
Reimagining

VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION

The first General Rule as United Methodists is to “do no harm.” United Methodist Volunteers in Mission leadership understands that many project sites rely on teams to assist in serving the community. These teams come from nearby, from another state, sometimes from another country. Some homeowners and missionaries may have recovered from COVID-19. Some may be carriers. Some are not infected. All want to serve. One of the worst unintended effects of mission work throughout the ages has been the spread of infectious disease. Remember that you bring other things with you when you bring the Gospel.

The federal disaster declaration includes every state and territory with most states presenting shelter-in-place and social distancing guidelines. These guidelines for US project sites are designed to assist in determining when and if to suspend teams for the summer and how to prepare the site for future teams. All sites should adhere to public health and safety protocols in order to protect employees, homeowners, and missionaries.

For the latest updates in regard to COVID-19, please visit Centers for Disease Control.

Phases

Phase 1 doesn't allow any physical interactions.

Phase 2 only allows the physical response of local volunteers for commute-from-home VIM projects with face coverings, social-distancing and other controls.

Phase 3 allows regional VIM responses with face coverings, social-distancing and other controls, with site following health department guidelines for communal sleeping and preparing and serving food.

Phase 4 allows more typical VIM missions and training, but still maintains controls.

VIM missions will be evaluated by your UMVIM Conference Coordinator to assure they can be performed safely in the given stage and, if accepted, strong preplanning and risk reduction controls will be applied. All VIM teams, whether local, domestic (US) or international, will follow current GNW Conference UMVIM guidelines. In an abundance of caution the most conservative of RLT (Reimagining Life Together), CDC, State and County guidelines will be applied.

This plan is guided by the following tables of allowed activities and required safety controls. All actions will be evaluated to assure our involvement in each situation will do no harm, will do good, and will promote staying in love with God for the volunteers and the community.

GNW Disaster Preparedness and Response Mission

Reopening plan Summary Table

Essential Missions	Phase 1 Activities	Phase 2 Activities	Phase 3 Activities	Phase 4 Activities
LOCAL VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pop-up Missions ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pop-up Missions ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ Local, limited VIM Missions² ▪ Max group of 6 on local mission ▪ Follow site organizational protocol and guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pop-up Missions ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Leader Training and in-person training (up to 10; physical space dependent) ▪ Regional (within Conference) VIM Missions³ ▪ Max group of 10 on regional mission (physical space dependent) ▪ Follow state, county, and site organizational protocol and guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pop-up Missions ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Leader Training and in-person training (up to 10; physical space dependent) ▪ Regional (within Conference) VIM Missions³ ▪ Max group of 10 on regional mission (physical space dependent) ▪ Follow state, county, and site organizational protocol and guidelines
DOMESTIC VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training and in-person training (up to 10; physical space dependent) ▪ Regional VIM Missions³ ▪ Max group of 10 on domestic mission (physical space dependent) ▪ Follow state, county, and site organizational protocol and guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training and in-person training (up to 15; physical space dependent) ▪ Discretionary Regional/Beyond Conference VIM Mission⁴ participation evaluated on case-by-case basis ▪ Max group of 15 on domestic mission (physical space dependent) ▪ Follow state, county, and site organizational protocol and guidelines
INTERNATIONAL VIM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual Team Leader Training ▪ No physical interaction ▪ US State Dept. approves travel to country. (Level 1-3 not Level 4)

GNW Volunteers in Mission Reopening Plan Summary Table

Essential Missions	Phase 1 Activities	Phase 2 Activities	Phase 3 Activities	Phase 4 Activities
SAFETY ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited physical interaction ▪ Follow current RLT, CDC, State, county health and safety guidelines ▪ Follow United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) Protocols found on the UMVIM website umvim.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited physical interaction ▪ Follow current RLT, CDC, State, county health and safety guidelines. ▪ Follow UMVIM Protocols found on the UMVIM website at umvim.org ▪ Follow site and organizational protocols and guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discretionary Regional/Beyond Conference ERT Mission participation ▪ Follow current RLT, CDC, State, county health and safety guidelines. Continue safe practices. ▪ Follow UMVIM Protocols found on the UMVIM website at umvim.org ▪ Follow UMVIM site and organizational protocol and guidelines for discretionary live, remote meetings and interaction
HOSTING TEAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pop-up Missions ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual coordination and outreach ▪ Virtual meetings and presentations ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Virtual Missions¹ ▪ Virtual coordination and outreach ▪ Virtual meetings and presentations ▪ No physical interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conditional in-person/virtual support ▪ Virtual meetings and presentations ▪ Follow state, county, and site organizational protocol and guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discretionary coordination and outreach ▪ Meetings and presentations in person or virtual ▪ Follow state, county, and site organizational protocol and guidelines

General Guidance for Domestic (US) Project Service

Sites are suspending teams for the summer:

- ✦ The decision to reopen will be based on the guidance of the governor, bishop, and county health department of the UMVIM site. Paying attention to their direction about school closure, lifting stay-at-home orders, and the time when small groups are permitted to gather again.
- ✦ Make this decision with the guidance of the board of directors or other governing body.

General Guidance for International Service

The State Department still has a Level 4 ban on international travel at this time. At Level 4, insurance is not available to teams traveling internationally. It is recommended that teams do not travel without travel medical insurance.

Guidelines for Hosting teams

- ✦ Follow CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting facilities.
- ✦ Post reminders for hand washing, awareness of symptoms, etc.
- ✦ Provide prevention supplies:
 - ✦ Hand sanitizer
 - ✦ Disposable facemasks
 - ✦ Eye protection
 - ✦ Cleaners and disinfectants
 - ✦ Gloves for food preparation and cleaning
- ✦ Other considerations:
 - ✦ Avoid buffet-style meal service. Have kitchen crews prepare dishes. This includes sack lunch preparation.
 - ✦ If the dishwasher does not meet standards for sanitation, consider asking teams to bring paper products (not Styrofoam) to be discarded after each meal. Provide adequate trash receptacles.
 - ✦ All touch surfaces should be thoroughly wiped down with approved cleaners prior to team arrival and as the team prepares to leave.
 - ✦ Consider ways to assure safe distancing on the work sight, in the dorm, dining area, and meeting space.
 - ✦ If possible, provide washer and dryer facilities for laundering expectations.
- ✦ Screening protocol on arrival:
 - ✦ Take temperature
 - ✦ Ask about general health
 - ✦ Ask if the missionary has been in contact with anyone who had COVID-19
- ✦ Provide space for isolation if someone reports symptoms.
- ✦ Arrange for outdoor projects to assure minimal contact between homeowner and team members (painting, deck or ramp building, landscaping, roofing). Make accommodations for rest room facilities so team members do not have to enter the home. (i.e.: portapotties)

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- Children's ministry (VBS) should be suspended until additional guidance from CDC and local officials is available.
 - Have a plan in place to safely transport a team member who develops symptoms of COVID-19.

Guidelines for leading a team

- Participate in Team Leader training.
- Follow the guidelines of the CDC for travel both inside and outside the US.
- Follow local guidelines from municipal, county, and state health authorities. Also, know the guidelines for the locality where the team intends to serve.
- If it is determined that it is safe and lawful to serve, continue to make arrangements for proper social distancing and PPE for team members, and sanitize surfaces and equipment.
- Each team member will sign the Team Member Liability Waiver
- Protocols for the interruption of transmission of the virus will be followed until: (1) antibodies protect against re-infection, (2) tests are widely available to the general public and all team members have recently tested negative, or (3) there is a vaccine available and all team members have been vaccinated.
- Know the health infrastructure in the area where the team intends to serve and the location of the nearest hospital.
- Have a plan for canceling the journey or sending team members home if any team members are uncomfortable with the enforcement of safety protocols.
- Consider donations to the partner organization and organizing a virtual mission if it is not appropriate to physically travel to the project site.

Notations

1. Follow Safe Sanctuary guidelines for virtual missions when youth participate.
2. Local VIM missions performed by people near the mission site who can report to the job site each day from home.
3. Regional ERT missions performed by people within a one-day drive of the affected community. No air travel.
4. Members to be self-sufficient. They will travel and lodge individually. Members to either bring or purchase own food separate from team mates. The team may co-locate in separate camping spaces with trailers, campers or tents. Hotels or other individual accommodations are also an option. Cohabitants can lodge together.

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