



## Religious Exemptions and Language in COVID-19 Orders Revised April 20, 2020

**Explanation of formatting:** Those states whose names are bolded have a religious exemption of some kind. States that are not bolded do not have an express exemption (for some the order may not extend to close houses of worship or stop services but it does not explicitly exempt them). Any language in the orders related to worship/religious activities is included. Each state has a link to the relevant order and/or FAQs or guidance on the order in addition to a link to the state's page for COVID-19 order updates.

### 1. **Alabama**

- a. Alabama's stay at home order lists as an essential activity "[t]o attend religious services. A person may leave his or her place of residence to attend an event that is a religious worship service, wedding, or funeral in either of the following circumstances: (i) The event involves fewer than 10 people and the people maintain a consistent six-foot distance from one another; or (ii) The event is a "drive-in" worship service that adheres to the following rules: 1. All participants shall remain in their vehicles for the entirety of the service; 2. The participants in each vehicle all share the same place of residence; and 3. Participants do not come within six feet of participants in other vehicles." It includes as an essential business or operation, "[r]eligious entities, including religious and faith-based facilities, entities and groups." [Order](#), [link to updates on governor's statements](#) (which often provide a link to the pdf of the State Health Officer's Order)

### 2. **Alaska:**

- a. The order has no religious exemption; it states that "[a]ll individuals shall cease participation in public or private gatherings that include non-household members, regardless of the number of people involved. This includes, but is not limited to, weddings, faith gatherings, graduations, and funeral events." [Governor's Order](#), [FAQs](#), [Essential Infrastructure Attachment A](#), [link to all health mandates](#)

### 3. **Arizona:**

- a. The state's stay at home order of 3.30.20 provides that essential activities include, "[e]ngaging in constitutionally protected activities such as speech and religion...provided that such is conducted in a manner that provides appropriate physical distancing to the extent feasible." [Executive Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

### 4. **Arkansas:**

- a. Both the Governor's Executive Order and the Secretary of Health's Directive state that, "[t]his directive does not apply to businesses, manufacturers, construction

companies, places of worship, the Arkansas General Assembly, municipal or county governing bodies, or the judiciary; however, these entities are advised to limit person-to-person contact and maintain appropriate social distancing of at least six (6) feet to prevent the spread of this virus.” In addition, the Arkansas Department of Health issued a Business Limitations Directive which describes social distancing and sanitation protocols and applies to places of worship. [Governor's Order](#), [Secretary of Health's Directive](#), [Business Limitations Directive](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

5. **California:**

- a. The California order does not mention religious organizations, but the list of essential infrastructure includes “[f]aith based services that are provided through streaming or other technology.” [Order](#), [California Essential Infrastructure List](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

6. **Colorado:**

- a. The Colorado order provides an exemption for “In-person pastoral services for individuals who are in crisis or in need of end of life services provided social distancing is observed to the greatest extent possible. Houses of worship may remain open; however, these institutions are encouraged to implement electronic platforms to conduct services whenever possible or to conduct smaller (10 or fewer congregants), more frequent services to allow strict compliance with Social Distancing Requirements.” The guidelines for places of worship outline very specific recommendations and requirements for both in person and drive-in services. [Amended Public Health Order](#), [Guidelines for places of worship](#), [Original Stay at Home Order](#), [Amendments to Original Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

7. **Connecticut:**

- a. The Order places a “Restriction of Social and Recreational Gatherings to No More Than 5 People. Effective immediately, and through April 30, 2020, unless earlier modified, extended, or terminated by me, the prior order set forth in Executive Order No. 7D, prohibiting social and recreational gatherings of 50 people or more, is hereby amended and modified to require that all such gatherings of six (6) or more people, including but not limited to, community, civic, leisure, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; plays or live performances; conventions; and similar activities, are prohibited throughout the State of Connecticut, except that religious, spiritual or worship gatherings shall not be subject to such increased restrictions, and shall instead remain subject to the prohibition on gatherings of 50 or more people, provided that they employ reasonable and appropriate distancing measures. To further clarify this order, it does not apply to government operations, private workplaces, retail establishments, or other activities that are not social or recreational gatherings.” [Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

8. **Delaware:**

- a. Delaware’s most updated modification adds to the Fourth Modification (which has initial gathering and other limitations) “[h]ouses of worship and other places of religious expression or fellowship, which shall comply with all social distancing

requirements set forth in the COVID-19 State of Emergency declaration and all modifications, including attendance of no more than 10 people for in-person services under any circumstances. Houses of worship are strongly encouraged to transition any in-person services to remote services broadcast by telephone or video.” New Guidance for Houses of Worship states that remote services should be used whenever possible, no gatherings may be greater than 10 people, including those coordinating remote services, and that drive in services are permitted provided they comply with specific guidelines including that all cars must be at least 15 feet apart. Religious organizations are included on the industry list as essential. [Fourth Modification](#), [Tenth Modification](#), [Guidance for Worship Services](#), [DE Industry List](#), [link to news archives](#) (which contain links to orders)

#### 9. Florida:

- a. The Florida stay at home order states that, “[f]or purposes of this Order and the conduct it limits, ‘essential activities’ means and encompasses the following...Attending religious services conducted in churches, synagogues and houses of worship.” The order further adopts both the CISA list of essential services and that adopted by Miami-Dade County, both of which are included in the order. Miami-Dade’s relevant order provides that, “This order does not limit the number of persons who may be physically present at any religious service. Persons attending religious services are urged, but are not required, to practice social distancing, such as keeping six feet between persons and limiting group size to less than ten people.” The CISA’s guidelines includes as critical workforce “[c]lergy for essential support” in their list of critical infrastructure workers. [Order](#), [Order clarifying that the statewide order supersedes local orders](#), [link to COVID-19 executive orders and Florida Division of Emergency Management orders](#)

#### 10. Georgia:

- a. The current Executive Order does not have an exemption for churches nor does it mark them as a critical infrastructure, although it follows the CISA list of critical workforces which includes as essential “[c]lergy for essential support.” The FAQs on the order state that churches are subject to the limitation that no more than ten people be present unless there are at least six feet between people at all times. Further, as a non-essential service, houses of worship would be subject to 20 criteria, which are listed in the order. [Guidance and FAQs](#), [Order](#), [Order extending restrictions through April 30](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

#### 11. Hawaii:

- a. The Hawaii order states that “Businesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations, including food banks, when providing food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, individuals who need assistance as a result of this emergency, and people with disabilities” are exempt from the order. The COVID-19 FAQs state that “[s]ervices and activities at places of worship will be suspended.” [FAQs](#), [Order](#), [Guidance on Order](#), [link to all emergency proclamations](#),

12. Idaho:

- a. The Idaho order has no exemption for houses of worship or religious organizations; however, there is an exemption for businesses that provide “social services.” The additional guidance from the state clarifies the following “Can my church livestream their service?... Yes, so long as only the minimum personnel necessary to stream the service (no more than 5) and the individuals maintain the Social Distancing Requirements in the Order...Are drive-in theaters and drive-in church services allowed? Yes, as long as Social Distancing Requirements are followed at all times. Participants should avoid leaving the vehicle, vehicle occupants should be limited to household members, and common facilities such as concessions and restrooms should be avoided. Transactions and reservations should be handled online or over the phone.” [Order](#), [Additional Guidance](#), [link to Governor's coronavirus efforts \(links at the bottom\)](#)

13. Illinois:

- a. The Executive Order include as essential “[b]usinesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations, including food banks, when providing food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, individuals who need assistance as a result of this emergency, and people with disabilities.” The FAQs clarify that: “[t]he Executive Order does limit gatherings to no more than ten people and requires social distancing. At the same time, the Executive Order does not otherwise prohibit religious activities and specifically allows religious organizations to provide food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life, to its congregants and needy individuals. Religious organizations are permitted to conduct services and prayer online.” [Order](#), [Order extending stay at home order](#), [FAQs](#), [link to all coronavirus executive orders](#)

14. Indiana:

- a. The updated Stay-at-Home order states that “[a]ll public and private gatherings, whether governmental, social, philanthropic, religious, spiritual or otherwise, of any number of people that occur outside of a single household or living unit, are prohibited unless such gathering is of ten (10) or less people who engage in social distancing and other sanitation measures.” The order lists as essential “religious facilities, entities and groups, and religious gatherings, provided they adhere to the CDC’s guidance on social gatherings.” The order incorporates the CISA designation of essential infrastructure personnel which includes “[c]lergy for essential support.” [Updated Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

15. Iowa:

- a. The Iowa order states that “[s]ocial, community, spiritual, religious, recreational, leisure, and sporting gatherings and events of more than 10 people are hereby prohibited at all locations and venues, including but not limited to parades, festivals, conventions, and fundraisers.” The Order further provides, however, that “[a] gathering of people inside parked cars, trucks, or other enclosed motor vehicles

shall not constitute a gathering of more than 10 people if no more than 10 people are inside each vehicle, all people remain inside the vehicle at all times, and the vehicle remains enclosed with all windows, sunroofs, and convertible tops closed.” [Order, link to newsroom \(articles have links to new orders when applicable\)](#)

**16. Kansas:**

- a. The executive order provides that mass gatherings, including those in “churches or other religious facilities” that take place in an enclosed space must have ten or fewer participants, but that “the number of individuals—such as preachers, lay readers, choir or musical performers, or liturgists—conducting or performing a religious service may exceed ten as long as those individuals follow appropriate safety protocols, including maintaining a six-foot distance between individuals and following other directives regarding social distancing, hygiene, and other efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19.” [Order, link to all executive orders](#)

**17. Kentucky:**

- a. An order from 3.19.20 states that “[a]ll mass gatherings are hereby prohibited...Mass gatherings include any event or convening that brings together groups of individuals, including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities.” An Order put out on 3.25.20 designates as essential “[o]rganizations that provide charitable and social services. Businesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations, including food banks, when providing food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or special populations, individuals who need assistance as a result of this emergency, and people with disabilities. These organizations have a special responsibility to implement social distancing to the fullest extent possible, and to take all necessary actions to stop the spread of disease, including by stopping in person retail operations.” Guidance from the state provides that faith leaders should “[p]ostpone gatherings. Provide web- and mobile-based communications and services, if possible. Increase the use of email, conference calls, video conferencing, and web-based seminars. Partner with other organizations in your community to share messaging.” [Order of 3.19.20](#); [Order of 3.25.20](#), [Guidance for Faith-based Organizations](#), [link to COVID-19 updates](#)

**18. Louisiana:**

- a. The order states that “[a]n activity is essential if the purpose of the activity is one of the following...going to and from an individual’s place of worship,” and thus this can be done consistent with the Stay at Home order. However, the order prohibits all gatherings of 10 or more people where people are in close proximity to one another. The order follows the CISA designation of essential workforce and so exempts from the order “[c]lergy for essential support.” [Order, COVID-19 Newsroom](#)

**19. Maine:**

- a. The Maine Stay at Home Order does not list religious activities as essential. The Maine order on essential businesses follows the CISA designations of critical

infrastructure personnel and adds a few additional businesses. None of the added designations implicate houses of worship. Under CISA the exemption “[c]lergy performing essential support” are exempted. Under the most recent guidance for non-essential businesses, a house of worship could have no “more than 10 workers...in a space where social distancing is not possible,” must only perform activities that are “facilitated to the maximum extent practicable by those working remotely,” and must “not allow customer, vendor, or other visitor in-person contact.” [Order](#), [Essential Business List](#), [Order designating essential businesses](#), [Order extending Essential Business order until April 30](#), [Stay at Home Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

20. **Maryland:**

- a. The Maryland order states that “[s]ocial, community, spiritual, religious, recreational, leisure, and sporting gatherings and events (“large gatherings and events”) of more than 10 people are hereby prohibited at all locations and venues, including but not limited to parades, festivals, conventions, and fundraisers.” [Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

21. **Massachusetts:**

- a. The Massachusetts order states that “[c]hurches, temples, mosques, and other places of worship shall not be required to close their brick and mortar premises to workers or the public; provided, however, that such institutions shall be required to comply with all limitations on gatherings established in section 3 below.” Section 3 states that, “[g]atherings of more than 10 people are prohibited throughout the Commonwealth. Gatherings subject to this order include, without limitation, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based, or sporting events, concerts, conferences, conventions, fundraisers, parades, fairs, festivals, weddings, funerals, and any similar event or activity that brings more than 10 persons in any confined indoor or outdoor space.” However, the list of essential services has an exemption for “workers at places of worship.” [Order](#), [List of Essential Services](#), [Order extending the prior order on gatherings and businesses](#), [link to updates and orders](#)

22. **Michigan:**

- a. The Michigan order prohibits gatherings of any size outside of a household. However, it states that “[c]onsistent with prior guidance, a place of religious worship, when used for religious worship, is not subject to penalty under section 17 of this order.” [Order](#), [link to executive orders](#)

23. **Minnesota:**

- a. The Minnesota order exempts as critical sector workers “[f]aith leaders and workers. This category includes officials, workers, and leaders in houses of worship and other places of religious expression or fellowship, wherever their services may be needed. This category also includes workers necessary to plan, record, and distribute online or broadcast content to community members.” [Order](#), [list of essential businesses](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

24. **Mississippi:**

- a. The order qualifies religious entities as an essential. It states that “[r]eligious entities including religious and faith-based facilities, entities and groups, and religious gatherings provided that they adhere to the CDC and the Mississippi Department of Health recommendations and guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19” are exempt from restrictions. The Mississippi Department of Health Guidance recommends avoiding gatherings of over 10 people where the people come into close contact and to practice social distancing. [Order No. 1463](#), [MSDH Guidance, Shelter in Place Order](#) (this order adopts the definition of essential business from Order No. 1463), [Order extending Shelter in Place](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

25. **Missouri:**

- a. The Missouri Department of Health’s stay at home order states that “[i]ndividuals may...go to and from an individual’s place of worship, provided that limitations on social gatherings and social distancing are properly adhered to.” The Order bans gatherings of over 10 for businesses not listed by CISA. The FAQs state as examples of a permissible activity: “Go to a place of worship – just make sure that no more than 10 people are in any single space at one time and keep 6 feet of distance between you and others.” [Order](#), [FAQs](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

26. **Montana:**

- a. The state’s order has been amended to run concurrently with the President’s order. [Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

27. **Nebraska:** \*no statewide stay at home order, but all counties are now under directed health measures.

- a. The Nebraska Directed Health Measures prohibit gatherings of more than 10 people. The guidance on the Directed Health Measures state that they apply to “church services, funerals, weddings, parades, and festivals.” [Link to Directed Health Measures by County](#), [Guidance on DHMs](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

28. **Nevada:**

- a. The Nevada order states that “[p]laces of worship shall not hold in-person worship services where ten or more persons may gather, including without limitation, drive-in and pop-up services, for the remainder of the Declaration of Emergency. Places of worship may, however, hold worship services via alternative means, including but not limited to, video, streaming, or broadcast, provided that any personnel needed to perform tasks related to such alternatives do so in a manner that is consistent with social distancing guidelines promulgated by the Nevada Health Response, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and all Directives promulgated pursuant to the March 12, 2020 Declaration of Emergency, including without limitation, the prohibition on gatherings of ten or more persons and maintaining minimum separation distances of at least six feet between persons.” [Order](#), [link to all emergency orders on COVID-19](#)

**29. New Hampshire:**

- a. Exhibit A of the stay-at-home order exempts “[w]orkers at places of worship” as essential. It further states that “[e]ntities that fall under this guidance shall continue to operate with necessary staff to complete critical and essential functions.” The Order states that “[t]his Order shall not apply to any church, synagogue, mosque, or other house of worship, provided that those organizations must still comply with Emergency Order #16.” Order #16 states that “[i]n accordance with updated CDC guidelines, the following activities are hereby prohibited within the State of New Hampshire: Scheduled gatherings of 10 people or more for social, spiritual and recreational activities, including but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities. This prohibition does not apply to the General Court, day-to-day operations of for profit or not for profit organizations and State Government, or gatherings for urgent medical purposes such as blood drives or meetings of medical personnel to discuss efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.” [Exhibit A of Order](#), [Order](#), [Order #16](#), [link to all COVID-19 orders](#)

**30. New Jersey:**

- a. The New Jersey order provides that “leaving the home for an educational, religious, or political reason” is a permitted activity. However, gatherings are prohibited, and this covers all religious gatherings according to a letter to religious leaders written by a commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health as well as the FAQs on the order. [Order](#), [Letter](#), [FAQs](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

**31. New Mexico:**

- a. The state order provides that “[c]hurches, synagogues, mosques, and all other houses of worship shall adhere to [the prohibition on Mass Gatherings], but nothing in this order is intended to preclude these faith-based institutions from holding services through audiovisual means.” [Order](#), [link to all executive and public health orders](#)

**32. New York:**

- a. The guidance on the order provides “[p]ursuant to Executive Order 202.10, all non-essential gatherings of individuals of any size for any reasons (e.g. worship services, parties, celebrations, or other social events) are canceled or postponed. Congregate services within houses of worship are prohibited. Houses of worship may only be used by individuals and only where appropriate social distancing of, at least, six feet between people can be maintained. Further, individuals should not gather in houses of worship, homes, or other locations for religious services until the end of this public health emergency. If possible, religious leaders should consider alternative forms of worship, replacing in-person gatherings with virtual services, such as phone or conference calls, videoconference calls, or online streaming.” [Guidance](#), [Order 202.10](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

**33. North Carolina:**



- a. The stay at home order lists as an essential activity “travel to and from a place of worship.” The FAQs state that “places of worship” are exempt but that “[t]he Order allows individuals to attend their places of worship if they follow the mass gathering ban and do not have more than 10 people assembled. Social distancing should be practiced. Places of worship are encouraged to stream their services online to accommodate people complying with the Order.” [Order](#), [FAQs](#), [links to all executive orders](#)

34. **North Dakota:**

- a. The Order does not refer to houses of worship in the enumeration of facilities that must close. The guidance states that, “[a]ny attempts to implement social distancing in cultural & religious gatherings should be informed by cultural & religious leaders.” [Order](#), [Guidance](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

35. **Ohio:**

- a. Listed as essential businesses and operations in the order are: “[o]rganizations that provide charitable and social services. Businesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations, including food banks, when providing food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, individuals who need assistance as a result of this emergency, and people with disabilities...Religious entities. Religious facilities, entities and groups and religious gatherings, including weddings and funerals.” Guidance for the faith community from the Ohio Department of Health encourages remote services and meetings to take place when possible and that six feet be maintained between individuals when in-person events must take place. [Order](#), [Guidance for the faith community](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

36. **Oklahoma:**

- a. Executive Department Executive Memorandum 2020-01 exempts “faith-based services that are provided through streaming or other technology.” Further, it incorporates the CISA critical infrastructure framework, so “[c]lergy for essential support” would also be exempt. The state order limits gatherings to 10 or fewer people. All businesses not deemed essential are ordered closed to the public. [Order on essential businesses](#), [Updated order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

37. **Oregon:**

- a. Oregon enumerated what places are closed and does not list houses of worship. However, it states that businesses and nonprofits must work remotely to the extent possible and to the extent not possible must practice social distancing or close until they show compliance. “Non-essential social and recreation gatherings” of any size outside of a home are prohibited if social distancing cannot be maintained. [Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

38. **Pennsylvania:**

- a. The Pennsylvania Department of Health’s order provides that “gatherings of individuals outside of the home are generally prohibited except as may be required

to access, support or provide life sustaining business, emergency or government services as outlined above.” The guidance to the orders by the Governor and Secretary of Health, states that nothing in the order should “be construed to affect the operations of...[r]eligious institutions. However, religious leaders are encouraged to find alternatives to in-person gatherings and to avoid endangering their congregants. Individuals should not gather in religious buildings or homes for services or celebrations until the stay at home order is lifted.” The Industry Operations Guidance lists religious organizations as essential. [Governor's Order](#), [Secretary of Health's Order](#), [Industry Operations Guidance](#), [Order Guidance](#), [link to archive with articles linking to orders](#)

39. Rhode Island:

- a. The stay at home order of March 28, 2020 states that “[a]ll gatherings of more than five (5) people in any public or private space such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, library, theater, place of worship, parade, fair, festival, park or beach, are prohibited.” [Order](#), [Extending Order until May 8th](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

40. **South Carolina**

- a. The South Carolina order lists an exemption for “[a]ttending religious services conducted in churches, synagogues, or other houses of worship.” The order states that all are encouraged to practice social distancing. [Order](#), [Non-essential business list](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

41. South Dakota:

- a. The South Dakota Order does not apply to places of worship. It requires employers to follow CDC guidelines and limit unnecessary work gatherings. Also, it asks local and municipal governments to “[r]estrict public gatherings of 10 people or more, unless it is necessary.” [Order](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

42. **Tennessee:**

- a. The Tennessee order states under its exemptions, “[o]rganizations that Provide Charitable and Social Services. This includes, but is not limited to: businesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations, including food banks, when providing food, shelter, social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or individuals otherwise in need, individuals who need assistance as a result of this emergency, or persons with disabilities; Religious and Ceremonial Functions[:] This includes, but is not limited to: religious facilities, entities, groups, personnel, services, rites, and gatherings, including weddings and funerals, provided that the Health Guidelines set forth in Executive Order No. 22 are followed to the greatest extent practicable.” [Order](#), [Amendment to Order](#), [Order extending previous orders](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

43. **Texas:**

- a. The Texas order includes as an essential service “[r]eligious services conducted in churches, congregations and houses of worship.” The guidance states these

services are considered “essential services” under the order. If religious services cannot be conducted from home or through remote services, they should be conducted consistent with the Guidelines from the President and the CDC by practicing good hygiene, environmental cleanliness, and sanitation, and by implementing social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19.” [Order](#), [Essential Services Guidance](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

**44. Utah:**

- a. The Utah order states that “[e]xcept as otherwise lawfully required, nothing in this Directive should be interpreted to prohibit the following persons from fulfilling their duties and responsibilities...3. faith leaders and faith workers; and 4. charitable and social services organizations.” The FAQs state “Why is my church or place of worship closed? Governor Herbert has recommended that all mass gatherings in the state of Utah be limited to 10 people or less.” [Order](#), [FAQs](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

**45. Vermont:**

- a. The Vermont order states that “[e]xcept as set forth below, effective Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 5 p.m., subject to closures and limitations provided in prior orders, all businesses and not-for-profit entities in the state shall suspend in-person business operations. These businesses and not-for profit entities are encouraged to develop business strategies, procedures and practices such as using an on-line presence, telephone and web-based service delivery and phone or online orders for curb-side pick-up and delivery.” The guidance states that, “[t]he Agency recognizes the constitutional significance of religious liberty and the personal significance to many of worship in a religious community. Unfortunately, the significant health risks posed by this highly contagious virus, particularly to elderly and at-risk Vermonters, requires religious organizations to suspend worship in a brick and mortar setting. When conducting alternative worship services, organizations are directed to eliminate in-person contact. We ask faith leaders to help members of their congregations understand the dangers of COVID-19, the importance of staying home for the immediate future and the need for this measure. Section 6(m) of the Executive Order specifically authorizes your organization to continue in-person operations for building and property services for the safety, sanitation and operations of facilities.” Vermont has issued an order delineating Phase I of the state’s reopening; the order does not affect houses of worship. [Order](#), [Guidance](#), [Reopening Order Phase I](#), [link to all executive orders](#)

**46. Virginia:**

- a. Virginia’s order exempts from the stay at home order “[t]raveling to and from one’s residence, place of worship, or work;” but holds that “[a]ll public and private in-person gatherings of more than ten individuals are prohibited. This includes parties, celebrations, religious, or other social events, whether they occur indoor or outdoor.” The FAQ Guidance on the Order states: “What about religious services? Can I still go to my church, synagogue, or mosque? Virginians are strongly encouraged to seek alternative means of attending religious services, such as virtually or via ‘drive-

through' worship. Places of worship that do conduct in person services must limit gatherings to 10 people, to comply with the statewide 10-person ban." [Order](#), [FAQs](#), [Order extending stay at home and gathering limitations](#), [link to executive orders](#)

47. **Washington:**

- a. Washington's order states that it is a "Proclamation to impose a Stay Home – Stay Healthy Order throughout Washington State by prohibiting all people in Washington State from leaving their homes or participating in social, spiritual and recreational gatherings of any kind regardless of the number of participants... All people in Washington State shall immediately cease participating in all public and private gatherings and multi-person activities for social, spiritual and recreational purposes, regardless of the number of people involved, except as specifically identified herein. Such activity includes, but is not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities. This prohibition also applies to planned wedding and funeral events. This prohibition shall remain in effect until midnight on April 6, 2020 [extended to May 4, 2020], unless extended beyond that date." [Order](#), [Order extending stay at home order](#), [link to all proclamations](#)

48. **West Virginia:**

- a. The Order lists "going to and from a place of worship" as an essential activity and as essential organizations "[r]eligious facilities, entities, and groups and religious gatherings, including weddings and funerals; provided that such gatherings should still practice proper social distancing of six feet between persons to the greatest extent possible." However, guidance from the Department of Health and Human Resources states that "[a]t times when widespread community mitigation and physical distancing measures are being encouraged, traditional, in-person worship or fellowship activities should not be held. Alternative approaches that maintain recommended prevention practices should be used and other ways to connect faith-based communities implemented, such as offering phone or online (live or recorded) meetings or worship services. CFBOs should actively practice all recommended disease prevention and other community mitigation measures." [Order](#), [FAQs](#), [DHHR Guidance for Community and Faith-based Organizations](#), [Timeline of Governor's actions with links to updated orders](#)

\*\*\*Some counties are under stricter, amended, or extended executive orders applicable to those select counties.

49. **Wisconsin:**

- a. The Wisconsin order exempts "[o]rganizations that provide charitable and social services. Businesses and religious and secular nonprofit organizations, including prevocational group supportive employment, food banks and food pantries, when providing food, shelter, and social services, and other necessities of life for economically disadvantaged or otherwise needy individuals, individuals who need assistance as a result of this public health emergency, and people with disabilities... Religious facilities, entities, groups, and gatherings, and weddings and funerals, except that any gathering shall include fewer than 10 people in a room or confined

space at a time and individuals shall adhere to Social Distancing Requirements as much as possible.” [Order, link to all executive orders](#)

50. Wyoming:

- a. Statewide Public Health Order #3 provides that: “[g]atherings of ten people or more are prohibited in order to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health of the public.” Faith-based gatherings are not exempted and so are to follow the CDC guidelines including limiting gatherings to ten people or fewer and practicing Social Distancing. [Order—Continuation on Gatherings, link to all orders and guidance from the Wyoming Department of Health, link to all executive orders](#)

51. **Washington D.C.:**

- a. The Mayor’s order exempts “[t]ravel required to visit a house of worship” as an essential activity. However, houses of worship are not exempt from the gathering restrictions. The “Additional Information” on the gathering order states “Did the Mayor close churches? No, but large gatherings of ten or more people are prohibited, so as a practical matter, most churches are not holding services. Weddings and funerals may only be 10 or fewer people. Houses of worship can maintain basic business operations, and many open their doors to people who walk in who want a quiet place to pray alone. Many congregations are also maintaining their social service programs to deliver essential items like food to people who are at home or helping others get to medical appointments.” [Stay at Home Order, Gathering Order, Additional Information, Order extending stay at home measures, link to newsroom which posts Mayor's orders](#)