship services and other mask-on religious activities involving more than 1,000 persons were subject to a capacity limit of 75%. From **26 April 2022**, this capacity limit will be removed.
6. There is **no need for safe distancing** between each worshipper.
7. ROs must adopt the following SMMs for worship services:
 - a. For indoor settings, all persons present (except children below 6 years of age) must **wear a face mask at all times.**² Face shields are not permitted as substitutes for face masks. Young children are still strongly encouraged to use a mask, especially in crowded areas. Mask-wearing will remain optional in outdoor settings. However, we encourage individuals to exercise precaution e.g. wear their masks in crowded outdoor areas.
 - b. **Singing by worshippers is allowed, with their masks on.** Worshippers are to remain masked when giving verbal responses.
 - c. Live performance elements are permitted during the worship service at places of worship.
 - i. From **26 April 2022**, there will be no restrictions on the number of performers and crew, or the number of performers allowed to unmask for live performances **(including for singing or playing instruments that require intentional expulsion of air).**
 - ii. From **26 April 2022**, there is no need for performers/crew to be fully vaccinated to sing or play instruments that require intentional expulsion of air, in line with lifting of workforce vaccination measures that will also take effect from 26 April.

¹ To maintain their “fully vaccinated” status, persons aged 12 years and above should receive their booster doses no later than 270 days after the last dose in the primary vaccination series. For more information, refer to <https://www.moh.gov.sg/covid-19/vaccination>.

² Children 12 years and below, as well as persons who have health conditions that may result in breathing or other medical difficulties when a mask is worn for a prolonged period of time, may wear a face shield in lieu of a face mask.

- iii. **From 26 April 2022, safe distance will not be required between individuals.** There is also no need for safe distance between persons involved in the conduct of live performance elements and worshippers.
 - iv. Participants are strongly encouraged to avoid sharing of equipment (e.g. props, musical instruments and microphones) among participants. If this cannot be done, the equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and/or disinfected before handled or used by others.
 - v. All technical equipment (e.g. camera, lights) should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each session, and between each user.
- d. Worshippers are strongly encouraged to **not share prayer and other common items** (e.g. holy books, passing of offertory baskets, prayer mats) and to bring along their personal prayer items instead, where required.

Marriage Solemnizations

8. ROs may continue to use places of worship to conduct marriage solemnizations with VDS. From **26 April 2022**, there is no capacity limit on the number of participants in marriage solemnizations conducted by ROs.³

Funerals

9. From **26 April 2022**, funerals, funeral wakes or funeral processions held during or before the burial or cremation of the deceased in places of worship will be **allowed with no capacity limit**.

- a. For indoor settings, attendees must remain masked at all times. For outdoors, attendees are encouraged to wear masks.
- b. From **26 April 2022**, **food and drinks are allowed to be served** at funeral events. Food and drinks do not have to be served individually. **Self-serve buffet is not allowed**.

10. ROs must continue to comply with prevailing SMMs listed on MTI's website⁴ for these funerary-related activities and check the guidelines for any further updates.

11. From **26 April 2022**, visits to columbaria at places of worship **will be allowed with no group size limit**.

³ Refer to ROM/ROMM's guidelines and the SMMs for Marriage Solemnizations at: <https://www.marriage.gov.sg>.

⁴ Refer to SMMs for Funeral Events at: <https://www.gobusiness.gov.sg/safemanagement/sector/>.

Other Religious Activities

12. From **26 April 2022**, VDS will be removed from religious rites that are not part of a worship service and other religious activities (e.g. pastoral services) for rites/activities involving 500 persons or less, similar to the conditions for worship services as stated in para 4.

13. Religious classes (without VDS) can proceed without being subject to any capacity limit, subject to prevailing fire safety and room capacity. For indoor classes, masks must be worn as a default at all times.⁵ From **26 April 2022**, singing in religious classes with masks on will be allowed.

Recording and Broadcast of Religious Services and Prayers

14. ROs can continue to support the religious needs of their communities via remote means such as recording and broadcast of religious services and prayers.

15. From **26 April 2022**:

- a. There will be no restrictions on the number of performers and crew, or the number of performers allowed to unmask (**including for singing or playing instruments that require intentional expulsion of air**) for recording and broadcast of religious services and prayers.
- b. There is no need for performers/crew to be fully vaccinated to sing or play wind instruments, in line with lifting of workforce vaccination measures that will also take effect from 26 April.
- c. **Safe distance will not be required in mask-on and mask-off settings.**
- d. There will be **no audience size limits**.

CONSUMPTION OF FOOD & BEVERAGES

16. Consumption of Food and Beverages (F&B) is allowed in places of worship. This includes communal meals served by community kitchens in places of worship.

17. From **26 April 2022**:

- a. There is **no capacity limit** for communal meals.

⁵ Refer to MOE's advisory on SMMs for private tuition and enrichment at: <https://www.moe.gov.sg/faqs-covid-19-infection>.

- b. **VDS will be applied if the activity exceeds 500 persons**, and ROs have to conduct VDS entry checks for this purpose.
- c. F&B need **not** be served in individual portions, and individuals are encouraged to be stationary when consuming meals. **Self-serve buffet is not allowed.**
- d. Participants should put on their masks as soon as they have finished eating or drinking.
- e. Safe distance will not be required between individuals.

DEPLOYMENT OF MANPOWER

18. ROs should primarily engage their religious workers and staff to support the permitted religious activities but can deploy volunteers to support if necessary.

19. From **26 April 2022**, **all employees who can work from home may now return to the workplace**, an increase from the current limit of 75%.

20. Social gatherings at workplaces can continue subject to prevailing SMMs. Religious workers and administrative staff should continue to comply with prevailing workplace SMMs stipulated by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and check MOM's guidelines for any further updates.⁶

STEPPING DOWN ON THE USE OF TRACE TOGETHER(TT) AND SAFE ENTRY(SE)

21. Most venues will no longer require the public to check in using the TT application or token. However, the TT/SE functionality will be maintained as a means of conducting VDS checks for the settings that still require it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ON CPRO WEBSITE

22. **ROs must acknowledge through the CPRO website the new conditions for religious activities imposed before commencing the activities from 26 April 2022**. The detailed requirements and format for submitting the acknowledgement form can be found at www.cpro.gov.sg.

23. MCCY reserves the right to suspend a RO's activities if there are gaps in the SMMs and until the necessary rectifications are made. ROs are responsible for the implementation of SMMs and action could be taken for lapses and breaches. Should there be any confirmed COVID-19 cases linked to a RO's premises or place of worship, the premises may be closed for a period of time as determined by the authorities.

⁶ For more information, please refer to MOM's advisory at <https://www.mom.gov.sg/covid-19>.

TOWARDS COVID-19 RESILIENCE

24. This round of SMM easing and our transition to DORSCON Yellow is a milestone in our progress towards living with COVID-19. However, the situation can change quickly in the face of new virus variants. Hence, we urge ROs and their worshippers to remain socially responsible and vigilant even as we take strides towards normalcy.

25. MCCY will continue to work closely with our ROs for a COVID-19 resilient environment for religious activities.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH

For more information and FAQs on COVID-19 for the religious sector, please visit www.cpro.gov.sg or contact MCCY's Crisis Preparedness for Religious Organisations Programme Office (cpro@mccy.gov.sg).

**FIVE CORE PARAMETERS TO RESET
OUR SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES (SMMs)**

Parameter	Current Posture
(1) Group sizes	No limit
(2) Mask-wearing	Required indoors* Optional outdoors
(3) Workplace requirements	All can return to office
(4) Safe distancing	Not required
(5) Capacity Limits	No limit [^]

* In indoor workplace settings, employees may also remove their masks at their workstations: (i) when they are not interacting physically with others and (ii) when they are not in customer-facing areas.

[^] Capacity limits will be lifted for all settings except nightlife establishments, where dancing among patrons is one of the intended activities, which will continue to have a 75% capacity limit.

SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES IN SMMS FOR RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Religious Activity	From 29 March 2022	From 26 April 2022
Permissible Group Size	Group size of up to 10 persons for mask-off activities	No group size limit
Congregational and Worship Services	Worship services involving more than 1000 worshippers will be capped at 75% of the venue's capacity or 1,000, whichever is higher.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity limit will be removed. • VDS will be removed from congregational and other worship services <u>except</u> for services involving more than <u>500 persons</u> at any one time.
Live performance elements during congregational and other worship services	Performers (fully vaccinated) who are singing and playing instruments requiring intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments) in front of an audience will no longer need to conduct additional testing.	No need for performers/crew to be fully vaccinated to sing or play wind instruments, in line with lifting of workforce vaccination measures that will also take effect from 26 April.
Other Religious Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are more than 1000 participants, the mask-on activity is capped at 75% of the venue's capacity or 1000 participants, whichever is higher. • Mask-on classes (without VDS) can proceed without being subject to any capacity limit, subject to prevailing fire safety and room capacity requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity limits will be removed. • VDS will be removed from religious rites that are not part of a worship service and other religious activities (e.g. pastoral services) for rites/activities involving 500 persons or less. • Singing in religious classes with masks on will be allowed.

Religious Activity	From 29 March 2022	From 26 April 2022
Marriage Solemnizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger solemnizations for more than 1000 persons are capped at 75% of the venue's capacity or 1000 participants, whichever is higher. 	<p>Capacity limits will be removed.</p> <p><i>Refer to the Registry of Marriages and Registry of Muslim Marriages for the detailed SMMs for marriage solemnizations.</i></p>
Recording and Broadcasting Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Static performers on stage may be in groups of 10 persons, with no need to maintain safe distance within the group. • Performers (fully vaccinated) who are singing and playing instruments requiring intentional expulsion of air (e.g. wind instruments) in front of an audience will no longer need to conduct additional testing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe distance will not be required between individuals. • No need for performers/crew to be fully vaccinated to sing or play wind instruments, in line with lifting of workforce vaccination measures that will also take effect from 26 April.