

Purpose of this Policy

Public health crises are an unfortunate reality in a fallen world. Influenza hits the population annually and novel viruses are expected to arise regularly. Public health issues like these have the potential to impact churches.

The following policy describes the measures our church will take when a public health crisis rises to a level of severity that requires changes in how our church conducts its community life.

General Awareness and Recommendations

Church leaders will monitor notices released by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other local health agencies.¹ When those agencies make recommendations to faith communities, our general intention is to apply them to our church.

We encourage all church members and attendees to follow the CDC's recommendations for hygiene as they participate in church meetings and events, even when there is no current public health crisis:

- Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Avoid touching common surfaces (these are surfaces touched by many hands like doorknobs, keyboards, and drinking fountains).
- Avoid shaking hands and giving hugs.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Stay home if you are coughing, sneezing, have a fever, or show other potential symptoms of illness.
- Stay home if you have been in close personal contact with someone who is ill.

Levels of Response

Level 1

When the CDC or other public health agencies mark the risk as "high", Sovereign Grace Church will take the following actions:

- Insist that anyone with cold, flu, or other symptoms stay home.
- Cancel Sunday morning hospitality offerings (coffee, donuts, etc.).
- Cancel Children's Ministry.
- Collect offering in a way that does not require the passing of baskets.
- Cancel communion.

¹ The OC Health Care Agency is our local agency: <http://www.ochealthinfo.com/phs/>

Level 2

When the CDC or other public health agencies recommend public gatherings be canceled or people quarantined, Sovereign Grace Church will take the following actions:

- Cancel regularly scheduled group meetings until it is determined to be safe to meet in-person (e.g. corporate worship, small groups, youth group).
- Consider alternative methods for conducting church ministry (e.g. online).