

Homewood Friends Meeting Respiratory Virus Plan

January 2025

The Homewood Friends Meetinghouse is open for use by Meeting members and attenders and by renters. We follow current CDC guidelines for respiratory viruses (e.g., influenza, COVID-19, or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)) and any Baltimore City/State of Maryland directives and will update this Respiratory Virus Plan accordingly. While we are opening the meetinghouse for worship and other gatherings, there remains some risk of respiratory virus transmission. Any person who comes to the meetinghouse will do so at their own risk.

Respiratory Virus Symptoms: Generally, it is advised that people not enter the meeting house if they have respiratory virus symptoms that aren't better explained by another cause. These symptoms can include fever, chills, fatigue, cough, runny nose, and headache. For persons with unexplained respiratory symptoms, without fever, it is acceptable to enter the meeting house if wearing a mask.

If febrile respiratory illness: In accordance with CDC guidelines, persons with fever and respiratory symptoms should stay away from others until at least 24 hours after both their symptoms are getting better overall, and they have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication). Since some people remain contagious beyond the "stay-at-home" period, a period of added precaution is recommended for the following 5 days using prevention strategies, such as: enhanced hygiene practices; wearing a well-fitting mask, and keeping a distance from others.

Masks: Masks are optional at Homewood Friends. Wearing masks will be strongly encouraged when the CDC [Respiratory Virus Activity Level for Maryland](#) is VERY HIGH. Either the Operations Coordinator or Meeting Clerk will check the CDC website weekly to ascertain the current Respiratory Virus Activity Level and when it is VERY HIGH will include the mask recommendation in the weekly announcements.

- Masks remain required in the Meeting Room during Meeting for Worship for persons sitting on the raised facing bench.
- The Meeting has a supply of high quality masks, for persons who need them, available at the entrances to the Meeting Room.
- Renters can make decisions about whether or not to require masks for their groups.

Persons with [risk factors for severe disease](#) may want to consider wearing a high quality mask when the [respiratory virus activity level for Maryland](#) is MODERATE or higher.

Meeting for Worship:

- We will worship together in-person, with an option to worship remotely via Zoom (blended Meeting for Worship). Persons with respiratory symptoms are encouraged to worship remotely. We have found that Zoom has allowed us to incorporate Friends into the fabric of our worship life who are unable to participate in-person.
- If you are comfortable doing so, please remove masks temporarily, when delivering a message in Meeting for Worship or when making an announcement (to improve audibility).

HEPA air filtering machines are located in the library, dining room, basement hallway, and office. The library machine can be temporarily relocated upstairs for the First Day School or for other purposes, as needed.

Any questions or concerns about this plan should be addressed to: homewoodfriends@gmail.com.