Guidance for Reopening TVUUC Building and Grounds in Light of COVID-19 Surge

The COVID-19 Task Force (CTF) created the following reopening framework to help guide decision-making about appropriate activities on church grounds in light of the recent surge in COVID-19 cases.

In August 2021, the task force adopted using CovidActNow’s risk categories\(^1\) to define local community risk. The community risk level in Knox County\(^2\) was selected as the marker for determining our congregation’s risk level. Decisions about moving from one risk level to another will be based on two-week data trends.

In September, the task force mapped Rev. Buice’s proposed worship reopening phases onto these defined risk levels and added an additional level for when COVID-19 no longer constitutes a pandemic. The task force then created recommendations for outdoor worship services and for small group activities. The task force considered guidance and feedback from CovidActNow, the CDC, UUA, other UU congregations, church leadership, task force members, board members, and congregants when crafting these recommendations.

This reopening framework was reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors on September 21, 2021.

Note: CovidActNow guidance\(^3\) remains the same across all risk levels, as derived from CDC recommendations\(^4\):

- Masks are now recommended for vaccinated individuals in public indoor spaces to reduce the spread of the Delta [and Omicron] variant. Unvaccinated people should continue to mask in all public spaces.
- Indoor gatherings should be avoided with people outside the immediate household, unless you are fully vaccinated. Outdoor gatherings with masks and distancing are a safer alternative.

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\(^1\) [https://covidactnow.org/covid-risk-levels-metrics](https://covidactnow.org/covid-risk-levels-metrics)

\(^2\) [https://covidactnow.org/us/tennessee-tn/?s=22951216](https://covidactnow.org/us/tennessee-tn/?s=22951216)

\(^3\) [https://covidactnow.org/?s=22951216](https://covidactnow.org/?s=22951216)

# Recommended Worship Activities at TVUUC, by Risk Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covid Act Now Risk Level</th>
<th>Endemic&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Extremely High&lt;sup&gt;7&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended Activities</strong></td>
<td>Indoor: Offer worship as before pandemic; discontinue all pandemic-related safety protocols. Continued offering of livestreamed services. Outdoor: n/a.</td>
<td>Indoor: Worship service open to the public with safety protocols in place; vaccination encouraged but not required. Continued offering of livestreamed services. Outdoor: Worship service open to the public with no restrictions; participants assess individual risk tolerance.</td>
<td>Indoor: Worship service open to the public with safety protocols in place; vaccination encouraged but not required. Continued offering of livestreamed services. Outdoor: Worship service open to the public with safety protocols in place; vaccination encouraged but not required.</td>
<td>Indoor: Worship service open only to those fully vaccinated and with safety protocols in place. Continued offering of livestreamed services.</td>
<td>Indoor: Worship service streamed online; no in-person option. Outdoor: Worship service open to the public with safety protocols in place; vaccination encouraged but not required.</td>
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**Safety Protocols to Include:**
- Universal masking for ages 2+
- Physical distancing
- Good ventilation
- Reduced occupancy
- No congregational singing
- No food or drink

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<sup>6</sup> This phase is intended for when COVID-19 is no longer classified as a pandemic and predictable endemic levels of disease are present instead. This phase is also predicated on the assumption that vaccines will be widely available for all age groups.

<sup>7</sup> In January 2022, CovidActNow renamed this risk level; it was previously called Severe. Risk thresholds remain the same.
## Recommended Small Group Activities at TVUUC, by Risk Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covid Act Now Risk Level(^8)</th>
<th>Endemic(^9)</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>Extremely High(^10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended Activities</strong></td>
<td>Indoor &amp; outdoor: No limitations on small group activities, congruent with pre-pandemic policy.</td>
<td>Indoor: Application &amp; approval required; limited restrictions to be determined from application review.</td>
<td>Indoor: Application &amp; approval required; safety protocols required; vaccination encouraged but not required.</td>
<td>Indoor: Application &amp; approval required; safety protocols and vaccination required.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor: No application required; no restrictions; participants assess individual risk tolerance.</td>
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\(^9\) This phase is intended for when COVID-19 is no longer classified as a pandemic and predictable endemic levels of disease are present instead. This phase is also predicated on the assumption that vaccines will be widely available for all age groups.

\(^10\) In January 2022, CovidActNow renamed this risk level; it was previously called Severe. Risk thresholds remain the same.