



Designing COVID-19 Compliant Events

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Center for Hospitality Resilience | Presented by Christine Cleaver

The Coronavirus 2019 Disease (“COVID-19”) is easily transmitted, especially in group gatherings. With that in mind, many are eager to jumpstart the event and meeting industry. This webinar provided best practices for events and meeting planners to design meetings and events that will create compliance with the CDC considerations to enhance individuals’ and communities’ protection and prevent coronavirus disease spread.

COMPLIANCE

The COVID-19 public health crisis is a rapidly evolving situation. Event planners should work with municipality, town, city, and state and officials to determine proper protocols according to dates and times of events. Over 65% of attendees are expecting planners to implement proper COVID-19 protocols.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html>

TRUST

The expectation that institutions, businesses, and other organizations to deliver on their promises and behave responsibly. Over 54% of attendees trust that planners are implementing proper COVID-19 protocols. Communicating your protocols to your attendees is going to deepen their trust in attending your events.

THE PLAN

Operations Plan. An operational plan is a highly detailed plan that provides a clear picture and implementation plan for your team to contribute to the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives. The operational plan maps out the day-to-day tasks required to run a meeting/event. The plan assists in creating a trust for both employees and customers.



Scenarios of the handling of potential issues should be part of your plan. A designated person should oversee the plan and manual to make updates and address issues when needed.

Operations Manual. The operations manual is the documentation by which an organization provides guidance for its employees to perform their functions correctly and reasonably efficiently. It documents the approved standard procedures.

Publish the health and safety parts of your manual for the public to assist with current expectations in relation to past precedence at events.

Example:

<https://www.temple.edu/sites/www/files/health-safety-plan.pdf>

Establish Pillars. Establish pillars that easy to understand and remember that guide your COVID-19 protocols.

Examples:

- Safety
- Distancing
- Hygiene
- Health Monitoring

<https://www.temple.edu/sites/www/files/health-safety-plan.pdf>

Policies and Procedures. All employee and customer policies and procedures should be included in the operations manual. Having policies and procedures lessens errors, ensures safety, and assists with unknown circumstances.

Publish, communicate, and market your customer policies in advance of your event.

Terms and Conditions. Create operation terms and conditions as part of the ticket or registration purchase. Patrons agree to follow the event terms and conditions. Use the double acceptance method the ensure the guest has read and is properly agreeing to the terms and conditions.

Checklist. Use industry established checklists to assist with your planning and the guest experience.

Examples:



<https://eventbrite-s3.s3.amazonaws.com/marketing/landingpages/assets/Illustrations/EventSafetyLP/Eventbrite-COVID19-Safety%20ChecklistV2.pdf>

<https://www.ustravel.org/toolkit/industry-guidance-promoting-health-and-safety-all-travelers>

https://www.travelpulse.com/news/hotels-and-resorts/hotel-association-develops-safe-stay-guest-checklist-for-travelers.html?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=news-junkie&utm_term=organic

Training. Training must happen more than once! The world of COVID-19 changes daily; therefore, your designated operational employee must monitor and update training procedures as needed.

Due Diligence. By taking reasonable steps and recording those steps, you are doing your due diligence for the health and safety of your customers and employees.

- Continually review and update THE plan
- Keep detailed records and record all steps you have taken to meet COVID guidelines
- Invest in implementation of The Plan

BEST PRACTICES

COVID designer. Hire a specific designer to look at all aspects of your event from a COVID safety perspective. This will give you an additional frame of reference on the design and implementation of a safe event.

Capacity Per Regulations, which leads to Modified Layouts. You need to know the exact dimensions and capacity of your venue(s). Varying regulations will remove a certain percentage of your capacity. Use a diagramming software program to assist with your design.

Examples:

<https://www.socialtables.com/>

<https://www.smartdraw.com/>



Social Distancing. Limiting capacity overall or within a specific venue. Need to design alternate ways to deliver contact

Minimize Close Contact. When designing your event, it is important to not only look at primary venue spaces but also hallway and entranceways. Staggered times or one way to enter or exit will assist in lessening of contact in secondary spaces.

Hygiene. Establishing and following good hand hygiene practices assist in keeping your attendee, staff, and vendors healthy. These practices should be part of your pillars and in your overall plan.

Health Monitoring. Health monitoring apps are helpful to assist in with attendee, staff, and vendors' health monitoring steps.

<https://www.hcamag.com/us/specialization/hr-technology/covid-19-6-apps-to-monitor-employee-health/220371>

Maintain a Detailed Registration List. For COVID-19 tracing purposes, you must have a detailed overall, day of, and session registration and attendance lists.

Provide Alternate Options. Attendees may fall ill or will no longer be able to attend in person; you need to have alternate delivery of your event materials -- video, stream, etc.

Menu Only Options For Food Service. For the near future, food service at events will be menu ordering and take out style. You need to think about the extra implementation steps this will impose on your event.

Good Messaging – Signs and Digital. Overall, communication is KEY! The more you can communicate with your attendees, staff, and vendors, the better the overall experiences will be because everyone will understand the protocols and expectations.

Cleaning Protocol. Detailed cleaning protocols need to be established. These protocols need to consider all areas of your event. These protocols need to take place before, during, and after the event.

Good Ventilation. If you are hosting an indoor event, you need to work with the venue to establish the best ventilation possible during the event. You should include ventilation information in your safety and health information.

Physical Barriers/Guides. Guides and barriers assist in traffic and room flow. Guides and barriers will also assist with room capacity.



Staggered Times. In order to avoid overcrowding in secondary areas of your event, consider pre-assigned staggered arrival times.

Tracks. In order to avoid overcrowding in primary and secondary areas, consider assigning attendees to event tracks. Tracks assist in the overall flow, movement, and tracking.

Example:

Track A
Track B
Track C

EVENT TYPES

The following event types in new formats were showcased in the presentation.

Social Events. Events are being held in a smaller social distance setting.

- Weddings
- Bridal Showers
- Birthday Parties

Celebrations. Events can still be held in person if social distancing practices are followed.

- Racetrack graduations
- Drive-in wedding
- Drive-in concerts

Concerts. New concert formats.

- Platform seating
- Drive-In

Convention Speakers.

- Panelist with plexiglass barriers

RESOURCES

Abiding by guidelines provided by credible sources is critical for events. It's imperative that you are monitoring new health and safety measures for contingency operations during a pandemic. A list of resources is provided below:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html>

Center for Hospitality Resilience



- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/event-planners-and-attendees-faq.html>
- <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/personal-social-activities.html>

EVENT RESOURCES

- <https://www.pcma.org/coronavirus-business-events-professionals-need-to-know-faq/>
- <https://www.eventmanagerblog.com/events-coronavirus>
- <https://sthm.temple.edu/center-for-hospitality-resilience/past-events/>
- <https://whova.com/>
- <https://www.eventbrite.com/l/covid19-event-safety/>
- <https://www.cvent.com/en/blog/hospitality/safe-meetings-events>
- https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/CDPH%20Guidance%20for%20Mass%20Gatherings%20and%20Large%20Community%20Events_ADA%20Compliant.pdf
- <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/tripadvisor-launches-travel-safe-tools-making-it-easy-for-travelers-to-find-important-health-and-safety-information-about-hotels-and-restaurants-reopening-during-covid-19-301082502.html>

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