

Public Health Guidance

COVID-19 safety at events



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Events are an important part of our community. They contribute to our culture, economy and connectedness. COVID-19 safety at events contributes to community confidence and safety.

Events in Tasmania are no longer regulated by specific COVID-19 Public Health Guidelines.

However, events must still be conducted safely and in accordance with the requirements and recommendations of local government, workplace health and safety regulators, and others.

For the foreseeable future it will be important to act to reduce the chances of COVID-19 spreading at an event.

Reducing the risk of COVID-19 spreading at an event is important for the safety and confidence of patrons, staff, and the community.

The following guidance information will help event organisers manage COVID-19 risk and safety.

COVID-19 safety at events is supported by:

- Asking patrons and staff not to attend if unwell
- Providing sufficient space at the event to enable patrons to keep a reasonable distance from each other
- Supporting those who choose to wear a face mask
- Enabling hand washing and sanitising
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Ensuring the person or team responsible for safety consider and manage COVID-19 risk.

Event organisers, staff and patrons all have roles in acting to protect the health and safety of staff and patrons.

These sorts of measures have been part of running and attending events since 2020. During that time, we have all gained experience and understanding of COVID-19 safety at events.

We have learned:

- Planning is critically important.
- When people mix and move freely and closely for a long time, COVID-19 can spread amongst them.
- Event organisers now recognise the importance of actively enabling COVID-19 safety, and that they can run events safely without needing close public health oversight.

These understandings have informed the guidance for COVID-19 safety event planning provided on the following pages.

Further support and information

Public Health can provide COVID-19 safety advice to assist with event planning.

Email respiratory.outbreaks@health.tas.gov.au.

Communication and messaging

KEY ACTIONS	WAYS TO REDUCE RISK
COVID-19 safe messages	<p>Messages for patrons are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay home if you are unwell. • If you become unwell at the event, please leave the event. • Where practicable keep some distance from other people or social groups. • Wash and sanitise your hands. • You are welcome to wear a face mask. Wearing a face mask can reduce the risk of catching or spreading viral infections, especially when space is limited. Particularly consider wearing a face mask if you are at risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and/or the community incidence of COVID-19 is moderate or high.
Communication before the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information to patrons before the event about how you are promoting COVID-19 safety. For example, add information to your website, social media pages, advertisements and/or tickets. • One of the most important pre-event messages is 'Stay home if you are unwell'. • For more information visit COVID-19 resources on the coronavirus website.
Communication during the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messaging at the event can help patrons to follow COVID-19 safe behaviours. This is most important when the community incidence of COVID-19 is moderate or high. • The most effective signage is clear, large (A3 or larger), waterproof, and displayed in prominent locations such as the entry, food, bar, and areas where people tend to congregate. • When the community incidence of COVID-19 is moderate or high you should consider reminders over the sound system and on large screens that most patrons can see.

Managing patrons

KEY ACTIONS	WAYS TO REDUCE RISK
Availability of face masks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging patrons to use face masks is a reminder that COVID-19 safety is important. Consider having a small supply of face masks for patrons. • Consider a face mask policy for staff, particularly those in customer-facing roles and for those who may interact with or support more vulnerable community members at your event.
<p>Some activities may increase risk of respiratory infection, including COVID-19 spreading at your event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dancing • consuming alcohol • camping 	<p>Understand and manage those activities at your event that may involve closer socialisation and result in a greater number of and more prolonged interactions between patrons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer events and longer service of alcohol can increase this risk. <p>Camping at events can increase COVID-19 risk as patrons share living, food preparation and sanitary facilities for extended periods of time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the message that unwell people should not camp at events. Provide campers who become ill at your event with a face mask and help to get them home safely. • Separate camping areas from competition or performance, bar and eating areas and other facilities. • Event camping works well where there is space to spread out. Designate campsite areas with plenty of space, including corridors for movement. • Consider limiting or discouraging alcohol consumption at event camping sites. • Have enough well-maintained toilet and sanitary facilities for the number of campers, distributed throughout the camping area. • Provide additional cleaning during peak usage times such as mornings and evenings. • Provide running water and soap at sanitary facilities and/or hand sanitiser throughout the campsite. For events over multiple days it is safest to provide both. • Monitor soap and/or hand sanitiser supplies and refill them regularly.

Managing patrons (cont)

KEY ACTIONS	WAYS TO REDUCE RISK
<p>Maintaining physical distance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In dense crowds, it can be impossible for people to keep apart from each other. The closer people are, the easier it is for respiratory viruses to spread. • As you plan your event, consider how you can provide sufficient space for patrons who may choose to keep some distance from other patrons. • You can also help people maintain some physical distance by managing the layout, size and movement of transit and shared spaces (entry and exit, bag checking areas, walkways, toilets, food and drink). • Clear visual reminders such as posters, screens, ground and directional markings, and barriers can help.
<p>Reduce queuing and congestion</p>	<p>Consider ways to help reduce queuing and congestion such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use multiple entry and exit points, with multiple entry lanes. • Install temporary fencing or crowd control barriers to enable a snake-like formation. • Install directional signage or ground markers such as arrows on the ground or other areas. • Stagger entry and/or departure times. • Spread activities and stallholders / vendors as widely as you can across the grounds. <p>Examples of activities where queuing and congestion are more likely include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • popular children’s activities such as face painting and competitions • food, drink and merchandise vendors and carnival rides • time-limited and scheduled displays and events such as competitions and races • bonfires, fireworks, stages.
<p>Reduce over-crowding</p>	<p>Provide plenty of space for patrons to spread apart.</p> <p>Comply with local council requirements for capacity of outdoor areas and indoor building occupancy limits. Ways to reduce the chance that large numbers of people are in the one space at a time include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ticketing so you know how many patrons will attend. • Patron counting apps or manual clickers. • Separate session times or ‘one-in one-out’ attendance management. • Moving the event outdoors or partly outdoors. • In grandstand bleacher style seating, plan on no more than two people per linear metre, ie 50 cm per seat base. • Ensure indoor areas are well ventilated. Open windows and doors, and use exiting ventilation systems.

Cleaning and hygiene

KEY ACTIONS	WAYS TO REDUCE RISK
Hand and cough hygiene	<p>Washing or sanitising hands regularly and covering the mouth and nose when coughing and/or sneezing can help reduce the spread of common viruses.</p> <p>You can promote hand and cough hygiene among staff, volunteers and patrons by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing hygiene stations with alcohol-based hand sanitiser at entrances and across the event site. • Ensuring toilets are working, and bathrooms have running water for hand basins, liquid soap, disposable hand towels or dryers. • Displaying signs or posters that show good hygiene and hand washing practices.
Venue cleaning	<p>Appropriate, regular cleaning of surfaces helps remove viruses and prevent disease transmission.</p> <p>Ways to ensure venue hygiene:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have cleaning measures in place before, during and after the event. • Pay particular attention to high touch surfaces such as door handles, chairs, tables, food and drink facilities, EFTPOS machines, rubbish bin lids and bathrooms. • Ensure sufficient time between multiple sessions for appropriate cleaning. • Cleaning tips for workplaces are at Safe Work Australia: Cleaning Safe Work Australia (swa.gov.au)

Workers and volunteers

KEY ACTIONS	WAYS TO REDUCE RISK
Responsible person/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the person or team responsible for safety consider and manage COVID-19 risk. • Inform staff, contractors, exhibitors / vendors and performers on how COVID-19 safety will be encouraged at the event.

Managing COVID-19

KEY ACTIONS	WAYS TO REDUCE RISK
Managing unwell people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of staff and patrons with cold and flu like symptoms. Noticing, and then acting kindly and supportively may make a difference to the spread of disease at the event. • Ask an unwell person to wear a face mask and help them to leave the venue and safely go home.

Helpful hints

- A site map can help you understand the space available, areas of congestion, the flow of patrons and where to put signage and hygiene stations.
- Keep up to date with current information visit coronavirus.tas.gov.au.