

MEDIA RELEASE

3 August 2020

**MCCY TO PILOT INCREASED LIMIT FOR WORSHIP SERVICES
FROM 7 AUGUST 2020**

As part of the gradual resumption of religious activities, the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) will pilot an increase in limit for congregational and other worship services, from 50 persons to 100 persons in some places of worship.

2. From 7 August 2020, 12 religious organisations (ROs) (listed in Annex A) will be allowed to accommodate up to 100 persons at any one time for congregational and other worship services, with necessary precautions in place to safeguard public health. This pilot will include the implementation of two zones of up to 50 persons each for congregational and other worship services in some places of worship¹.

3. MCCY has consulted religious leaders, who are also members of the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Racial and Religious Harmony², to identify the ROs for the pilot. The pilot sites reflect the diversity of religious practices and worship settings in Singapore. The participating ROs must have first safely conducted congregational and other worship services for up to 50 persons under the guidelines for Phase Two.

Increased Limits with Additional Safe Management Measures

4. Under this pilot, participating ROs will be allowed to have up to 100 persons at a time for congregational and other worship services.

¹ They are: Masjid Assyafaah, Masjid Mujahidin, Masjid Al-Istighfar, Masjid Al-Iman, St Andrew's Cathedral, Jurong Christian Church, Amazing Grace Presbyterian Church, Seletar Tamil Methodist Church and Central Sikh Temple.

² The NSC, chaired by the Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, is a national platform to build understanding and trust at the top level of community, government and faith leaders. Its members comprise the apex leaders from the major faith and ethnic groups.

5. Besides the prevailing safe management measures introduced at the start of Phase Two³ (see Annex B), the pilot ROs will have to put in place additional measures to keep the larger group of worshippers COVID-safe, taking into account the different worship practices:

- a) Churches, mosques and gurdwaras. Establish two zones, each accommodating up to 50 worshippers, for the worship service. In worship settings where religious services are structured / seated, these zones will help to minimise interactions between worshippers. Each zone has to be separated by a physical partition or barrier. Worshippers must maintain a safe distance from one another at all times. To avoid interaction between worshippers across zones, there should also be separate entrances and exits or staggered entry and exit timings for each zone.
- b) Buddhist, Taoist and Hindu temples. Safe management measures include ensuring no crowding or bunching of worshippers at common areas and in the prayer halls, no mingling between groups, and safe distancing between worshippers.

6. ROs participating in this pilot must submit their updated Safe Management Plans (SMPs)⁴ to MCCY at least three days before commencing the pilot. MCCY will assess how well the participating ROs implement the required safe management measures to provide a safe environment for their worshippers, before deciding on whether to increase the limit on the number of worshippers for other ROs.

Enclosed

Annex A – Places of Worship Participating in the Pilot

Annex B – Current Safe Management Measures for Worship Services

For media queries, please contact:

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³ <https://www.cpro.gov.sg/resources/resumption-of-religious-activities/>

⁴ The document is accessible at www.cpro.gov.sg

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About the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth

The Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth seeks to inspire Singaporeans through the arts and sports, strengthen community bonds, and promote volunteerism and philanthropy. Since its inception in November 2012, MCCY has been actively engaging the arts, heritage, sports, community and youth sectors. The Ministry aims to bring into sharper focus the efforts to build a more cohesive and vibrant society, and to deepen a sense of identity and belonging to the nation. MCCY will work with its stakeholders to create an environment where Singaporeans can pursue their aspirations for a better quality of life and together, build a gracious and caring society we are proud to call home.

Places of Worship Participating in The Pilot

Religious Organisations	Sites	Selected Worship Services for Pilot
Mosques (1 mosque per cluster)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masjid Assyafaah (North) • Masjid Mujahidin (South) • Masjid Al-Istighfar (East) • Masjid Al-Iman (West) 	Friday prayers only
Hindu Temples	• Sri Mariamman Temple	Fridays only
	• Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple	Saturdays only
Churches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Andrew's Cathedral • Jurong Christian Church • Amazing Grace Presbyterian Church • Seletar Tamil Methodist Church 	Saturdays and Sundays only
Buddhist Temples	• Kong Meng San Phor Kark See Monastery	Saturdays and Sundays only
Gurdwaras	• Central Sikh Temple	Saturdays and Sundays only

Current Safe Management Measures for Worship Services

The current key safe management measures for worship services are:

- Worshippers have to observe **1 metre safe distance** between others if they are worshipping individually. Worshippers may also worship in groups of no more than 5 persons, with 1 metre safe distancing between groups.
- Keep worship services to **as short a duration as possible**. Worshippers should leave immediately after performing their worship. There should be no reception or mingling between worshippers, before, during or after each worship service.
- All persons present must **wear a face mask at all times**.⁵ Those who are involved in the conduct of the worship service (e.g. preachers, prayer leader, scripture reader) may wear a face shield when performing their speaking duties and must be at least 1 metre away from any other individual.
- **Singing and other live performances are not permitted during the worship service**. Singing is considered a higher risk activity as it could potentially release a larger amount of droplets. Places of worship may consider alternatives to singing and other live performance components in their worship services.
- There should be **no sharing of prayer and other common items** (e.g. holy books, passing of offertory baskets, prayer mats) as this increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Worshippers are to bring along their personal prayer items instead, where required.
- Places of worship with reduced air circulation (e.g. enclosed prayer spaces, air-conditioned worship hall) should, where possible, open doors and windows to naturally **ventilate the space after use**.

This full list of safe management measures can be found in MCCY's advisory 'Resumption of more religious activities in Phase Two' [here](#).

⁵ Children twelve 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.

