LARGE GATHERINGS & EVENTS

MItigation Planning Toolkit

2022 Plan Safer Events

With support from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), COVID-19 Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

LARGE GATHERINGS & EVENTS

PLANNING SAFER EVENTS:

Whether you are an event planner, venue owner, or gathering coordinator, this toolkit can help you plan safer events that reduce the spread of COVID-19. Examples of events and gatherings include conferences, meetings, festivals, parades, concerts, sporting events, weddings, faith-based gatherings, and other types of assemblies.

In this toolkit you'll find guidance on creating a mitigation plan and links to other resources. You can also request free individualized consultations and submit your plan for review by our COVID-19 mitigation advisors.

This toolkit was developed in 2020 and updated in 2022.

Visit the Plan Safer Events website for more information:

www.plansaferevents.com

WHAT IS A MITIGATION PLAN?

A mitigation plan outlines the steps you will take before, during, and after your event to reduce risk of your staff, volunteers and attendees contacting the virus. During the COVID-19 pandemic, event organizers have a lot of decisions to make to plan a safer event:

- How can the event be organized to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 to staff, volunteers and attendees?
- Should the event move forward depending on local case counts?
- If the event moves forward, what are the local mandates/recommendations?
- How should the room be setup? Can food be served safely?
- How should travel from other places be handled?
- Should the event require proof of a negative test or vaccine status?

It isn't possible to guarantee COVID-19 won't be spread when people gather in person, but it is possible to plan ahead and reduce the risk.

Plan Safer Events offers a checklist on the following pages to help you develop a mitigation plan, links to helpful resources, sample plans, and a template to use when you are putting your plan together. You can even request a mitigation advisor to help talk things through. All of this is free of charge to Alaskans. Visit our website, email info@plansafer-events.com or call 855-778-8444 for more information.

MITIGATION PLANNING CHECKLIST

GENERAL PRE-EVENT CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ Familiarize yourself with local and national planning resources. (Visit Centers for Disease Control/State of Alaska DHSS websites) See resource list at the end of document for helpful links.

- ☐ Incorporate local and/or statewide mandates into your mitigation plan. Consult with local, regional, or state public health officials.

- ☐ Consult leadership and members of your organization; consider using a survey to help understand perspectives about covid mitigation measures.

- ☐ Decide if you will require that attendees be vaccinated or provide a negative test as a condition for attending the event.

- ☐ Plan for how you will verify vaccine/test status.

- ☐ Communicate requirements through every channel available to be sure participants understand and can follow the rules.

- ☐ Have a plan to accommodate high-risk attendees and how you will respond to a positive case among attendees.

- ☐ Develop a plan with protocols to train staff and volunteers on COVID-19 mitigation strategies and all relevant event policies.

VENUE/FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ Find out if the venue you are considering has an existing COVID-19 mitigation plan and if there are max capacity guidelines. Discuss whether venue staff will follow event mitigation requirements for attendees (i.e. provide vax card or negative test)

- ☐ Develop a plan to close off shared spaces (e.g., a lounge) or plan for staggered use of these spaces and regular cleaning.

- ☐ Create a map of the venue showing any changes you have made to the event layout and set-up to comply with social distancing recommendations.

- ☐ Consult with building management to make sure that the facility ventilation systems and fans are working properly.

- ☐ Work with venue and event staff to agree on sanitation protocols and ensure these are scheduled and regular.

- ☐ Decide on how you will communicate with event vendors and partners so that you can let them know immediately about any changes or adjustments to plans or schedules.

LEGAL/LIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

☐ Assess potential liability concerns and ensure that your organization, company, or venue are covered. This could be through a waiver signed by participants before attending the event or some other type of disclaimer.

☐ Consult with a lawyer who knowledgeable about COVID-19, liability concerns, waivers, and contractual negotiations.

☐ Have an expert review any contracts or agreements your organization or venue is considering and make sure that liability concerns and responsibilities are clearly laid out before finalizing.

☐ Seek guidance from insurance providers about mitigation liability, have agent review mitigation plan.

☐ Be sure any event partners or fiscal agents are involved in these discussions.

REGISTRATION/CHECK-IN

☐ Ensure registration and check-in systems avoid crowding at entry points.

☐ If possible, conduct registration and check-in online or through an app so that there is limited gathering, waiting, or crowding at the entry points.

☐ If requiring vaccinations or negative tests, communicate this far ahead of time to attendees. Clarify which forms of documentation will be accepted. For example, photo of vaccine card, app verification, honor system, at-home test results, etc.

☐ If attendees are not used to registration, consider incentives for a prize drawing for those who choose to register.

☐ Develop a plan to communicate registration and check-in protocols with attendees prior to their arrival.

☐ If testing will be provided at the event, ensure that the supply is adequate to accommodate the estimated number of guests and is conducted in a designated area away from other attendees.

☐ Determine whether checking documentation will be handled in-house or if a contractor will be hired.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

- [ ] Decide whether you will screen attendees and employees for COVID-19 symptoms. Some methods include:
  - Onsite touchless questionnaires
  - Pre-screenings in conjunction with registration process.
- [ ] Train all employees, staff, volunteers, and attendees in detail the protocols and recommendations if an attendee or employee is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, and what steps they should take if they need to stay home.

COMMUNICATION

- [ ] Develop a detailed plan for how you will communicate with vendors, employees, and attendees about:
  - COVID-19 signs and symptoms
  - Staying home if they feel unwell
  - Protocols at the event (such as social distancing & face-coverings)
  - Risks associated with gathering in groups
  - Refund policies
  - Procedures to care for someone who is ill or showing symptoms
- [ ] Plan and create any COVID-19 related signage and materials you will have at the venue and that will be provided to participants.
- [ ] Communicate early and often about entry requirements, screenings, face mask wearing, social distancing, and attendee traffic flow to limit crowding.
- [ ] Promote a culture of making good choices when we might seem symptomatic.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- [ ] Decide if your event will follow any physical distancing protocols and how these will be communicated and enforced.
- [ ] Communicate to attendees before and during the event about the steps you have taken (layout changes, signage, announcements, traffic flow guides, barriers, etc.) to ensure social distancing.
- [ ] Point out to participants physical barriers to encourage social distancing and let them know how social distancing will be monitored.

FACE COVERINGS

- ☐ Follow local mandates or recommendations on wearing masks/face-coverings.
- ☐ If there are no mandates, decide whether the event will require face coverings and include in communications. Include specifics about when masks can be removed (i.e. during eating).
- ☐ Always provide masks on-site and ensure adequate supply.

SANITATION & HYGIENE

- ☐ Create a cleaning and sanitation plan with a schedule. Decide how and who will make sure it is followed.
- ☐ Provide detailed information to employees on cleaning protocols, including all materials needed and who is responsible at what times.
- ☐ Decide if there will be handwashing stations/hand sanitizer provided during the event, and if so, make sure there is plenty of supply on hand for the entire event.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

- ☐ Research and ensure compliance with any local rules and guidance on food and beverage concessions.
- ☐ Determine how social distancing will be encouraged in food lines and eating spaces.
- ☐ Plan for any needed changes in how food is served, or beverages are provided.

RECORD ATTENDEES AND RESPONDING TO A POSITIVE CASE

- ☐ Collect and record all contact information from attendees, staff, and volunteers.
- ☐ Develop a plan to communicate with employees, vendors, and attendees in the event that there is a positive COVID-19 test (either during or following the event).
- ☐ Create a resource list with testing sites and medical providers nearby the venue.
- ☐ Establish an up-to-date outline of the isolation, quarantine and close contact procedures to follow.
- ☐ Distribute this information to all staff, volunteers and attendees and include in signage as appropriate.

EVENT DETAILS

Event Title:

Event Location (City, State):

Event Date(s):   Event Organizer:

Email: Phone:

Hosting/Planning Organization:

Anticipated Number of Attendees:

Event Type*:

PRE-EVENT CONSIDERATIONS

example: *conference, meeting, festival, parade, concert, sporting event, wedding, faith-based gathering, and other types of assemblies.*

VENUE/FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

LEGAL/LIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

REGISTRATION/CHECK-IN

HEALTH SCREENINGS

COMMUNICATION

SOCIAL DISTANCING

FACE COVERINGS

SANITATION & HYGIENE

FOOD & BEVERAGE

RECORD ATTENDEES

1. **ALASKA - LOCAL ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS:** Links to updated statewide, borough, municipal, city, and military health mandates and ordinances.
   - Local & Borough Resources
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2. **CDC GUIDANCE:** Links to guidance from the CDC on large gatherings, youth sporting events, and faith-based events.
   - CDC Considerations for Events and Gatherings
   - CDC Event Planning and COVID-19: Questions and Answers
   - CDC Events and Gatherings: Readiness and Planning tool
   - CDC Consideration for Youth Sports
   - CDC Toolkit for Youth Sports
   - CDC Playing Sports
   - CDC Events and Gatherings: Readiness and Planning Tool
   - CDC Considerations for Events and Gatherings
   - CDC Event Planning and COVID-19: Questions and Answers
   - CDC Youth Sports Program FAQs
   - CDC Symptoms Download
   - CDC Cleaning & Disinfection
   - CDC Update Planning & Considering Events
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3. **STATE OF ALASKA RESOURCES:** Links to State of Alaska (SOA) resources, health mandates, guidance, and statewide plans.
   - SOA COVID-19 Health Mandates
   - SOA Local City & Borough COVID-19 Resources
   - SOA Coronavirus FAQ
   - SOA DHSS Large Gatherings, Sports and Community Events
   - SOA DHSS Stay active during the pandemic
   - SOA Local COVID-19 Alert levels
   - SOA Governor's Mandates - Slides
   - SOA COVID-19 ECHO series
   - SOA DHSS Large Gatherings, Sports and Community Events
   - SOA DHSS Community of Faith
   - SOA Gatherings and Community Events in Alaska
   - SOA Indoor Air and COVID-19: Considerations for ventilation in the COVID-19 pandemic
   - SOA COVID-19 Dashboard
   - SOA Advisory Document - Large Gatherings Events

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4. **WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) GUIDANCE ON LARGE EVENTS:**
   - [Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of COVID-19. Interim guidance, 29 May 2020](#)
   - [WHO mass gathering COVID-19 risk assessment tool – Generic events](#)
   - [WHO mass gathering COVID-19 risk assessment tool – Sports events](#)
   - [WHO mass gathering COVID-19 risk assessment tool – Religious events](#)

5. **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**: A collection of answers to the most frequent questions on COVID-19 and planning gatherings in Alaska.
   - [SOA COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

OTHER EVENT PLANNING RESOURCES

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6. **INFORMATION FOR TRAVELERS**: Information, mandates, tips, guidance, and best practices for travelers.
   - [State of Alaska – Traveler Information Page](#)
   - [MIT – How Safe is Air Travel?](#)
   - [Mayo Clinic – Tips for Traveling Safely](#)

7. **OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS:** Links to information on communication, outreach, engagement, media, and other specialty topics.
   - [Ideas 42 Tips for Communicating about COVID](#)
   - [COVID Messaging & Tool kit, pgs. 23-36](#)
   - [Behavioral Insights Infographics Rules](#)
   - [Behavioral Insights Communication Tools](#)
   - [Behavior Barrier Toolkit](#)
   - [Behavioral Insights Webinar on COVID](#)

8. **MITIGATION PLAN EXAMPLES:** Links to existing mitigation plans for reference.
   - [Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage - COVID-19 Mitigation Plan](#)
   - [Skinny Raven - Hightail Half Corona Virus Mitigation Plan](#)
   - [Alaska School Activities Association - Event Guidelines](#)
   - [Anchorage School District Reopening Plan](#)
   - [Alaska Afterschool Network - Mitigation Plans](#)
   - [Challenge Alaska - Mitigation Planning](#)
   - [COVID-19 - Juneau Youth Football League](#)
   - [Cook Inlet Soccer Club COVID Mitigation Plan & Dome User Guidelines](#)