

# Selangor COVID-19 Medium-Term Strategy for: Non-Muslim Places of Worship

**Revision:** Revision 1 (26 June 2020) ~ to be reviewed from time to time

Media statement by Kementerian Perpaduan Negara on 15 June 2020 [KPN.UKK.100-2/1/4 (8)] is referenced. Non-Muslim places of worship also subject to any additional restrictions given by the Federal Government.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS

### Who can come for religious gatherings?

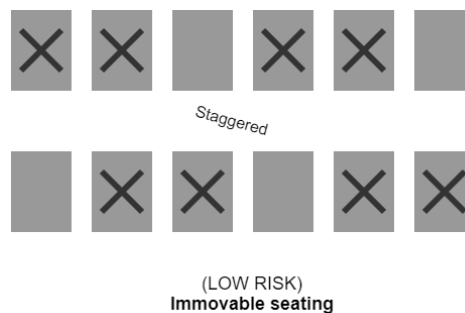
1. Those who:
  - a. **Do NOT have any symptoms of COVID-19** (fever 37.5 or above, cough, shortness of breath, chills & rigors, muscle pain, new loss of taste or smell), **AND**
  - b. **EITHER,**
    - i. are at **LOW RISK of severe COVID-19** (see table below), **OR**
    - ii. are **senior religious leaders / officiants for religious ceremonies** (even if HIGH RISK or VERY HIGH RISK) who are willing to be exposed to the risk of COVID-19 and will take extra precautions.
2. Worshippers who are at **HIGH RISK of severe COVID-19 are DISCOURAGED BUT ALLOWED** to come for religious gatherings, PROVIDED THAT arrangements have been made to allow them to participate safely.
3. Worshippers who are at **VERY HIGH RISK of severe COVID-19 are NOT ALLOWED** to come for religious gatherings, unless they are senior religious leaders / officiants for religious ceremonies.
4. **Children age 12 and below are ALLOWED:**
  - a. For religious ceremonies or gatherings where the child will always be together with and under the supervision of their parents/guardians **AND** is able to comply with social distancing;
  - b. For religious classes or childcare – see section on *Religious Classes, Childcare, Weddings, and Funerals*.

Risk of severe COVID-19	Self-assessed guidance (medical certification is NOT required)
Very high risk	<p><b>Fulfills any ONE or MORE of the following criteria:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Obesity III</b> (BMI of 40 or above ~ Weight above approximately 100kg for a person 1.6 m in height)</li> <li>2. <b>Severe hypertension or diabetes mellitus</b> (e.g., requiring 3 or more different medications, insulin, OR multiple hospitalizations)</li> <li>3. People who live in a <b>nursing home or long-term care facility</b></li> <li>4. <b>Hemoglobin disorders</b>, such as thalassemia</li> <li>5. <b>Immunocompromised</b> (weakened immune system), including cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, HIV, prolonged use of steroids</li> <li>6. <b>Liver disease</b>, including cirrhosis</li> <li>7. <b>Serious heart conditions</b>, including heart failure, coronary artery disease, congenital heart disease, cardiomyopathies, and pulmonary hypertension</li> <li>8. Chronic kidney disease being treated with <b>dialysis</b></li> <li>9. <b>Chronic lung disease</b>, including severe asthma</li> </ol>

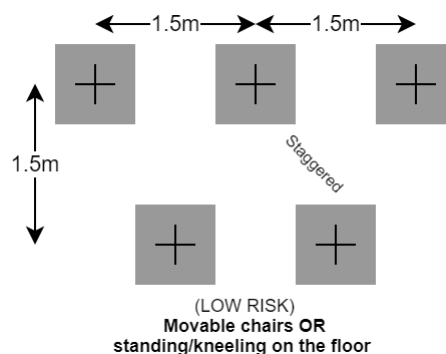
Risk of severe COVID-19	Self-assessed guidance ( <i>medical certification is NOT required</i> )
High risk	<p><b>Does NOT fulfill criteria for very high risk BUT fulfills any ONE or MORE of the following criteria:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Age 70 and above</b></li> <li><b>Obesity II</b> (BMI of 35.0 – 39.9 ~ Weight approximately 90-100kg and above for a person 1.6 m in height)</li> <li><b>Mild hypertension, diabetes mellitus, or asthma</b> (e.g. requiring no more than 3 different medications in total)</li> </ol>
Low risk	<b>Does NOT fulfill any criteria for high risk or very high risk</b>

### Logistical Arrangements and Maximum Capacity

- Each place of worship should have a designated COVID-19 officer to be in-charge of logistics and to direct the flows (with a team, if needed).
- In the main area where the formal religious gathering takes place, space out seating / standing / kneeling areas for LOW RISK individuals as follows:
  - Immovable seating:* Along each row, cross-out 2 of every 3 chairs so that there will be a gap of 2 seats between designated seats. Designated seats across rows should be staggered so that individuals are not immediately behind or in front of another. See diagram below.



- Movable chairs:* For each row, arrange chairs every 1.5 meters along the row; with 1.5 meters between rows. Designated spots across rows should be staggered so that individuals are not immediately behind or in front of another.
- Standing or kneeling on the floor:* For each row, mark out designated spots 1.5 meters apart along the row; with 1.5 meters between rows. Designated spots across rows should be staggered so that individuals are not immediately behind or in front of another. See diagram below.



3. If you plan to allow HIGH RISK individuals, allocate and signpost a separate section to protect HIGH RISK individuals with the following spacing:
  - a. *Immovable seating*: Along each row, cross-out 3 of every 4 chairs so that there will be a gap of 3 seats between designated seats. Designated seats across rows should be staggered so that individuals are not immediately behind or in front of another.
  - b. *Movable chairs*: For each row, arrange chairs 2.5 meters apart along the row; with 2.5 meters between rows. Designated spots across rows should be staggered so that individuals are not immediately behind or in front of another.
  - c. *Standing or kneeling on the floor*: For each row, mark out designated spots 2.5 meters apart along the row; with 2.5 meters between rows. Designated spots across rows should be staggered so that individuals are not immediately behind or in front of another.
4. Family members from the same household can sit or stand closely together as a 'bubble' PROVIDED THAT logistical arrangements can be made and enforced. The maximum number of household members in each 'bubble' is 5 and the spacing between households should be at least 2.5 meters.
5. Please count the total number of designated spots/seats for LOW- and HIGH-RISK individuals separately – this is the MAXIMUM CAPACITY for LOW- and HIGH-RISK individuals, respectively. The number of worshippers who can gather at the place of worship at any one time cannot exceed the MAXIMUM CAPACITY.
6. As MAXIMUM CAPACITY is limited, consider an online booking system for worshippers and/or provide additional repeat services.
7. SELangkah contact tracing. If not already registered, please register your place of worship with SELangkah:  
<https://www.selangkah.my/main/daftar>  
*Note: Registration does not require licensing with the local authorities.*
8. Print and display the SELangkah QR code at multiple entry and exit points (so that people do not need to crowd together to scan).
9. Plan the flows of people, especially on arrival and when the gathering is dismissed, to minimize crowding. Where possible, one-way flows are preferred, and this should be indicated with directional arrows and/or dividers between streams of people. If footwear is taken off, please make appropriate arrangements so that there is no crowding around the shoe rack.
10. Provide clear signposts, a floor plan, and instructions for worshippers. The floor plan and instructions (as text, infographics, or video) can be sent digitally in advance to worshippers.
11. Consider providing face masks to worshippers (for a small donation or for free).
12. Provide hand sanitizer at strategic locations such as entrances and exits.
13. Ensure good ventilation – keep windows and doors open if possible. Religious gatherings in confined spaces with no windows and recirculating air conditioning are highly discouraged.
14. Clean and sanitize the place of worship, especially surfaces frequently touched, between sessions. Follow MOH guidelines on the use of disinfectants.

### **Arrivals, Flows, and Dismissal**

1. Please ask worshippers to arrive early to allow time for the arrival process.
2. Please ask worshippers to bring a face mask and their own items for use during the religious gathering (e.g., holy books, special garments, etc.) so that they will not need to share.
3. Please remind worshippers to observe good hygiene and social distancing.
4. Please remind worshippers to wear a face mask at all times, including when inside the place of worship and while praying or singing.
5. On arrival, please ensure that temperature is checked for each worshipper, SELangkah QR code has been scanned, maximum capacity is not exceeded, face masks are worn, and that the arrival queue is appropriately spaced out.
6. Please ensure orderly (preferably one-way) flows of people, spaced at least 1 meter from each other, to the designated seat/spot.
7. Please plan for and ensure orderly dismissal of the gathering so that there is no crowding of exits. For example, the gathering can be dismissed in small groups beginning with those closest to the exits.
8. If the religious gathering involves collection of money, electronic transfers (QR code, IBG, etc.) should be available and preferred.
9. Use non-touch greetings only.
10. Social gatherings, food, and refreshments after the religious service are not allowed.

**Important:** *The behavior of worshippers before, during, and after the religious service in adhering to social distancing and good hygiene is critical. Please use creative means to constantly remind worshippers not to be complacent about COVID-19 as it is highly infectious.*

### **Religious Classes, Childcare, Weddings, and Funerals**

For religious solemnization/rites associated with weddings and funerals, please follow the same general principles for religious gatherings, subject to the relevant COVID-19 alert level. *Note: Mass gatherings such as 'kenduri' or wedding receptions are NOT ALLOWED under these guidelines.*

For religious classes or childcare involving pre-school age children, please comply with the guidelines from the Ministry of Education and/or Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development. For religious classes involving primary school age children, please comply with the guidelines from the Ministry of Education.

### **GUIDANCE FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Churches – *Holy Communion:* Please use individual cups and/or consider the use of individual communion prepacks.

Temples – *Food which has been dedicated:* Please follow MOH guidelines for food preparation and handling; prepack in individual packages.

**Additional Note:** This guideline is subject to any additional restrictions stated in the guidelines from the Federal Government, which can change from time to time.

## SELANGOR COVID-19 ALERT LEVELS SYSTEM FOR RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS

General principles described earlier apply all the time. As COVID-19 cases may go up and may go down over the medium term, COVID-19 alert levels will be announced from time to time for each local authority area, depending on the number of active cases of community spread. This is a separate but complementary system to the national system. Depending on the prevailing COVID-19 alert level for the local authority area, the following rules apply:

Selangor COVID-19 Alert Levels for Local Authority areas	ALWAYS (GREEN)	YELLOW	RED
<b>Religious gatherings</b>	ALLOWED	ALLOWED	ALLOWED BUT ONLY FOR SMALL GATHERINGS OF NOT MORE THAN 20 PEOPLE <i>(e.g., to facilitate online broadcast)</i>
<b>Religious classes</b>	ALLOWED	ALLOWED	NOT ALLOWED (ONLINE ONLY)
<b>Wedding religious rites / solemnization</b>	ALLOWED	ALLOWED	ALLOWED BUT ONLY FOR SMALL GATHERINGS OF NOT MORE THAN 20 PEOPLE
<b>Funeral religious rites</b>	ALLOWED	ALLOWED	ALLOWED BUT ONLY FOR SMALL GATHERINGS OF NOT MORE THAN 20 PEOPLE
<b>Related mass gatherings</b> e.g., wedding receptions, processions, or 'kenduri'	NOT ALLOWED	NOT ALLOWED	NOT ALLOWED
<b>High-risk individuals</b>	DISCOURAGED BUT ALLOWED IF LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS MADE	DISCOURAGED BUT ALLOWED IF LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS MADE	NOT ALLOWED
<b>Upper Age Limit</b>	AGE 70 and above DISCOURAGED BUT ALLOWED	Age 70 and above NOT ALLOWED	AGE 70 and above NOT ALLOWED