

Bellingham Friends Meeting

Safe Practices for In-Person, Outdoor, and Mid-week Meeting for Worship

Bellingham Friends Meeting (BFM) wants to provide a safe space for worship and spiritual growth. Because of COVID-19, its variants, and other infectious diseases, these protocols and recommendations are intended to find a balance between creating safety from infectious diseases, and creating a safe and nurturing place where we can worship, celebrate, and be together as a spiritual community.

- Friends are asked to stay home if experiencing any signs or symptoms of illness including a fever or feeling unwell, or if having recently tested positive for COVID-19, or if living with someone with COVID-19 or any other contagious disease.
- Physical distancing will no longer be required while attending in-person worship, but anyone who is immune compromised or otherwise at higher risk of becoming infected may wish to consider other measures to minimize risk including maintaining a greater physical distance from others.
- One section of the worship space will be set aside for those wishing to maintain greater physical distance.
- While inside the Meetinghouse, all adults and children over the age of 11 will wear a well-fitted N-95 or KN-95 mask. Children younger than 11 are welcome to wear a mask, but taking into consideration the child's ability to tolerate the mask and their overall health and other needs.
- N-95 or KN-95 masks will be provided by BFM.
- Washing hands and using hand sanitizer can also help reduce the risk of spreading infection. Hand sanitizer will be available at the entry to the Meetinghouse and Friends are encouraged to use it when arriving.
- Friends traditionally shake hands at the rise of meeting. We will resume this practice, but that it is optional. Hand sanitizer will be available in the worship space and will be passed around following the hand shake.

- We will continue to maintain a record of those attending Meeting in person with contact information. Any person who attended Meeting the previous week, and who discovers that they have COVID or any other highly contagious disease, is asked to send an email message to info@bellinghamfriends.org or leave a text message at 360-671-7012 so that others who may have been exposed may take appropriate precautions.

The following advice comes from the Washington State Department of Health:

Take Action, Take Care

1. Get Vaccinated and Boosted: COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are the number one defense against infection and serious illness.
2. Know When to Test: Reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 by testing if you feel sick, are attending a gathering, or have been exposed to COVID-19.
3. Wear a Mask: Wearing a mask is proven to slow the spread of COVID-19 and are still required in some settings.
4. Use WA Notify: Enable WA Notify on your phone to get alerts if you have been exposed to COVID

If you have signs or symptoms of COVID 19, or if you have tested positive, or been exposed to someone with COVID, take these steps:

1. Check the Latest Guidelines: Stay home and away from others, and follow the latest isolation guidelines. (<https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19>)
2. Get Treatment: Contact your health care provider to explore your treatment options.
3. Get Support to Recover: Get meal and medication delivery, childcare, and other services while you recover from COVID-19.

Long COVID: People with COVID-19 can have symptoms that last weeks to years after infection. Prevent long COVID by preventing COVID-19 infection.

Please direct any questions, concerns, suggestions, or other comments to a member of Worship and Ministry Committee.