

FAMILY REUNION INSTITUTE'S

STICKY REUNION SITUATION

WHO'S INVITED TO THE TABLE

April 2021

The Situation:

Planning for a future reunion is getting sticky and personal. Some of our family members are getting the vaccine. Others are not. How can we plan for a safe reunion when we don't know who did or did not get vaccinated? Should we only invite those who have received it?

The Fix:



Doug Harris

One option for this situation is to hold a combo reunion, with a live reunion for those who have been vaccinated and a virtual for those who have not. The live reunion can be planned as usual, except for a slot of time (or times) where those who could not join the live reunion can join via Zoom. It requires someone with technical expertise to set up the Zoom camera remotely. The host hotel may be able to provide help and expertise in this area. (Keep in mind that most hotels charge a fee for IT set-up, however information on your options should be free.)

It can be tricky asking for proof of vaccination, though. Some folks will lie and some will be offended, but it must be dealt with. If there is a medical professional (EMT, nurse, doctor) within the family or a family friend, it would be a good idea to have them be the spokesperson/coordinator to confirm vaccination status, (or ask family members to bring their vaccination cards with them).

To set up your virtual reunion within the live reunion, check out the 15 Virtual Reunion Tips below.

15 VIRTUAL REUNION TIPS

1. Design an attractive virtual invitation, and include fun, games, and prizes.
 2. Notify family members in advance (and send a reminder the day before).
 3. Have a registration.
 4. Record session for those who cannot attend.
 5. Identify those who don't know how to join (mostly elders), then team them with young people.
 6. Have a clear agenda/process.
 7. Identify start & end time, and stick to it! Folks will want to stay on longer. Don't do it. It will exhaust everyone.
 8. State ground rules (e.g., each person has 2 minutes; timekeeper will intervene if you go too long).
 9. Have everyone introduce themselves.
 10. Choose host who can fill in gaps and move things along.
 11. Make it interesting.
 12. Don't try to do everything in one session.
 13. Any musical talents? Let them serenade the family.
 14. If you have family t-shirts or hats, send them ahead of time so everyone can wear them on the virtual meeting.
 15. Small family? Have a pizza party by sending a pizza to everyone's home at the same time.
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