



COVID-19 POLICY

Updated: March 24, 2020

San Francisco Night Ministry (SFNM) is continuing to monitor the latest news about the COVID-19 “Coronavirus” Outbreak and its impact on the SFNM and the folks we serve. Following is our current policy and approach.

For more information about COVID-19 listen to public health messages from reliable sources:

San Francisco's main webpage compiles all announcements, resources, and topics related to COVID-19 - [Website](#), [Twitter](#)

The San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) - [Website](#), [Twitter](#)

The San Francisco Department of Emergency Management (SFDEM) - [Website](#), [Twitter](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - [Website](#), [Twitter](#)

For official updates, text COVID19SF to # 888-777.

*** Office Closure / Stay Home / Shelter-in-Place**

SFNM will comply with the City of San Francisco’s “Shelter-in-Place” order operative through April 7 and all subsequent orders.

The SFNM is now closed to staff, students, and volunteers until further notice. The only exception are the night ministers who are on duty any particular night (see below).

All Care Line Counselors will work from home through April 7 and probably beyond.

Trent Thornley will be in contact with CPE students to arrange for working at home, unless they are on duty as a night minister.

Notwithstanding any of the above, and even after all shelter orders are lifted, please remain at home for a period of two weeks from the end of any cough symptoms you have experienced this year. As always, please do not come to work if you have any signs of fever or a cold or the flu. The most common Coronavirus symptoms are a fever, cough, and breathlessness.

Even in normal circumstances, please do not come into SFNM if you feel sick.

* On The Streets

SFNM operates an essential service in the form of multi-faith spiritual and emotional care. Night ministers who walk the streets providing care are essential service providers. Valerie McEntee will be in contact with the night ministers to offer a range of options for ministry, from walking with extraordinary precautions to staying inside to support the phone line and CLCs. ***No one shall be required to walk the streets if they are not comfortable doing so, without having to state a reason.***

When walking, on-duty night ministers shall adhere to these policies:

- (1) Travel Letter. SFNM has issued an “essential service provider” letter that each night minister shall carry when walking the streets on duty.
- (2) Social Distance. Maintain social distancing of at least six (6) feet whenever possible.
- (3) Sanitize. Carry hand sanitizer for yourself to use frequently.
- (4) Do not touch. Refrain from touching any person for reason, except emergency circumstances. Prayer, meditation, well-wishes should be offered at an appropriate distance. Consider bowing or acknowledging the dignity of everyone you meet in ways that do not involve physical contact.
- (5) PPE. Use PPE in the event of an emergency intervention in which significant contact with a person is likely and necessary (i.e. a medical emergency such as an overdose). Each night minister has one kit of PPE in a zip-lock bag with your name on it in the office. If you need to use gloves, discard this PPE in the garbage can outside of Martin Luther Towers, across from the lobby, before entering the building. Please sanitize the storage bag when returning the office. Consider storing your N95 mask for re-use as long as possible, as there is a crisis in supply of this PPE; otherwise, discard as with the gloves. If you will reuse your mask, please return it to the ziplock bag and seal with gloved hands. Discard your gloves and sanitize the outside of the bag with a wipe when you return to the office.

PPE is only for use in life threatening emergencies. For anything short of a life threatening emergency, night ministers will remain at least six feet away from those we serve.

- (6) Distributing Items. Bring hand sanitizer for distribution. For a certain segment of our nocturnal neighbors, SFNM may be their only access to precautionary services. Because of limited stock, please only give bottles to people whom you know for a fact live outside, and only one bottle per person. Folks should be urged to use soap and water instead, as it is more effective. We will distribute more as more becomes available. As you feel called to do so, you may continue to bring a reasonable supply of water bottles, granola bars, and socks for distribution. Distribute items from a distance. Sanitize your hands between visits.
- (7) Distributing Information. Please distribute the following information as appropriate. You may write information appropriate to a visit into blank night ministry cards for distribution.
 - a. Our Care Line # **(415) 441-0123** and, as of March 27, our new hours **8PM – 4AM**.
 - b. Tuesday Virtual Gathering – Monique Ortiz will lead a conference call Gathering Tuesdays from 6PM – 7:30PM, or later if needed. Folks should call in **(978) 990-5000, then enter access code 298478#**

- c. Hand-washing stations – encourage hand-washing as best practice.
- d. Other Covid-19 resources, including food access and clinics. Please encourage folks who are sick or experiencing symptoms to visit a clinic.
- e. Information about new shelters that the City might provide. Please encourage folks to seek shelter whenever possible. We are trusted communicators who have an essential role to play in the midst of this public health crisis.

(8) PPE. Take a personal protective equipment kit, which includes gloves and an N-95 face mask.

PLEASE WIPE DOWN ALL SURFACES IN THE OFFICE AT THE BEGINNING AND END OF YOUR SHIFT.

CHECK BACK FOR UPDATES TO THIS POLICY

*** On The Phones / Care Line**

All Care Line Counselors (CLCs) will work from home until further notice. We are expanding our Care Line hours to 8PM – 4AM. Special instructions will be given to night ministers to supervise CLC shifts from 10PM – 2AM in terms of balancing and prioritizing time on the streets versus time on the phones. Contact Laura Rolen or Valerie McEntee with questions.

Please encourage your friends and family to **support our Care Line** through (1) promoting the number widely, (2) volunteering (volunteer@sfnightministry.org), or (3) giving funds needed to upgrade our communication platform, among other needs.

Your help distributing this flyer is appreciated! Updated versions of this flyer will be posted as the first link under the Quick Links section on the front page of our website: www.sfnightministry.org.

*** In The Office**

When returning to the office at any time, for those folks authorized to do so, please stop in the bathroom before coming into the office and wash your hands for at least 20 seconds. Please note that is 20 seconds of rubbing soap on your hands, not 20 seconds from turning on the tap to turning it off. Consider using a paper towel or such to turn on and off the facet, and open the door. ***Hand sanitizer is not as effective as hand washing. Please do not skip this step!***

The WHO video on proper hand washing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PmVJQUCm4E>. There are sani-wipes in the office. At the beginning and end of your office time please use them to wipe down keyboards, phones, doorknobs, water pitcher and tea kettle handles, fridge and microwave doors. ***Please use the sani-wipes liberally!***

* Programs

We acknowledge that many of our folks feel isolated, alone, and stigmatized. We are exploring ways to keep folks connected and provide them access to spiritual care in this time of great need.

Until further notice, both of our Open Cathedrals, and our Monday Meditation Group and Tuesday Gathering at Faithful Fools are cancelled.

Tuesday Gathering will meet virtually, 6PM – 7:30PM every Tuesday night. The conference call line: **(978) 990-5000, then enter access code 298478#**

We will be reviewing our programs on a week-to-week basis following the Shelter-In-Place and other government orders. ***Tune into our Facebook pages for the latest updates.***

For real-time updates and SF Communities of Faith responses, check the SF Interfaith Council site: <https://www.sfinterfaithcouncil.org/covid-19-coronavirus-preparedness>

Blessings on all you do to manifest a better world!