

Massachusetts Veterans' Memorial Cemeteries (MVMC) - Agawam and Winchendon Safety Rules

Checklist: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/places-of-worship-phase-ii-checklist/download>

Guidance for Ceremonial Room

For indoor services in the ceremonial room occupancy shall be limited to 40 percent of the building's maximum permitted occupancy level as documented in its occupancy permit on record with the municipal building department or other municipal record holder. (32 at Agawam, 40 at Winchendon). The occupant count shall include all persons inside the ceremonial room, including attendees and staff.

Staff shall monitor the number of attendees entering the ceremonial room to ensure compliance with the maximum occupancy level.

Attendees who are not part of the same immediate household must be seated at least 6 feet apart. Members of the same immediate household are permitted to sit together and less than 6 feet apart.

If there is fixed seating, rows should be blocked off and kept empty to allow for sufficient distancing between rows.

All attendees and staff must wear face coverings or masks in accordance with COVID-19 Order No. 31 and the Department of Public Health's Guidance while inside the ceremonial room and throughout the committal ceremony, except where a person is unable to wear a face covering or mask because of a medical or disabling condition.

A leader or celebrant engaged in conducting the service or making an address may remove his or her face covering while doing so, provided that he or she is able to maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from other persons present; installation of protective, plexi-glass or other transparent barriers must be installed for lecterns and other points of address.

For children between age 2 and 5, the wearing of a face covering or mask is at the discretion of the child's parent or guardian. Children under the age of 2 should not wear a face covering or mask.

A person who declines to wear a face covering or mask because of a medical or disabling condition shall not be required to produce documentation verifying the condition.

Best practices

Tape or other visual distancing markings shall delineate 6-foot separations and signs should be posted indicating the maximum number of persons permitted per row.

Promote ventilation for enclosed spaces where possible. For example, consider opening windows and doors to allow airflow.

Take steps to encourage orderly entering and exiting of the building in a manner that encourages social distancing. For example:

- Signage or floor markings should be posted to have one-way aisles or otherwise direct attendees to follow certain pathways for entering and exiting the service
- If a line forms outside, those waiting should be directed to maintain social distancing. Tape or other markings on the ground outside of the ceremonial room should be placed to encourage attendees to maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet
- Staff should direct people in high traffic areas to help maintain social distancing
- Officiants or other staff should direct successive, row-by-row exiting

Hygiene Protocols

Attendees and workers must have access to handwashing facilities, including soap and running water, and allow workers enough break time to wash hands, as necessary. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol should also be available, if possible.

Staffing and Operations

There shall not be communal gathering pre or post service.

If an attendee or worker has tested positive for COVID-19, staff shall notify the local Board of Health (LBOH) and assist the LBOH as reasonably requested to trace likely contacts and advise contacts to isolate and self-quarantine.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

The ceremonial room shall be cleaned and disinfected between each service, including disinfection of heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, bathrooms, microphones, shared instruments).