

Hosting a COVID Secure Event – Guidance

Key things to consider:

- 1. Have I notified the local Safety Advisory Group or Safety Advisory Team – This should be done without delay and at the earliest opportunity by contacting your local authority district or borough council)**
- 2. Do I require a licence?**
- 3. Am I following the relevant legal requirements and taking account of government guidance in respect of coronavirus?**
- 4. Have I undertaken the appropriate risk assessment and identified control measures to be put in place?**

The advice below is designed to highlight controls that Event Organisers will need to consider in order to hold a COVID Secure event.

Safety Advisory Group or Safety Advisory Team

The Safety Advisory Groups or Safety Advisory Teams (SAG/SATs) have been established at District Council Level to enable Event Organisers to seek help and guidance through one central body. The SAG/SAT does not take responsibility for your event – this always remains with the Event Organiser who has a duty of care and in most cases the legal responsibility for health and safety.

Many Event Organisers will also require advice and support from the police, fire service and the ambulance service.

In addition to any licences your event may require, you will also need to demonstrate in advance that your event will be COVID secure. You will be asked to complete a COVID questionnaire which should allow you to explain the COVID controls for your event, which should reflect the controls identified by your COVID risk assessment which you should have undertaken and to submit your answer to the SAG/SAT Co-ordinator at least four weeks in advance.

In some cases, the Environmental Health Officer may also request that they see a written copy of your COVID risk Assessment for the event. The following guidance will support you in completing this.

You can also find useful guides, checklists and templates in our [Trading Safely Covid19 toolkit](#) for Hertfordshire businesses.

Part of the attraction of attending events often includes socialising and associated activity. This can lead to attendees engaging in more risky behaviours and taking less notice of the guidance around social distancing, or contravening legal requirements. Event Organisers must anticipate the behaviour of their visitors or

attendees at their event as part of the COVID Risk Assessment and put in place control measures to reduce the risks of transmitting coronavirus. The measures might be in addition to the trading procedures you had in place before the pandemic, but the prevention of individuals catching and transmitting the virus is of paramount importance.

Licences:

The first thing to do is to check what licence/consent is required; please contact the Licensing Team at your local council.

It is the responsibility of the Event Organiser to ensure that the correct licence/consent/permit is in place for the activities being proposed.

In most circumstances, the process of obtaining these will include a consultation period lasting 28 days. There are often statutory requirements which therefore must be followed before permission can be granted. Failure to identify suitable COVID controls based on a risk assessment for coronavirus and health and safety hazards is likely to result in objections to an application from one or more of the Responsible Authorities and could result in enforcement action.

General COVID-19 Guidance

You will need to assess your event against the Coronavirus Legal Requirements and take account of Government Guidance to make your event COVID Secure.

Depending on the nature of your event you may need to consider more than one guidance document, for example, if you are an outdoor arena providing entertainment, selling merchandise and food and drink, you will need to consider the guidance for **Performing Arts, the Visitor Economy, Pubs and Restaurants** and Shops and Branches.

As you may be aware, one of the most important controls in reducing the risk of transmitting coronavirus for any events is that social distancing is maintained. Government Guidance states that this should be at least 2 meters, unless other mitigation controls are in place.

Better Business for All guidance will help you identify what control measures will need to be implemented to ensure that you fulfil your legal obligations to carry out a Risk Assessment under the Coronavirus Restriction Regulations and in most cases under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The controls in this guidance are generic, and they must be tailored to the specific circumstances of your event.

Latest CORONAVIRUS Position:

It is now against the law to meet people you do not live with, in a group larger than 6 (unless you are meeting as a household or a support bubble), whether inside or outside and Event Organisers should take this into account in their COVID risk

assessment to ensure that people stay in their separate groups and do not mix or mingle.

The COVID Risk Assessment

You will need to provide answers to the COVID Questionnaire for Event Organisers (stating the COVID controls you intend to have in place) and in some cases you may be required to provide a documented COVID risk assessment to your local council at least four weeks in advance of the event taking place.

A risk assessment is the Event Organiser's record that identifies the significant hazards associated with the event, including COVID-19 and identifies the controls that need to be taken to reduce or limit the risk of transmitting coronavirus.

Risk assessments and controls must be kept under review and adjusted where necessary, even during an event.

The COVID risk assessment must consider the specific coronavirus risks associated with the activities that are proposed and take into account the risk of transmission of coronavirus to:

- the people working at or supporting the event,
- those you expect to attend the event and particularly those who are vulnerable
- others who may be affected by the event, even if they are not attending

COVID Controls that can assist (but not limited to) in reducing the transmission of coronavirus are:

- Social distancing,
- Personal hygiene (including hand washing, face covering etc.)
- Preventing contamination such as avoiding touching items such as contactless payments, keeping doors open, sharing of equipment etc
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Tracing those may have worked, supported or attended the event

As human behaviour plays a significant role in achieving a safe environment, communication, training and/or instruction of the coronavirus risks and controls to workers, staff, contractors, volunteers must take place prior to the event, as well as continuing instruction and supervision during.

Organised outdoor events

The Events Industry Forum has published guidance on outdoor events which has been developed with input from Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (you will need to create an account to access this but it is free):

COVID Symptoms

Attendees should be signposted to the [NHS webpages](#) for information on symptoms of COVID-19 and requested not to attend the event if symptoms they develop.

Attendees who develop symptoms while at the event should be advised to leave the event immediately if they are able to, using private transport to return to their accommodation/residence.

If you become aware of positive cases of COVID-19 who attended your event, you should report the suspected outbreak to: **Public Health England Health Protection team 0300 303 8537** and your local Environmental Health Department.

Capacity and Social Distancing

- The maximum number of people permitted at any one time ensuring that social distancing can be maintained (it is advisable to document how this has been calculated) considering floor space, seating setting up as well as likely pinch points and busy areas.
- Queuing systems for entering and leaving the event, as well as for toilets, food and other services whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Consider staggering arrivals and the use of floor markings for the areas where queues may typically form.
- Ensure that groups from more than one household are not in groups of more than six people.
- You must review security and emergency procedures to ensure they enable social distancing as far as possible, or that alternative controls are in place

Contact Tracing

There is a legal requirement to facilitate contact tracing by displaying a QR code, (which is a code that can be scanned using the NHS Covid-19 app, and which will log the person's entry to the premises on their phone).

You must also request that those attending your event, (principally, staff, customers and visitors (with some exemptions)), scan the QR code with the app on entry, or provide certain contact details.

Activities and Behaviours

When members of the public are attending performances, Event Organisers should ensure that steps are taken to avoid audiences needing to unduly raise their voices to each other. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage shouting, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult, for example during performance intervals. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission – particularly from aerosol and droplet transmission.

It also includes:

- Discouraging or avoiding activities or features that are likely to encourage audience behaviours increasing transmission risk, such as crowding, clustering, communal dancing and physical contact outside of household groups or support bubbles.

- It is recommended that you advise attendees prior to or at the start of the event, of the behaviour expected e.g. no singing, respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene, and maintaining social distance.
- You must consider how you will ensure that any behaviour that is outside the expected 'event rules' is addressed. It is advisable to consider the use of SIA security staff, particularly if alcohol is being sold at the event or, if people are permitted to bring their own where it is more difficult to monitor the amount of alcohol being consumed.

Hygiene and First Aid

- You must implement cleaning procedures which ensure hand contact surfaces are regularly cleaned. You should implement the **guidance for cleaning in non-healthcare settings** following a possible or confirmed case of COVID-19 at an event.
- Adequate facilities are made available for hand washing (with soap and water) and frequent waste disposal. It is also recommended that hand sanitiser is provided at queuing points.
- Consider whether toilet-to-person ratios needs to be revised to allow for physical distancing, minimising queues, and enhanced cleaning routines.
- The frequency of toilet and wash hand basin cleaning should be increased beyond what has been the case before COVID-19 and should be based on a risk assessment which includes both the usage of the facility and the fact that COVID-19 may survive on the hard contact surfaces present in toilets for at least 72 hours. Enhanced monitoring of facilities will be required to ensure hygiene is maintained.
- Consider the action you will take should someone presents themselves with COVID-19 symptoms. You should consider establishing isolation areas where persons can be provided with first aid (if they are too unwell to immediately return home), and plan communication pathways with NHS services. Persons who are ill can be provided with a face covering to help contain respiratory droplets generated from coughing and sneezing. The isolation area should be equipped with the necessary supplies to facilitate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.

Further guidance on producing a risk assessment can be found [here](#)

Face Coverings

Government Guidance stipulates that customers in hospitality venues must wear face coverings, except when seated at a table to eat or drink. This maybe come a legal requirement.

Staff in hospitality and retail (including concessions) will now also be required to wear face coverings (as from 24 September).

Other matters for consideration

- Check your ticketing Terms and Conditions and ensure that you are clear about your ticketing refund strategy (particularly for those who have

symptoms of COVID) and that the impact of cancellation or postponement is communicated effectively to your customers.

- We suggest that your public liability insurance covers COVID-19 in terms of infection control and cancellation due to local restrictions.

Event Management Plan

For all events it is good practice to provide an overall documented event management plan which details the event and how it will be operated. It is likely that a plan will be requested by relevant agencies including the Police, Ambulance Service, NHS, Fire Service, Emergency Management, Highways and Environmental Health who may request that additional measures are put in place to ensure a safe event is provided for all.

The size of the event will often dictate how detailed the plan needs to be, however in all circumstances it should at least include the following information:

- A brief overview of the event;
- Location;
- Dates and times;
- Name and contact details of event organiser;
- Security/stewarding arrangements;
- First aid provision;
- Fire safety arrangements;
- Food safety arrangements;
- Noise management plan;
- On and off-site traffic arrangements;
- COVID-19 plans; and
- Any other relevant information.

Should an incident occur which requires investigating under Health and Safety legislation, your risk assessments and event management arrangements to implement and manage control measures will be considered as a part of any investigation.

Legislation restrictions and requirements

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No. 2) (England) Regulations 2020

[The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) \(No.3\) Regulations 2020](#)

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of FaceCoverings in a Relevant Place) (England) Regulations 2020

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Collection of Contact Details etc and Related Requirements) Regulations 2020

The above regulations restrict the number of people at events and require a COVID risk assessment

Local authorities have powers to issue directions imposing prohibitions, requirements or restrictions in relation to the holding of indoor and outside events as well as the use of outdoor spaces in its area.

Hertfordshire County Council may therefore prohibit an event or require additional measures or restrictions if they are satisfied that there is a serious and imminent threat to public health and it is necessary and proportionate to prevent and protect against controlling spread of infection of coronavirus in the area. Any such directions from the Council will be documented.

Events and infection control data in the local area will be kept under constant review and any event may be subject to these measures up to and including the day of the proposed event if at the time, the infection rate is such that to continue to hold the event would pose an imminent threat to public health.

Contact Details:

For further information or advice please contact your local **Environmental Health team** at your local council