

A message from Laura Magnani, Presiding Clerk

Covid has come closer and closer to home, for some of us into our own bodies or those of our loved ones. In spite of this, we are committed to holding our long-awaited in-person gathering. The longing to be together again, especially as expressed by our beloved youth, is strong. While we embrace the profound goodness of spending time in each other's company, we acknowledge the risk of possible illness resulting from this choice. It will be up to each of us to fully embrace the COVID policy as outlined by the Safety Committee, designed to mitigate the risks of gathering. For all who can, we hope you will join us at Mount Madonna. For those who can't, we honor that and welcome you to the beloved community through the world of Zoom.

POLICY

1. Up-to-date COVID Vaccination of everyone age 5 and up is required. This includes a single booster shot if your primary shots were 5 months or more previous. Documentation of vaccination is required and will be reviewed at Mount Madonna when you arrive. Previous COVID illness, confirmed by test, within 6 months of Annual Session is acceptable in lieu of the required booster. Be prepared to state the dates of your COVID illness and what test was done to confirm it when you arrive at Mount Madonna.

2. A negative rapid COVID test performed when you arrive at Mt. Madonna is required of everyone attending. Tests will be provided for Friends unable to bring their own.

3. Masking with N95, KN95 or KF94 masks is required indoors (except while actively eating or drinking). They must be properly worn at all times. Friends are expected to bring their own masks. Cloth masks alone are inadequate. Masks are required for all ages, 2 and above.

4. Physical Distancing should be maintained in every possible situation both indoors and outdoors. If appropriate physical distancing is maintained outdoors, masking is not required.

5. Daily Symptom Monitoring A list of COVID symptoms to check for daily will be made available at Annual Session. Test to determine COVID status anytime your symptoms warrant doing so. Daily temperature checks will be done at lunch and at the Children's Program.

6. Depart Annual Session if you are symptomatic and/or test positive at any point during the session. Notify Bronwen Hillman, Arrangements Clerk, of any positive test during annual session or in the two weeks post session and provide all information needed for contact tracing.

RATIONALE

We honor Pacific Yearly Meeting as a resilient spiritual community in which individuals care for one another and follow long-held Quaker testimonies. Implicit in each testimony is the recognition that Friends live in close relationship with one another. Our decisions and actions on a daily basis have consequences, not only for ourselves but for others in our community.

We recognize that there are many reasons members of the Quaker community may not be vaccinated. We affirm the spiritual right of Friends to make medical decisions about their own bodies as led by Spirit. The decision to require vaccination for the in-person annual session is not meant to ostracize people who cannot or choose not to vaccinate, but rather to acknowledge the limitations of Pacific Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting does not have the staffing or logistical capacity to provide the support needed to handle the substantially increased severity of disease among unvaccinated individuals if an outbreak occurred. Our vaccine requirement for in-person

attendance is made in light of the increased risk of transmission by, infection of, and severe illness to a non-vaccinated person. A virtual session alternative is available to those who cannot attend due to this requirement.

We recognize that young children under age 5 have not been eligible for vaccination and children under age 2 cannot be expected to mask. Children face lower risk of severe illness from COVID-19 but have borne a disproportionate burden for the larger society's failures. Youth need and deserve joy and healing this summer.

We encourage you to rapid test before leaving home. Although an additional rapid test will be required when you arrive, testing in advance is recommended.

You should arrive at annual session with enough CDC-approved masks to make it through the event. Please have a mask available at all times. Pacific Yearly Meeting will have limited back-up supplies of masks and rapid tests for those needing additional supplies during annual session.

During Annual Session

- Friends are encouraged to take advantage of outdoor eating opportunities at all times. Please engage physical distancing when eating indoors or outdoors. We need to embrace a culture shift that eating is for fueling bodies and fellowship time is a time to mask.
- When in a residence room/space by yourself or with your roommate, no masking is required. If in a dorm room that is not your own and with other people the expectation is that you will mask.
- We recommend frequent hand washing. While COVID-19 transmission is predominantly airborne, hand hygiene remains important, using either soap and water for 20 seconds or using a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Friends are reminded that any indoor gathering is safer with air movement. Open windows and doors when possible.
- Space seating whenever possible and move conversations outside when possible.
- Group singing should take place outdoors and distanced.

This policy is subject to change between now and Annual Session. It was prepared by the Safety Committee composed of health professionals Andrea Armin, DJ Bloom, Jeff Richman and Mico Sorrel who thank the authors of the Friends General Conference COVID Health and Safety Policy that informed the content of this policy.