



STAYING SAFE@PLACESOFWORSHIP
SELANGOR TASK FORCE COVID-19 (STFC)
28TH MARCH 2021

As we aim for a safe reopening, we need to be extra careful and vigilant as new daily cases of Covid-19 remain high. MKN has published the “*SOP PEMBUKAAN RUMAH IBADAT SELAIN ISLAM DALAM TEMPOH PERINTAH KAWALAN PERGERAKAN BERSYARAT [PKPB]*” on 4 March 2021 and this should be adhered to as the minimum. The following are supplementary pointers and ideas:

1. **Protect our elders.** As older adults are at high risk of severe Covid-19, their attendance is not encouraged. However, some may understandably strongly desire to attend religious services in person. Let’s do our best to protect them further by organizing dedicated services and/or special designated seating areas for older adults (those age 60 and above) and those with co-morbidities. For these dedicated services or designated seating areas, increase the spacing between seating to 2 meters and encourage the use of face shields in addition to face masks, while ensuring good ventilation.
2. **Multiple short services with fewer people, rather than fewer long services with many people.** The fewer the people in a service, the less the chance of transmitting Covid-19 to multiple people and the fewer possible people who may need to be contact traced if there a positive contact is subsequently identified. Hence, having multiple small and short services can be a solution to allow more people to participate in-person in total. Please don’t forget to sanitize the premises between services.
3. **Make use of open spaces.** Where open, well-ventilated spaces are available, please do make creative use of these. Covid-19 spreads most easily in crowded, close contact, and closed spaces.
4. **Extra precautions where there is poor ventilation.** For places of worship where ventilation is poor (e.g., air-conditioned shop lots and other small and confined spaces with few open windows), please take extra precautions as meetings in this

situation carry significant risk. Do your best to improve ventilation by (especially cross ventilation) by opening windows and doors. Consider increasing the spacing between seating to 2 meters and adjusting the allowable capacity, while encouraging the use of face shields in addition to face masks. Older adults are strongly discouraged from attending religious services in places where ventilation is poor.

5. **Be especially careful *not* to allow socializing before and after services.** Many people are longing to connecting with friends and family in person, after a long period of physical separation. However, the reopening of in-person religious services needs to be done safely as the vaccination campaign is just beginning and cases in the community remain high. For this interim period, please remind attendees to do any socializing in other safer, less crowded, closed, or confined settings, where permitted by prevailing SOPS, and to refrain from gathering in groups before or after religious services.