



COVID-19 Policies and Procedures in the Interfaith Hospitality Network Shelter Program

Updated November 30, 2021

Introduction

Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis (FPGI) operates a homeless shelter for families with children called the Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN). The program utilizes a network of congregations who take turns hosting up to four families each week for an evening meal, overnight sleep, and a continental breakfast, with dozens of volunteers doing everything from cooking to washing sheets. Guest families are transported by a volunteer-driven 15-passenger van each morning and evening to and from a Day Center that is staffed by a team of Family Promise employees. Every Sunday, beds are transported by cargo trailer from the prior week's hosting congregation to the next week's hosting congregation.

The IHN program was suspended in March 2020 and is set to re-open on January 3, 2022 with one "rotation" (i.e. one congregation hosting each night of the week). These policies and procedures are in place beginning January 3, 2022 and until further notice. Decision to implement or eliminate these policies and procedures are made by the FPGI Program & Service Model Committee, upon decision requested by the FPGI Executive Director.

Eligibility and Intake

Census and Waiver:

- The Shelter Programs Manager will limit the program census to three families at a time, so that each family can have a designated bathroom and living space at the Day Center without requiring masks for children. The three families will sum to no more than 12 individuals to ensure no two families need to share one row of seats in the IHN van.
- All guest family members 18 years or older will be required to sign a waiver their first day in the IHN program explaining the risks of COVID-19 transmission and holding FPGI harmless in case of contracting the disease.

Vaccination:

- To be eligible to reside at congregations or enter past the reception area of the Day Center, any individuals 12 or older will be required to be vaccinated with any FDA-approved/Emergency Use Authorized vaccine for COVID-19, and have waited the required period after full vaccination (i.e., the amount of doses recommended by the Center for Disease Control).
- Proof of vaccination must be provided by the guest family prior to entering the IHN program by providing a vaccine card or other official third party health record. This will also serve as proof for all required documentation described below (see "Congregations and Volunteers" and "Day Center").
- If a potential guest family has adults that have not been vaccinated, but is willing to do so, they will be provided a hotel voucher renewed weekly, and



transportation/coordination support to immediately get vaccinated from a provider approved by the State of Indiana. They can enter the rotational program after meeting the criteria in the paragraph above. The spot will be held for them.

- If a potential guest family has members that have not been vaccinated but are eligible for vaccination, and are not willing to do so, they will be provided a hotel voucher renewed weekly until a spot in the Apartment Shelter Program (another shelter program operated by FPGI) is available. FPGI will only incur the expense for one family in a hotel at a time to ensure the first family to contact FPGI for shelter is not turned away due to vaccination status. After the first family is helped, families contacting FPGI for help will be screened out if unvaccinated, and families will continue to be screened until a vaccinated family makes contact. This procedure is to manage the hotel cost to one family at a time, ensuring a full census without discrimination by vaccine status. When the family in the hotel gets a shelter placement in the ASP, the next family to contact FPGI for shelter assistance is eligible for a hotel voucher if unvaccinated.
- Shelter staff need to take special care to not offer the Apartment Shelter Program prior to the IHN program.

Congregations and Volunteers

Illness

- If a volunteer is ill, they should not volunteer until they are well (i.e., no fever for at least 24 hours without anti-fever medicine, no diarrhea, etc.). Family Promise guests that are ill should limit their contact to their family only.

Vaccination:

- To be eligible to volunteer at congregations in the near proximity of guest families, any adult volunteers (i.e., 18 years old or older) will be required to be vaccinated with any FDA-approved vaccine for COVID-19, and have waited the two-week period after full vaccination (i.e., the amount of doses recommended by the Center for Disease Control).
- Proof of vaccination must be provided by the volunteer to the congregational coordinator prior to being near guest families. This includes servers of food, van drivers, overnight hosts, and coordinators.
- Proof of vaccination must be provided by each individual congregational coordinator to the FPGI executive director prior to being near guest families.

Children of volunteers:

- Children under 18 who are unvaccinated are not permitted to be at the congregation in near proximity of or interacting with guest families. Vaccinated children who are present are encouraged to only be present if serving an essential volunteer role (e.g., a vaccinated 14-year old who is helping serve food).

Food serving/Eating:

- Only parents and volunteers should get food from any serving table.



- Host congregations should adhere to their usual food safety standards. Coordinators should intentionally require hand washing/sanitizing before and after every meal by all people present in the eating area.
- If possible, congregations should consider serving food in a way that limits sharing of utensils and is pre-portioned to lower the risk of transmitting illness.

Masks:

- Masks are to be worn by unvaccinated children over two years old when interacting with children of another family.
- As per current CDC guidelines, masks do not need to be worn by vaccinated individuals, or by children when in their rooms, or in a common space only occupied by their immediate family. However, masks are still recommended by the CDC as a strong transmission mitigator of COVID-19, and are encouraged to be worn even in these situations.

Day Center

Vaccination:

- To be eligible to work at the Day Center in the near proximity of guest families, staff will be required to be vaccinated with any FDA-approved vaccine for COVID-19, and have waited the two-week period after full vaccination (i.e., the amount of doses recommended by the Center for Disease Control).
- Proof of vaccination must be provided by the staff person to the FPGI executive director.

Designated space:

- Each of the three guest families will be designated one of the three upstairs full bathrooms and the adjoining living room and two storage closets. While in this space, masks will not need to be worn by unvaccinated children two and older.

Common areas:

- In downstairs common areas, masks are to be worn by unvaccinated children over two years old. Guest families can interact in these spaces with other families at their own risk.
- One family can use the kitchen and laundry room at a time, and should not use the space for longer than 30 minutes. Staff should address any issues that arise through scheduling if needed.

Transportation

- All individuals two years of age and older, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear masks in the van. If a guest family or volunteer driver does not have masks, they will be provided with a stock at the front door of the Day Center and in the front of the van by the driver. Windows should be open when the outside temperature allows.
- Guest families should sit with each other. Children of two different families should not sit in the same seating row when possible.



- Staff and van drivers should intentionally require hand washing/sanitizing before every van trip. At the evening trip, the Day Center Assistant will stand at the van door with hand sanitizer to support this effort, and hand sanitizer will be stocked in the front of the van for mornings.
- Staff will change the van in use each month to ensure it is deep cleaned and disinfected professionally before returning it to use for the rotation.

Sickness

- If any guest family member, staff person, or volunteer presents symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they should be tested in accordance with Marion County and CDC guidelines and inform FP staff of their status. This will enable appropriate contact tracing if needed.
- If any guest family member, staff person, or volunteer is requested to quarantine due to an exposure, they should inform FP staff of their status.
- If any guest family member, staff person, or volunteer presents symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they will be given a hotel voucher for isolation until a PCR COVID-19 test can be done. They can return to the rotation upon providing proof of negative results, and according to current CDC and Marion County guidelines related to COVID-19 testing and isolation. If positive, they can return when cleared by a medical professional according to CDC and Marion County guidelines.
- If a guest family member, staff person, or volunteer has a positive result on a COVID-19 test, that guest's entire family, that staff person, or that volunteer will be asked to isolate (guest families will go to hotel rooms or available apartment shelters) for the time period recommended by the CDC and Marion County, or until they receive a negative COVID-19 test.

Timeline of Implementation

- These policies and procedures go into effect when the IHN rotation opens on January 3, 2022.
- They remain in effect until decided otherwise by the Program Committee of the FPGI Board of Directors. The key metrics reviewed to affect this plan's status will be the daily positive cases in Marion County and the percent of the population vaccinated, both of which have a target of 100 or less and 50% respectively set by the Marion County Health Department as when Indianapolis can reopen fully.
- This document will be revisited every two months by the Program Committee, or when circumstances warrant an earlier review at the request of a committee member, including the executive director of FPGI.