



Safety Protocols for Event Planning during the COVID-19 Pandemic

(Guidelines are subject to change as additional resources and recommendations become available)

The City of Houston is committed to increasing mitigation measures to combat potential health risks associated with public gatherings. Therefore, in addition to standard event requisites, the following measures have been approved by Dr. David Persse, Public Health Authority and will be required by the producer prior to being issued approval, support and/or a permit:

- Producer to provide a social distance map for the event and production areas, to be reviewed and approved to determine occupancy:**
 - Current physical distancing requirement is 6 feet.
 - Queuing should be organized to allow guests and employees to practice physical distancing protocols in any area where queuing is necessary, e.g., entrances/exits, restrooms, concessions, etc.
 - Any personnel at risk of being within 6 feet of others and interacting for more than 6 minutes (such as registration/admissions, etc.) plexiglass barriers or increased PPE may be beneficial.
 - Considerations need to be taken to avoid cross-patterns for installation/deinstallation of staging hardware and soft goods, artists, and pedestrian traffic.
 - For queuing areas located prior to the temperature screening points, mobile temperature monitors (on foot) are beneficial to check for elevated temperatures.

- Guidelines to ensure key safety standards for event employees and participants, to include:**
 - All employees and guests are required to wear appropriate PPE including face masks
 - No face mask, face cover or respirator (N95/KN95 or other) that has an exhalation valve/vent or other opening to release the user's exhaled air are to be used. These exhalation vents defeat the purpose of the mask/face cover containing the user's droplets.
 - For more information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirator-use-faq.html>
 - Producers must provide face masks should individuals forget or wear the wrong type of face covering.
 - Employees and guests are subject to temperature checks, COVID-19 questions*, and wrist banding at entry points to the event:
 - Anyone with a temperature of 100.4 may be directed to the Hot Zone** or may be turned away before entering the site. The Hot Zone is dedicated to anyone who has a fever of 100.4 and higher, doesn't pass the COVID-19 questionnaire or, once inside the event site, exhibits signs of being ill (vomiting, passing out, etc.). An individual may not return to the event unless authorized by a medical professional.
 - The Hot Zone area must be 15-20 feet away from the testing site (Cold Zone**)
 - Social distancing in this area is required.
 - Additional PPE must be used for anyone working in this area (face shields, KN95 masks, gowns, gloves, preferably shoe coverings and hair covers).
 - A Warm Zone** area must be identified 15-20 feet away from the Hot Zone and Cold Zone for PPE removal and disposal:
 - Disposal of materials in the Hot Zone must be put in a dedicated red biohazard trash bag.



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- At the conclusion of operations, red biohazard bags will need to be 'goose-neck' tied (not using zip ties or other materials) and the exterior of the bag will need to be disinfected.
- Because biohazard bags are considered regulated medical waste due to the potentially infectious materials inside, they must be disposed by a qualified agency.
- To do this, disinfected biohazard bags may be delivered to the Houston Health Department Laboratory at 2250 Holcombe, Houston, TX 77030; arrangements for drop-off can be made with the Lab's BioSafety Officer, Vicente Zuno, at 832-942-1552.
 - These areas must be thoroughly sanitized upon clearing out of the area.
 - Once screened and approved, the employee or participant will receive a wristband.
- Multiple hand washing stations/hand sanitizers are to be placed strategically throughout the venue.
- Hand sanitizers to contain a minimum of either 60% ethyl alcohol (ethanol) or 70% isopropyl alcohol (isopropanol).
 - Please be aware the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced warnings on over 100 different hand sanitizer products found to contain Methanol or 1-Propanol, both toxic ingredients when absorbed. None of these hazardous hand sanitizer products are to be distributed. The FDA's list can be located here: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-updates-hand-sanitizers-consumers-should-not-use#:~:text=%5B7%2D2%2D2020%5D,tested%20positive%20for%20methanol%20contaminati on.>
- Educate and inform all employees of operational updates and guideline.
- Producers are encouraged to provide special accommodations for higher risk populations to ensure safety and enjoyment of the event (similar to ADA seating areas).

Disinfection protocol for widely used areas and restrooms

- Scheduling of disinfection and proper sanitization of restrooms after each us.
 - Disinfectants from the EPA's 'List N' of disinfectants to be used against COVID-19 are listed on the EPA's web site: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2-covid-19>
 - For each of these disinfectants, their Safety Data Sheet (SDS) details necessary safety information for the disinfectant's use such as Personal Protective Equipment, spill response procedures and more. Also, each disinfectant container requires proper labeling and those using them require training before use.
 - Some disinfectants (depending on the product, quantity, use and other factors) may be subject to the Texas Hazard Communication Act. This can be located here: <https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/HS/htm/HS.502.htm>
- Scheduling of cleaning and disinfection of high-frequency touchpoints.
- Scheduling of trash pick-up.
- Additional PPE for employees in these areas, face shields, KN95 face masks, gloves, etc.



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- Placement of signage encouraging safety measures**
 - Reinforce health and safety guidelines and protocols at guest and employee arrival points, websites, social media, pre-promotional materials, and throughout the event and venue.
 - For employees, proper removal of PPE signage.
 - Highlight sanitization protocols, hand sanitizer locations, physical distancing markers both inside and outside of the site.
 - Post COVID-19 safety and hygiene best practices signage.
 - Social distancing in parking lots/structures.
- Consider screening measures for persons with disabilities and appropriate accessible seating.**
- Producers are encouraged to use cashless transactions, parking/pass validation, and purchases.**
- Updates must be maintained throughout the planning of an event.**

***COVID-19 questionnaire must be asked of all staff, volunteers, participants and patrons:**

1. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
2. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
3. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced a new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
4. Within the last 14-days, have you experienced new muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition or a specific activity such as physical exercise?
5. Within the last 14-days, have you had a temperature at or above 100.4° or the sense of having a fever?
6. Within the last 14 days, have you had close contact, without the use of appropriate PPE, with someone who is currently sick with suspected or confirmed COVID-19?

(Note: Close contact is defined as within 6 feet for more than 10 consecutive minutes)

If the individual answers **YES** to any of the questions they will not be allowed into the event space unless determined otherwise by a medical professional.

****Cold Zone** – Public event area

****Warm Zone** – Designated area where PPE equipment is to be discarded

****Hot Zone** – Designated area individuals who have an elevated temperature, shows signs of illness (vomiting, passing out, etc.) and/or have answered negatively to COVID-19 questions will be directed and assessed by medical personnel.

The Mayor's Office of Special Events will work with Dr. David Persse and his team to review and approve all COVID-19 Special Event plans. Plans may be submitted via email to:

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