

Indoor gatherings, public and private, of more than fifty people are prohibited, and outdoor gatherings are limited to twenty-five percent of capacity, unless a plan for the exception is approved by local public health. Plans approved by local public health must be implemented to mitigate the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19.

Public and private gatherings should utilize protocols outlined below. Gatherings highly influence virus activity. It is recommended that gatherings should be planned with cancellation or postponement contingencies if safe gathering protocols cannot be followed. Idaho public health experts, DHW and all local Public Health Districts, will support any decision to postpone or cancel gatherings and public events in order to protect Idahoans and those who visit Idaho.

This protocol can be used for planning for gatherings of all sizes, but in particular for gatherings that are larger than fifty people (mass gatherings) and with a plan approved by local public health. For the purpose of this guidance, mass gatherings and events are defined as a gathering for business, social, academic or recreational activities including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, educational, leisure, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities. Specific examples may include, but are not limited to, weddings, graduations, large theater performances, rallies, car shows, reunions, races, holiday celebrations, rodeos, adult and youth sports tournaments. For the purpose of these protocols, educational activities are excluded that are defined as activities involving students taught by an educator in a school or equivalent setting. The exceptions are graduation ceremonies and other non-academic events. Additionally, school sports, and extra-curricular activities, including practice and games, may continue but attendance is subject to the limitations outlined in the Stage 3 Stay Healthy Order. Sports tournaments with non-participant attendance exceeding the size limitations in the Order (fifty persons indoors, twenty-five percent of capacity for outdoors) are not permitted unless a plan for a safe tournament is approved by local public health.

Large gatherings, event and venue plans must be submitted to the local public health district and approved prior to beginning operations. Inspections will not be required. Inspections will not be required. Event organizers and planners should have their reopening plan available during the event. Events will be expected to adhere to the plan submitted and base the plan on recommendations and guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state and local public health. Event organizers and planners are encouraged to make their plans available to the public.

Plan templates are available from the local public health districts.

GATHERINGS AND EVENTS SHOULD USE THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOLS AS GUIDANCE FOR THEIR PLANS.

Everyone Should:

- Wear cloth face coverings
- Engage in physical distancing of at least six feet
- Stay home if sick
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces and objects regularly

Event Planners & Organizers Should:

- Check in with their local public health district periodically leading up to the event to understand the current community risk for exposure to COVID-19
- Host events outdoors, if possible; event tents are considered indoor environments and adequate precautions should be taken
- Maintain the six-foot physical distancing requirements for employees and attendees
- Provide adequate sanitation and personal hygiene for employees, vendors, and attendees
- Ensure frequent disinfection of the event location as well as regular cleaning, especially of high-touch surfaces

Event Planners & Organizers Should:

- Masks and cloth face coverings should be required by employees, vendors, and/or attendees
- Provide services and event activities while limiting close interactions with attendees
- Identify strategies for addressing ill employees, such as the following:
 - o Require COVID-19 positive employees to stay at home while infectious
 - Symptoms of COVID-19 include muscle aches, a fever of 100.4°F or higher, cough, sore throat, and shortness of breath
 - o Keep employees who were directly exposed to the COVID-19 positive employee away from the workplace
 - o Closure of the event location until the location can be properly disinfected
- On a case-by-case basis, include other practices appropriate for specific types of events, such as teleconferencing, screening of employees for illness and exposures upon work entry, requiring non-cash transactions, etc.
- Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information to event staff and participants.
- Idaho public health experts recommend that organizers (whether groups or individuals) postpone or cancel mass gatherings and public events in any of the following situations:
 - The event will draw audiences or participants from communities, states, or countries that are currently experiencing confirmed substantial community spread of COVID-19 disease. Your local public health district can assist you in making this determination.
 - Refer to the county map provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to see if an area (county) they are from has higher rates than the overall rate for Idaho: <https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html>
 - The event's primary audience includes or may expose high-risk populations, including adults over the age of 65 years and people with underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes, regardless of the number of attendees.

In addition to the above guidance,

- Use technology (e.g., webinar, video conferencing, live stream, etc.) as a way to gather people or a way to augment a gathering to minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure when possible
- Consider directing attendees to seating or standing areas that are already properly distanced
 - o Use signage and barrier protection to limit movement and maintain distancing and direct the flow of traffic
 - o Limit tables to groups of six
 - o Space tables appropriately to keep patrons six feet apart while seated and moving in and out of chairs
 - o If stadium seating is being used, use barriers or signage to appropriately physically distance families
- Limit entrances and exits to the event to control the flow of attendees
 - o Consider separate entrances and exits to the event
 - o Mark where people line up to keep attendees six feet apart while waiting
 - o Open gates or doors to events early to allow for orderly entrance to event
- Post signs at entrance stating that if attendees have a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms, they are prohibited from entering
- Utilize on-line ticket sales, required sign-ups and/or RSVPs for crowd management
- Provide COVID-19 prevention supplies to event staff and participants
 - o Make sure that events have supplies for event staff and participants, such as hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol, tissues, trash baskets, disposable facemasks, cleaners and disinfectants
- Dedicate staff members to disinfect high contact surfaces throughout the establishment and disinfect tables between parties

- If food is being served at an event, refer to Restaurant Protocols, Idaho Rebounds plan
- If concession services are provided, prohibit in-stand concession sales and buffet-style serving areas
 - o Concession services should be limited to vending and walk-up services that can provide for appropriate physical distancing while patrons wait in line
- Stay in regular communication with your potential patrons about the status of COVID-19 in the state and in your area and any cancellation or change in the venue
- Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information to event staff and participants
- Develop a contingency plan that addresses scenarios you may encounter during the COVID-19 outbreak
 - o Identify actions to take if you need to postpone or cancel events
 - o Develop flexible refund policies for participants
 - o Determine if the event can be convened in a different manner such as a virtual event

Resources

Event Planning and COVID-19: Questions and Answers.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/event-planners-and-attendees-faq.html>

Get Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidance on Mass Gatherings.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>

Calculator to estimate the maximum number of people per square footage:
<https://www.banquettablespro.com/social-distancing-room-space-calculator>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplace, Businesses, Schools and Homes:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guidance on Disinfecting:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

EPA list of COVID-19 effective disinfectants:
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>