

FAMILY REUNION INSTITUTE'S

STICKY REUNION SITUATION

UNINVITED COVID BEHAVIOR (and Guests)

June 2023

The Situation:

Our first in-person reunion since covid is coming up and the whole family was looking forward to it. However, during the final pre-reunion fundraiser, a family member attended even tho' they had just been diagnosed with covid. And they attended with their entire household. When questioned about this (after the event) they said they didn't feel bad, and they had already paid for the event and didn't want to miss it.

Now we have family members reconsidering attending the reunion, and several have even asked if they could get their money back. How can we mitigate the damage this one family has caused, and get folks back to feeling enthusiastic about the reunion again?

The Fix:



Doug Harris

You are between the proverbial rock and a hard place. Here are your choices:

1. THE ROCK: Offer to return the Covid family's money and let them know why their attendance is a problem. If they refuse the offer...

2. THE HARD PLACE: Postpone the reunion for a minimum of 3 to 4 months (the time it takes to know Covid has run its course)--or perhaps next year.

In either case, establish communications (i.e., email, social media, etc.) with family about the reunion that go out monthly or every other month to update and maintain interest. Caveat: If you know of seniors who don't use email or social media, ask for a volunteer to call them each time there's an update--they'll love it!

The Fix:



Sylvia Ford-George

3. Doug is gangster! I'd like to offer A FEW OTHER OPTIONS: We'll never know the number of times this scenario is playing out at workplaces, schools, supermarkets, restaurants and/or anyplace people congregate to have fun. So if it's happening everywhere else, it's bound to show-up at reunions and reunion-related events. Since we're unable to control how people behave, the goal here is to keep family members as safe as possible while realizing no loss of reunion funds. Depending on how soon your reunion is, it may be too late to postpone or change the date and, there are some reunion costs that are paid upfront and are not refundable. So consider the following:

- Check to see if the reunion location(s) have covid-related and/or refund policies, and if you're able to suspend the reunion without losing any money.

- It wasn't clear whether or not the family had communicated any precautionary policies or protocols such as directing members to stay home if they are or have been sick; making the wearing of masks optional; seating folks with a comfortable distance; having hand sanitizer easily accessible during events, etc. And, it wasn't clear if any family members were diagnosed with covid after the event. If no one contracted covid that may be a good enough argument to keep the date, but make sure to set protocols that will make folks feel comfortable at the reunion—if you haven't already done so.

- If family members did contract covid see THE ROCK (above), and at your next planning meeting, discuss a covid refund policy. Talk through a way to create an emergency fund to help cover the cost of any needed refunds. Set refund policies (i.e. refunding the covid family only so that they stay home). And finally, institute the new policy ASAP.
