NRV Emmaus COVID-19 Prevention Policy

The New River Valley Emmaus Community (NRV Emmaus) will follow all federal, state and local guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at our events. These events include but are not limited to: Emmaus Walks, Face to Face Encounters, Community Gatherings, Team Meetings and Background Functions.

Preventative measures have been put into place to reduce the spread of COVID-19, although we cannot guarantee that you or family members will not become infected with COVID-19.

A signed waiver, holding NRV Emmaus harmless from all liabilities, claims, actions, or damages is required for Pilgrims, Conference Team Servants, and Background Support Servants.

Evidence of full vaccination status or a negative COVID test within 72 hours of a Walk weekend is required for participation as a Pilgrim, Conference Team Servant or Background Servant.

Team preparation meetings will be structured to minimize contact time; no overnight meetings will be scheduled.

A contact list will be maintained of every person who participates in all events. This list includes Pilgrims, Conference Team Servants, Background Servants and Community Members.

## Specific Practices as Recommended by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Include:

* Encourage vaccination
  + Participants are encouraged to be vaccinated <https://www.vaccines.gov/>
* Establish policies for mask wearing
  + Indoors: fully vaccinated persons should wear a mask in indoor public spaces when community spread is substantial or high. Those not fully vaccinated should wear masks and practice physical distancing.
  + Outside: Masks are generally not needed if full vaccinated. Those not fully vaccinated should wear a mask in crowded outdoor spaces.
* Establish policies and practices for physical distance
  + Physical distancing will be maintained as much as possible at events. Plans will be made to use larger spaces when possible for activities that usually take place in small spaces.
* Promote frequent handwashing
  + Handwashing supplies will be available at all hand sinks. Hand sanitizer, tissues and trash cans will be available in all congregate areas. Signage will be posted to encourage healthy practices.
* Practice routine cleaning and disinfecting
  + Facilities, including high touch surfaces, will be cleaned and sanitized with an EPA registered product after each use or periodically during events.
* Encourage self-monitoring of symptoms
  + Participants will be reminded at the beginning of each day/event to [self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/coronavirus-self-checker.html).
* Incorporate ventilation as a mitigation strategy
  + Events will be held outdoors whenever weather permits and airflow enhanced by open doors and windows when possible.

## Persons with Symptoms or Potential Exposures

* Persons with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 in the prior 14 days are not permitted to attend events.
* Persons who have come in close contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19 and are required to quarantine according [VDH guidelines for potential exposure](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/local-exposure/), may not participate in events.
* Persons experiencing symptoms during an event should leave the premises and follow [VDH guidance for testing](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-testing/) the NRV Emmaus Community Lay Director will be notified.
* Persons participating in conference room teaming or background area preparation who have come in close contact with someone who is positive for COVID-19 should follow the [VDH guidelines for potential exposure](https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/local-exposure/), which may include quarantining according to vaccination status and health history.

## Protocol in the Event of Exposure

* Persons testing positive for COVID-19 are considered contagious 2 days before becoming sick or 2 days before test specimen collection if they never experience symptoms until isolation is completed.
* If a participant becomes sick with COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 within 3 days after an event, they must contact the NRV Emmaus Community Lay Director at [laydirector@nrvemmaus.org](mailto:laydirector@nrvemmaus.org).
* The NRV Emmaus Community Lay Director will work with the VDH to complete the contact tracing process.

## Additional Information

Specific procedures to carry out the policy have been developed and leaders designated to ensure implementation.

NRV Emmaus will adhere to any further guidelines provided by Camp Maranatha or other event host site.

These guidelines will be available on our website and in print to every event participant.

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the NRV Emmaus Board every 6 months or prior to each Emmaus Walk or Face to Face Encounter.

The primary reference for preparing this policy is guidance from the Virginia Department of Health <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/> and the New River Health District, which encompasses guidance set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.