

**St. Bede's Reopening Plan:  
Operational Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers**

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# St. Bede's Reopening Plan

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## **1. Preparing the People of St. Bede's for the Next Phase of Life Together**

There are a great many changes that we have had to face in our life together as the people of St. Bede's Episcopal Church. Our doors have been shut and we have had to rely on electronic means to continue as the Body of Christ. In our worship and in our relationships, we have become accustomed to things being different around us and having to accommodate ourselves to the new and different considerations that come with protecting ourselves and those around us from the risks that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to us in the past year. And to top it all off, we called a new Rector to our parish and have been experiencing all the changes and transition that comes with it.

To prepare the people of St. Bede's for the next phase of our life together, communicating expectations will be of vital importance, in regard to both what one will see and hear and experience, and what is expected of all who gather together.

To that end, the Rector, wardens, and vesty will send a letter to our members and regular attendees announcing the return of in-person worship and what to expect when they are on campus, as well as what is in this plan. Likewise, we will be intentional in our newsletters, monthly journal, emails, bulletins, and announcements following our worship that we are spreading the word about what to expect of our worship together at this time as we prepare to worship in-person once again. And once approved, this plan will be shared with all who wish to see it and to know all that we are doing to keep ourselves safe at this time.

All individuals involved in the service of the parish and our Sunday worship will be prepared and educated for their role in our regathering. Vestry members will be asked to familiarize themselves with what we are doing to reopen safely. Volunteers at our services, such as Altar Guild members, ushers, Altar Servers, and acolytes will be trained in how to serve in our parish while abiding by the guidelines and regulations that we are given to mitigate risk to ourselves and one another.

Our parishioners expect that when we gather once again in person, things will be different than they were in the past, before the pandemic. And to make that transition as smooth as possible, we will continue to communicate at every opportunity what it will look like to worship together as we move into the next phase of our life together.

## **2. Current Diocesan, CDC, and State and Local Government Guidelines**

### **a. Personal Health Measures**

#### **i. Masking**

Diocesan policy is that masks (or face shields) are required for all gatherings including indoor and outdoor worship. Employees and visitors are expected to be masked at all times while on campus and should plan to bring their own masks to campus, in accordance with state

regulations. All visitors to campus will be asked to wear a mask, and will be asked to leave the campus if they refuse to wear a mask.

A small supply of face masks will be available at each in-person worship service for those who may be without one. Individuals must be masked to participate in worship services whether inside or outside.

#### **ii. Distancing**

Diocesan policy is that a minimum of six feet of distancing is to be maintained at all times, as much as is possible. Additionally, for soloists or small groups of singers this increases to 12 feet between individuals. Chairs, tables, desks and other physical layouts will be arranged to ensure appropriate distancing. Employees who share an office will be encouraged to arrange schedules so only one individual is working in an office at all times.

#### **iii. Hand Hygiene**

The CDC encourages frequent handwashing with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at key entrances and gathering places such as reception areas, narthexes, sacristy, food areas, and meeting rooms. Cleaning solutions and wipes will be provided for employees, (altar guild and hospitality) volunteers in their work areas. All St. Bede's employees have been instructed to wash their hands, or use sanitizer when a sink is not available, upon arriving for work and departing from work and after any of the following activities: using the restroom, sneezing, touching their face, blowing their nose, cleaning, sweeping, mopping, eating, drinking, entering a building, going on break and before or after an in-person meeting. We ask all on campus to use hand sanitizer at meetings or services, both at the beginning and conclusion of the meeting.

#### **iv. Symptom Monitoring**

Visitors to St. Bede's campus, including employees, will be asked to screen themselves for common risk factors for COVID-19 infections, including having a fever, loss of senses of smell and/or taste, and other known symptoms, and to make an acknowledgement of their self-monitoring and lack of symptoms when they sign-in for contact tracing purposes. In addition to the above, anyone present at a worship service in a service role will have their temperature taken with a contactless thermometer.

Outside groups will be required to perform their own symptom monitoring of members of their group and participants of their meeting. St. Bede's site use agreements with outside groups and vendors will include our expectations regarding hygiene, physical distancing, groups size, etc. as required by Diocesan, CDC, state, and county guidelines.

## **b. Cleaning and Sanitization**

The CDC has recently updated its guidance for cleaning and sanitizing of facilities to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Current guidelines are that high traffic areas and hard surfaces can be cleaned daily with soap and water or detergent to sufficiently clean surfaces. Additional disinfecting is prescribed when an infected individual or a person has knowingly come into a building within the previous three days. These guidelines will be followed at St. Bede's, and particular attention will be given to common areas or surfaces in the offices, restrooms, and buildings used for worship services or on-campus meetings. Cleaning supplies will be available in all common use areas for additional cleaning to that performed by our vendor, Galaxy Building Management.

All staff will undergo training for proper masking, distancing, cleaning and meeting with others. The following videos have been identified as being relevant to training of employees for proper hygiene:

How to clean a restroom: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mg09l\\_GvSqs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mg09l_GvSqs)

How to clean an office: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZVZJqSgXa8>

How to wash your hands: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4WA51th7aU>

How to disinfect the copier: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRNDD4Wl3eU>

## **c. Contact Tracing**

All individuals (including employees, church members, and visitors) who come onto church grounds will be required to indicate that they were at St. Bede's. Those coming for worship services will be presented with sign-in sheets as they enter the courtyard for outdoor services or the sanctuary building for indoor services. For those entering the offices, a sign-in sheet will be available in the front lobby. Present on these sheets will be an acknowledgement that a self-monitoring check has been performed and the individual is not showing signs of infection and has not been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed as having COVID-19 in the past two weeks.

Outside groups will be required to perform their own contact tracing and keep these records, as well as informing the parish if a person with COVID-19 has been present at their meeting.

## **d. Signage**

There will be health and hygiene reminders throughout the property. Signage will include reminders to wear masks, use gloves, wash hands, avoid touching faces, and other directions for visiting campus and participating in worship services or meetings.

### **e. Building Occupancy Levels**

Current San Mateo County guidelines for the orange tier allow up to 50% capacity or 200 individuals, whichever is lower. St. Bede's will abide by state and county guidelines for occupancy levels, as well as limits presented by proper social distancing (e.g. if social distancing prohibits us from attaining 50% capacity in the Sanctuary).

### **f. Holy Communion**

Current diocesan guidelines allow for reception of the communion elements in both kinds at this time, with the understanding that the *common* cup is not to be shared at this time. When St. Bede's distributes the communion host, initially we will do so in one kind only, performed by the priest placing the communion host into the hand of the recipient without making physical contact between their hands. If contact is made, both will sanitize their hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer before proceeding. Hand sanitizer will also be made available for those coming up to receive communion.

### **g. Worship Materials**

Current Diocesan guidelines are that Prayer Books, Hymnals, and other books are not to be used in the course of our worship at this time. St. Bede's will distribute the bulletin for worship services electronically for parishioners to print their own copy or to follow along with their phone or tablet. Printed copies will be made available as well, and recycling bins will be available at the exits to the worship spaces for used bulletins.

### **h. Music**

#### **i. Indoor Permissions**

Current diocesan guidelines permit soloists or a small group of singers to sing or chant indoors provided they are masked or wearing face shields and have a minimum of 12 feet distance between them. Congregational singing is not permitted at this time. Wind instruments are permitted if the instrument is fitted with a special instrument cover.

#### **ii. Outdoor Permissions**

In contrast to indoor worship, outdoor services have permission for congregational singing provided parishioners are masked and observing six feet of social distancing amongst themselves. Soloists and choir groups must maintain 12 feet separation between one another and the congregation. Additionally, all instruments, including wind instruments, are permitted if fitted with a special instrument cover.

## **I. Collection Plate and Donations**

The collection plate will be placed in a fixed location to prevent contact between individuals at the service. Our ushers will be responsible for securing the collections at the conclusion of the service in accordance with instructions under section 3.a.iii.

Our weekly newsletters and bulletins have information to parishioners about making donations electronically and contact-free through the parish office.

## **3. Saint Bede's Facilities**

### **a. Galaxy Building Management Services**

St. Bede's has a contract with Galaxy Building Maintenance to perform cleaning, general maintenance, and set-up of tables and chairs for all facilities and events that happen on campus. This includes Trinity School as well as for St. Bede's parish. The vendor will be responsible for performing all cleaning and disinfecting of the campus as needed and in accordance with CDC guidelines. The cleaning products and protocols used meet EPA guidelines and are approved for use and effective against viruses, bacteria and other airborne and bloodborne pathogens (including COVID-19)

### **b. Sanctuary**

The Sanctuary of St. Bede's seats approximately 300 individuals in normal seating conditions, and will permit 80 individuals with social distancing. Seating consists of wooden pews, in the round, and which do not have cushions. The choir typically is seated at one end of the semi-circle, clergy and altar servers sit opposite them, and the congregation fills the remaining portions. The air conditioners have been upgraded to MERV-13 filters to provide hospital level cleaning of the air. There are two sets of double doors at the back of the sanctuary that can be opened for cross ventilation. The sacristy is entered through doors on the wall behind the altar, and is where vestments and altar guild supplies are kept. The balcony includes the organ console and the desk where our A/V volunteers will control our live stream.

There are two restrooms accessible from the sacristy that will not be used for use by those other than the clergy and lay service participants (e.g. acolytes, Altar Guild, etc.).

### **c. Hill Center (Offices)**

This building has a common entryway, three offices, and a meeting room (the "Ford Room"). The rector and music director have private offices, and the parish administrator and bookkeeper share an office. The building has five exterior doors and large windows in each room that may

be opened to provide for cross-ventilation. The building does not have an HVAC system. This building does not have a restroom (employees use the restroom in Wyatt Hall).

**d. Lehman Hall (Great Hall)**

This building has been primarily used in the past year for Trinity School to have more educational space and provide for improved social distancing. It also houses our kitchen, which has not been in use since the suspension of in-person worship in 2020, and has restrooms which will be made available during worship services and other uses of the building. The air conditioners have been upgraded to MERV-13 filters to provide hospital level cleaning of the air, and the building has multiple sets of double doors that can be opened for increased ventilation.

**e. Wyatt Hall (Sunday School and Youth Room)**

This building has rooms for Sunday School, the nursery, and a youth room. One room is currently in use by Trinity School as a classroom. The other rooms are not in use at this time. We are exploring the possibility that a 12-Step group could use one of the rooms for a meeting space when they come back to campus. There is one bathroom available in this building which is used by office staff and will be made available during worship services and potentially for other uses of the campus.

**f. Courtyard**

In the center of the church's grounds is a large courtyard with our labyrinth. There are multiple entrances/exits that will provide for safe directing of traffic either into or out of the space. This will be the space that is used for outdoor worship services.

**g. Trinity School**

St. Bede's hosts the upper campus of Trinity School with K-5 students on campus. Trinity School is a private, K-5, elementary school that must adhere to CDC, OSHA, California Department of Public Health, San Mateo County Health and Department of Education directives. Trinity has successfully been COVID-19 free since August 2020 with the help of St. Bede's rector and vestry, and the school's board, staff, and volunteers. The school has an office building and two buildings for classrooms and other learning facilities. The school has been using portions of Lehman Hall and Wyatt Hall, as indicated above. The school is also responsible for cleaning and enforcement of CDC and Department of Education guidelines for COVID-19 safety. Trinity School buildings will not be used for any purpose other than those of the school itself.

Trinity school has rights to sole use of Lehman Hall from 8:00am until 4:30pm, Monday through Friday, as well as one of the rooms in the Wyatt Hall.

## **4. Employees, Volunteers, and the Use of Offices and Other Spaces**

### **a. Overview**

Employee meetings will be conducted virtually or in areas that allow for appropriate physical distancing between employees. Employees working on-site are to coordinate their work schedules in order to minimize the number of people in the Hill Center at any one time. Employees are encouraged to work remotely as their responsibilities permit. Up to three employees can work in the Hill Center at the same time. Small group meetings of up to four people may be held in the Ford Room, as long as social distancing, masking, and sanitization procedures are followed.

Hand sanitizer is available in the office and everyone will be required to sanitize their hands upon arrival and leaving the Hill Center. The rector and vestry will ensure regular communication and proper PPE use and sanitation procedures are followed and updated per the latest expert guidance.

Following CDC guidelines, high-touch surfaces such as door handles and commonly used equipment such as the copier should be cleaned daily. This will be the responsibility of the employees who have used the building that day to ensure that this is performed by the end of the day.

### **b. Contact Tracing and Visitor Sign-in**

All visitors to campus, including employees, will be required to sign-in as they arrive to campus and indicate that they are not displaying symptoms of COVID-19 nor have they been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days. If we are alerted to a presumptive case of COVID-19 at St. Bede's, we will work with the county and state to follow the recommended actions including contract tracing.

## **5. Worship at St. Bede's**

### **a. Services and Times**

Our initial plan for reopening is to hold one service at 9:30am on Sundays. We anticipate returning to two Sunday morning services as restrictions are eased and as makes sense for our parish.

Prior to the pandemic, St. Bede's held a Rite I service at 8:00 and a Rite II service at 10:15. Between the services, at 9:00am, we held an adult formation class we call SoulWork between Labor Day and Pentecost Sunday. During the pandemic this has been held online over Zoom at

8:30am. This will resume in September according to current Diocesan, CDC, state, and county guidelines at that time.

## **b. Service Participants and Responsibilities**

### **i. Clergy**

St. Bede's currently employs one priest and does not have a deacon or seminarian at this time. The rector, with the assistance of the vestry, is responsible for ensuring that all guidelines from the Diocese of California, the State of California, and San Mateo County are being followed as provided for in this document.

### **ii. Altar Guild**

Altar Guild members, in addition to typical responsibilities for a worship service, will clean and check the lectern microphone before the service and will clean it again after the service. Altar Guild members will ensure the following are available at the entry place for Sunday services:

- Hand sanitizer
- Offertory plate and envelope for plate offerings
- Single-use service bulletins
- Small supply of face masks
- COVID-19 sign-in sheets and pens.
- Trash bin with plastic liner for easy usher end-of-service disposal.

At the service's end, a member of the Altar Guild will retrieve and properly put away hand sanitizer dispensers, the thermometer, extra face masks, and the offertory plate, returning them to the altar guild sacristy.

### **iii. Ushers**

Prior to in-person services, ushers will don masks, apply hand sanitizer and don gloves. Ushers will move free standing hand sanitizers to narthexes.

Ushers will arrange the following according to their logical position and placement:

- Hand sanitizer
- Offertory plate
- Single-use service bulletins
- Small supply of face masks and gloves for ushers
- COVID-19 sign-in sheets and pens.
- Envelopes in which to place offertory and COVID-19 forms
- Trash bin with plastic liner for easy usher end-of-service disposal.

Ushers will ensure that all service attendees certify a clear COVID-19 history, no present COVID-19 symptoms, compliance with state travel quarantine rules, and contact information in case of an incident. Ushers will ensure that Lehman Hall and Sanctuary doors are opened for maximum ventilation, that seats or seat clusters are six feet apart, and that everyone is properly masked. If a person refuses to wear a mask, they will be asked to leave.

After the service, ushers will take completed sign-in sheets and collection and leave in the sacristy (there is a safe in the sacristy for the plate collection); contact tracing records are to be retained by the parish administrator for 30 days in case contact tracing is necessary. All single-use programs are to be placed in a recycle bin. All trash will be disposed of properly.

#### **iv. Altar Servers and Acolytes**

St. Bede's services typically consist of one adult "altar server" who carries the processional cross, leads the Prayers of the People and assists the clergy in the setting of the table and distribution of the chalice at communion. Children or youth from the church serve as acolytes, carrying the torches in procession. As is appropriate given attendance and social distancing, an altar server and acolytes may be incorporated into our services in a similar fashion to normal conditions. This will provide an opportunity for families and their youth and children to participate in our worship as they always have done so prior to the pandemic.

#### **v. Lectors**

The lessons from the lectionary are read by lay lectors at the lectern in the center of the aisle, in front of the altar rail. This will be where the lessons are read. Lectors will be instructed to not touch the microphone unless necessary and to minimize their physical contact with the lectern as they give their readings or speak from the lectern for any reason.

#### **vi. Musicians**

Musicians will follow state, county, and CDC guidelines, and as permitted by the diocese. (See Section 1.h.)

#### **vii. Streaming Volunteers**

St. Bede's services will be streamed to Zoom and/or YouTube, performed by volunteers seated in the balcony where the equipment for this purpose is located. In order to provide access to our common worship, we will continue to offer our worship online indefinitely.

#### **viii. Hospitality Volunteers**

The serving of food and beverages at church events is currently permitted, outdoors, with restrictions. Hospitality volunteers will follow CDPH and OSHA food service guidelines, including

regular hand hygiene, routine cleaning of surfaces and equipment, masking and gloving. Food and beverages will be served in such a manner as to prevent the use of common serving utensils.

### **c. Outdoor Services**

#### **i. Entrances and Exits**

The Courtyard has two main entrances/exits, which will be used for one-way traffic as much as is possible and practical. A ramp is available for handicap access to the Sanctuary and courtyard. Congregants will be advised to use alternate entrances and exits if possible to allow passage for those who need this access. Ushers will help direct traffic in order to maintain social distancing as much as is possible.

#### **ii. Restrooms**

Restrooms will be available in Lehman Hall and in the Wyatt Hall. Supplies will be provided for users to clean surfaces as indicated by CDC, state, county, and diocesan guidelines. Galaxy Building Maintenance will perform regular cleaning in accordance with CDC guidelines.

#### **iii. Seating and Occupancy**

For outdoor services, or services held in Lehman Hall, folding chairs will be placed by Galaxy Building Maintenance to follow social distancing guidelines. At the conclusion of the service the vendor will clean and put away chairs. The Courtyard can accommodate approximately 80 people for a worship service, including clergy, altar servers, acolytes, and musicians.

#### **iv. Streaming the Service**

The service will be streamed to Zoom and/or Youtube for those unable to attend in person. This will be performed using a portable sound system and a camera connected to a computer that is connected to the internet. The rector will ensure that the volunteers are adequately trained in the use of the system and equipment.

#### **v. Music**

We will follow diocesan, CDC, state and county guidelines for the inclusion of music in the outdoor setting. These guidelines currently allow congregational singing while masked and socially distanced, as well as wind instruments (see Section 1.h.).

## **d. Indoor Services**

### **i. Entrances and Exits**

The Sanctuary has two entrances/exits, which will be used for one-way traffic as much as is possible and practical. A ramp is available for handicap access to the Sanctuary and courtyard. Congregants will be advised to use alternate entrances and exits if possible to allow passage for those who need this access. Ushers will help direct traffic in order to maintain social distancing as much as is possible.

### **ii. Restrooms**

Restrooms will be available in Lehman Hall and in the Wyatt Hall. Supplies will be provided for users to clean surfaces as indicated by CDC, state, county, and diocesan guidelines. Galaxy Building Maintenance will perform regular cleaning in accordance with CDC guidelines.

### **iii. Seating and Occupancy**

The Sanctuary can seat approximately 80 individuals, socially distanced at 6-feet apart. This is greater than the average Sunday attendance prior to the suspension of indoor worship in 2020, and it is not anticipated that current occupancy guidelines (50% or 200 people) nor limits due to social distancing will be a limiting factor in available seating capacity during worship services. Should this be a problem, we will implement an online reservation system to manage attendance.

### **iv. Streaming the Service**

The service will be streamed to Zoom and/or Youtube for those unable to attend in person. A camera has been installed and necessary upgrades have been made to the audio system to easily facilitate streaming of the service. The rector will ensure that the volunteers are adequately trained in the use of the system and equipment.

### **v. Music**

We will follow diocesan, CDC, state and county guidelines for music in the indoor setting. This currently allows a soloist or small group of singers, following diocesan guidelines, but does not permit congregational singing. We will incorporate instrumental and recorded music into our services as well as masked and distanced singers, per diocesan guidelines.

## **6. Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals**

### **a. Baptisms**

Baptisms will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines provided for Sunday worship services. We will do our best to stream the service on Zoom and/or YouTube. Baptisms, as much as is possible and practical, will be performed with a special eye to social distancing. In particular, during the baptism itself, the priest will avoid making physical contact with the individual being baptized. If it is a baby or infant being baptized, the child will be held by a family member of the same household while the priest pours water over the child's head. Chrismation of the candidate is permitted, and the inclusion of this element of the service will be discussed with the candidate or family.

Music, communion, and other aspects of the service will be performed in accordance to the guidelines for worship services in similar settings.

### **b. Weddings**

Weddings will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines provided for Sunday worship services. We will do our best to stream the service on Zoom and/or YouTube. Similar to baptisms, weddings will be performed with a special eye to social distancing, as much as is possible and practical. During moments in the service such as the blessing of the rings and the blessing of the marriage, the priest will make every effort to not make physical contact with the couple being married. Should contact happen incidentally, those involved will immediately sanitize their hands or where the contact was made.

Music, communion, and other aspects of the service will be performed in accordance to the guidelines for worship services in similar settings.

### **c. Funerals**

Funerals and memorial services will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines provided for Sunday worship services. We will do our best to stream the service on Zoom and/or YouTube. Funerals and memorial services may take place outdoors, or graveside, if that is the family's desire, especially as it allows greater participation. Attendees will be expected to follow the same principles of wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands, and other similar guidance as for a regular Sunday service.

The clergy will be the primary speaker, and only one other person will give a eulogy prior to the start of the service if it is held indoors. If loved ones would like to speak during the service, it is encouraged that the service be outdoors.

Music, communion, and other aspects of the service will be performed in accordance to the guidelines for worship services in similar settings.

Following the service, attendees are welcome to remain on the campus for fellowship, but a reception with food and/or drinks is not permitted at this time.

## **7. Music at St. Bede's, Other than Worship Services**

### **a. Choir Rehearsals**

Our choir is on hiatus for the summer each year after Pentecost and until the first Sunday after Labor Day. When our choir resumes meeting in preparation for services in the Fall, they will observe all Diocesan, CDC, State, and County guidelines for singing and small group meetings as per current guidance at that time.

### **b. Arts at St. Bede's**

Prior to the pandemic, St. Bede's hosted a musical concert series called "Arts at St. Bede's" that met regularly throughout the year. We are exploring how and when we will resume this program. When we do we will follow all current Diocesan, CDC, State and County guidelines for indoor or outdoor gatherings, groups, and music events.

### **c. Outside Users**

St. Bede's has frequently had outside users come into our sanctuary for various musical purposes, and in particular we have frequent requests to play our organ. Any use of the organ or other similar uses of our facilities will occur in coordination with our Music Director and Parish Administrator to ensure that all current Diocesan, CDC, State, and County guidelines for relevant events and activities are being observed.

## **8. In-Person Meetings**

### **a. Parish Meetings**

Parish meetings will be conducted so as to be inclusive of all people involved and who wish to participate, and services like Zoom will be incorporated to include those who cannot or choose not to be present in-person for the meeting. As much as possible, meetings will be held outdoors or in buildings with better ventilation, such as Lehman Hall with its multiple doors that can provide superior cross-ventilation. The length of meetings will be shortened as necessary and possible, and guidelines such as mask-wearing, social distancing, hand hygiene, and other relevant guidelines will be upheld.

## **b. Outside Groups**

### **i. Available Rooms for Meetings**

Trinity school has rights to sole use of Lehman Hall from 8:00am until 4:30pm, Monday through Friday, as well as one of the rooms in the Wyatt Hall. Prior to the pandemic, St. Bede's hosted a Thursday morning and two Saturday morning 12-Step groups. As stated above, we are exploring making a room available in the Wyatt Hall for the Thursday morning group as that space does not conflict with the school's use of the building, and to use the Courtyard for the Saturday groups. Galaxy Building Maintenance will perform all set-up, cleaning, and tear down, and will ensure that CDC guidelines are being followed.

### **ii. Enforcing Safe Practices**

Outside groups will be required to enforce all diocesan, CDC, state, and county guidance for matters such as wearing masks, social distancing, hand hygiene, and contact tracing. As it is not appropriate for the parish to perform contact tracing for an "anonymous" group, the parish will work together with the groups to ensure that they are performing this function.