



Meetings in a World with Covid-19, flu, colds, pneumonia, and infectious diseases

The District 7670 Covid19 Advisory Group along with Governor-elect David Waechter have compiled the following guidelines and considerations from the CDC, WHO, and NCDHHS as well as others being used by faith-based organizations and Rotary International.

RI has suggested we not meet in person for the rest of the calendar year to ensure the safety of its members. This raises the ultimate questions: When will we reconvene? What will it be like to reconvene? Are your members ready? What are the feelings of your members? Some are surely ready to reconvene, but others may be hesitant due to pre-existing health concerns. You and your club will want to be sure to not alienate members and have a plan for how to engage members that are unable to reconvene.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Everyone is stressed and concerned to varying degrees. Please be mindful that emotions and reactions are not what we normally expect.
- Embrace that change is necessary – perhaps there are silver linings that once uncovered and implemented will make your club even better and more inclusive.
- Consider continuing your online presence even if you gather in-person until high risk individuals are able to resume their normal activities. Consider how online participation may be a part of your Rotary community going forward. It is an opportunity to those who are unable to gather in a traditional manner.
- Follow the recommendations and orders of our government officials, medical professionals, and scientific community. Rotarians should not involve their club or membership in political arguments or debate. We adhere to the laws and regulations of our community, state, and nation.
- Avoid making decisions based on opinions or emotion. Focus on the facts provided by reputable sources.
- Postpone in-person gathering with children or youth until public school returns to normal operations.
- Contact legal professionals, insurance providers, or other relevant leaders and ask the questions - how are we liable if someone gets COVID-19 from our gathering? What are your recommendations before we gather again as a Rotary community?



- While we prepare to re-gather, determine if you have the necessary resources to procure and provide for safe meetings, i.e. masks, hand sanitizer, and the appropriate cleaning supplies.
- Develop in-person gathering protocols and make an implementation plan in writing prior to meeting. Share your plan with your members via email or other means.
- Consider your first meeting an introduction to the new protocols and be understanding of people learning these new ways of interacting. Use “teachable moments”, but also be kind and supportive in your effort to keep everyone safe.

VENUES

- When proceeding with in-person meetings, address your chosen venue for the meeting well in advance. Will the venue allow large group meeting?
- Consider meeting with a group of health professionals to discuss your meeting venue and logistics to see if there are ways you can improve your protocols.
- Buffets are highly effective vectors of all germs. Sharing of utensils, touching food, dropping items, talking, coughing or sneezing over food/utensils all lead to transmission of germs. It is better to allow a single server to serve your food, give ample distancing, and not touch anything except your own utensils.
- This might be a good time to eliminate meals, have dutch treat, or bring your own food to reduce potential for transmission.
- Seating can be further apart than what we once did. When we sit further apart, we tend to speak loudly, which could spread virus into the air. There is a balance to be made so be more mindful and try to do what is right. Some things you just have to do your best and learn how to improve.
- Find venues where fresh air is abundant such as outdoors or in very large rooms where a high-quality HVAC system is filtering the air.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Personal Space should be respected even more now than ever. Do not stand too close to people in lines, when you are talking to them, or other times you may be standing too closely. It is not rude to ask someone to give you your space if you feel unsafe or



uncomfortable or if you are simply trying to avoid sharing your own germs with those people.

- Handshakes, high fives, and hugs – sorry, but these are not acceptable until we have a vaccine or good therapy for the virus.
- Wearing a mask reduces the amount of aerosol saliva/mucous spreading when we speak, cough, or sneeze. A mask will also help you avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- If you are considering bringing guests, you should inform them of the protocols and that your club is taking these measures seriously to protect everyone and make them feel safer. It is better to inform people in advance than for them to be surprised later.
- Consider meeting in smaller groups of less than 10 people and then use an online platform to report the ideas from your smaller groups. You can hold a weekly zoom meeting to go over any information your group discussed or send out a weekly newsletter comprised with the group's topics and ideas. Brainstorm other creative meeting strategies.

HYGIENE AND SANITATION

- Handwashing should be done both when we arrive and also before we leave. This way we are less likely to bring germs into the meeting and also less likely to transmit any germs we could have picked up in the meeting.
- Singing and yelling should not be happening at meetings because of the large volume of aspirated saliva that results. This is one of the primary vectors of most airborne viruses and bacteria.
- Coughing and sneezing are unavoidable but please use your elbow and not your hand to cover your mouth and nose. If you use a handkerchief, do not place it on a table or anywhere except your pocket. Always go wash your hands and face after you have sneezed or coughed.
- Sanitizing the space after you are done is very important because people may come into the space afterwards. Showing respect is not going out of style!



HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROTOCOLS

- Taking temperature before you go to a meeting and before bedtime is a good idea. A fever of 100 and above is very concerning as far as potential spread of disease, but not necessarily indicative of a Covid-19 or Flu infection.
- If you hear that you have even a secondary exposure risk, you should take your temperature twice a day and document it in a diary for 10-14 days. Do not attend any events and minimize exposure to friends and family.
- If you have traveled to parts of the World where infections are high, it is best to self-isolate and monitor your health for 10 days before returning to large gatherings.