

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Northern Chautauqua
Companionship on life's sacred journey

**COVID Policy and Plan for Gradual Reopening
for Multiplatform Worship Services and Other Activities**

The following policy is put in place by the UUCNC Executive Board, effective April 1, 2022. It was developed following UUA and CDC guidelines by the Reopening and Gathering Team, the Executive Board, and the Buildings and Grounds Committee. It will be in effect at least through the end of April. This replaces all previous policies. Any change in our COVID policy will be decided by the 15th of the month before the month in which it will take effect.

1) General Provisions

- a) Being “fully vaccinated” and boosted is strongly encouraged. If this is not true in your own case, you should not attend in person. By showing up, you are attesting that you have been fully vaccinated. However, you will not be asked to show proof of vaccination; we will take your word for it.
- b) For all phases of reopening for in-person gatherings, a way for people to participate virtually must be provided.
- c) If you have recently tested positive, are not feeling well, or think you may have been recently exposed to the virus, you should contact your health care provider and attend virtually and not in person.
- d) Please try to maintain social distancing while in the building, and ask permission before shaking hands or hugging other people.
- e) This plan, which is effective April 1, 2022, supersedes and replaces all prior COVID-19 policies and procedures of UUCNC. It is intended to run through the end of the current church year in June. Please note, however, that this plan assumes that the Chautauqua County level of COVID transmission, as reported on [covidactnow.org](https://www.covidactnow.org), remains at the medium or low levels. The plan is subject to change if changing conditions warrant.

2) Starting April 1, small groups may resume meeting in person.

- a) Gatherings must be scheduled in advance by contacting Janey Wagner or Wendy Westwood. And as always, check to make sure ALL doors are shut tightly, ALL windows closed, and ALL lights shut off when you leave. Please continue to use the sign-in sheets provided.
- b) Always provide a Zoom option for those who are unable to attend in person or are more comfortable attending virtually. To provide the Zoom option, you may use the laptop located underneath the clock in the large room; please put it back in the same place and connected the way you found it. Ask Jefferson Westwood, David Salley or Jim Stenger if you need training on the unit. The log-on password is kept with the laptop.

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- c) In-person group size is initially limited to 12 people. Group size may be expanded to 20 after April 15 if the air quality readings are within acceptable range (carbon dioxide under 1,000 ppm).
 - d) Meet in the large room and provide at least 3-foot spacing between participants. Mask wearing is still required.
 - e) Turn on the homemade air filtration unit, and run it throughout the meeting. The “high” level is recommended unless it is too noisy.
 - f) Use the air quality meter (kept in a box near the laptop). Periodically check the level of carbon dioxide (a proxy for exhaled particles). Record the before and after meeting readings in the log provided. If the carbon dioxide reading goes above 1,000 ppm, open doors and windows to “air out” the room, and discontinue the meeting as soon as possible. Then notify David Salley, Jefferson Westwood or Jim Stenger within 24 hours and furnish them with the meter reading data.
- 3) Depending on local and regional COVID-19 trends, as well as our experience with small group meetings in the first half of April, in-person worship will be allowed to resume starting on May 1st. The Worship Committee will decide when they are ready to do this using the following guidelines.
- a) There will still be a Zoom option, both for observers and participants.
 - b) Some way will be provided for at-home participants to have their Joys and Concerns incorporated into the service, and to participate with others in the Coffee Hour afterwards. Our goal is to also have a way for those at home to be able to participate by sharing readings, prayers, or music. At the time this policy was adopted, the technology for this was still in development.
 - c) You may be asked to reserve an in-person spot in advance, so the room can be set up appropriately for the number of people expected to attend. We will try to provide physical space between family units.
 - d) Mask-wearing will remain the general rule. However, speakers and designated worship service singers may speak/sing unmasked if they have received a negative rapid COVID test response within four hours of the start of the service.
 - e) The Buildings and Grounds Committee will designate someone to monitor the air quality in the room. Adjustments to this plan may be made based on air quality measurements.
- 4) Food and Drinks: In-person attendees are invited to bring their own beverages and/or snacks for after the service. Masks may be removed while actively eating or drinking. If the weather permits, people may gather to socialize outdoors. However, tables, chairs and other furnishings from the building are not to be taken outside. People are allowed to unmask once outdoors.