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Safer at Home Phase Three Guidelines for Social Gatherings (Weddings)

Use of Face Coverings

**SIXTH AMENDED NUMBER SIXTY-SEVEN (2020)
AND
ORDER OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY SEVEN
PHASE THREE TIGHTENING OF CERTAIN TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS
(COVID-19)
November 13, 2020**

All patrons in the Commonwealth aged 5 and over shall when entering, exiting, traveling through, and spending time inside the settings listed below cover their mouth and nose with a face covering, as described and recommended by the CDC:

...

[Executive Order #67](#)

Businesses must strictly adhere to the physical distancing guidelines, enhanced cleaning and disinfection practices, and enhanced workplace safety practices provided in the "Guidelines for All Business Sectors" document. Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services regulated facilities must continue to follow requirements related to prohibiting sick employees in the workplace, strict handwashing practices, and procedures and practices to clean and sanitize surfaces.

All Public and Private In-Person Gatherings

All public and private in-person gatherings of more than **25** individuals are prohibited. **The presence of more than 25 individuals performing functions of their employment or assembled in an educational instructional setting is not a "gathering."** A "gathering" includes, but is not limited to, parties, celebrations, or other social events, whether they occur indoors or outdoors.

Best Practices

In addition to the best practices in the "Guidelines for All Business Sectors" document, social gatherings should consider the following best practices:

- Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19, or known exposure to a COVID-19 case in the prior 14 days, is permitted in the establishment.

- Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding physical distancing, gatherings, options for high-risk individuals, and staying home if sick.
- Social gatherings should be limited to 50% occupancy of the event space, if applicable, or 250 participants, whichever is less.
- Limit the occupancy of spaces to ensure that six feet of physical distance can be maintained between all organizers, staff, volunteers, and attendees who are not members of the same household.
- Reconfigure seating areas to allow six feet of physical distance between individuals by eliminating or closing select tables or seating areas, or by spreading them out to allow for adequate spacing.
- Ensure exits are configured to reduce the occurrence of bottlenecks at the conclusion of the event.
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of high contact areas and hard surfaces, including check out stations and payment pads, store entrance push and pull pads, door knobs and handles, dining tables and chairs, light switches, handrails, restrooms, guest lockers, floors, and equipment. Follow CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection and use an EPA-approved disinfectant to clean. For high contact areas (e.g., in both public and staff areas), routinely disinfect surfaces at least every 2 hours. Certain surfaces and objects in public spaces, such as point of sale keypads, should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.
- Social gatherings should not include close contact between gathering organizers, staff, and attendees not from the same household. Discontinue activities such as face-painting, temporary tattoo application, or audience participation with performers.
- Events that cannot restrict access to the general public should not take place.
- Where applicable, organizers must create a participant flow plan of modified queue lines to and within the mass gathering. Determine areas likely to become bottlenecks or pinch points and adjust participant flow accordingly.
- Where applicable, install visible markers for queue lines that separate people by six feet of physical distance. Provide physical guides to seating areas including floor decals, colored tape, or signs to indicate where attendees should not sit, stand, or congregate. Sample markers are available in the VDH Business Toolkit.
- Do not include side events as part of the gathering. These are events associated with but located outside of the formal gathering location, such as souvenir vending stations, gaming areas, petting zoos, and designated food truck areas.
- Designate a coordinator who will be responsible for identifying COVID-19 related issues and their impact on the gathering, including coordinating health preparedness for the event and emergency response planning.
- Develop an emergency and medical response plan for COVID-19. This plan should include information about how attendees should interface with the local healthcare system (who to speak with or call if they feel sick) and procedures for isolating sick attendees and reporting illnesses to event organizers. The response plan must also include a plan for organizers to notify the local health department and all participants if any exposure to COVID-19 occurs at the event.
- Develop a mitigation plan for COVID-19, to include how all requirements listed here will be met, and how guidelines and requirements will be enforced at the gathering.
- Consider limiting the duration of the gathering, especially for indoor gatherings and gatherings involving activities that would increase respiration (e.g., cheering, singing).

- Consider delaying gatherings where the target demographic is persons in high risk populations.
- Use technology solutions where possible to reduce person-to-person interaction, including contactless payment and ticket scanning.
- Install physical barriers, such as sneeze guards and partitions, at staffed kiosks.
- All bathrooms, hand-washing stations, and portable toilets should be placed in a convenient location for use by attendees but away from congregate areas and arranged in a configuration that maintains at least six feet of physical distance.
- Provide a place for staff and attendees to wash hands with soap and water, or provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Where applicable, provide best hygiene practices to employees on a regular basis, including washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and practicing respiratory etiquette protocols. A CDC training video is available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/videos.html>.
- Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use them until after cleaning and disinfection. Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
- Attendees should leave as quickly as possible following the event in order to limit contact and exposure to themselves and other attendees.
- Establish relationships with key community partners and stakeholders, such as the local health department, community leaders, hospitals, and law enforcement. Collaborate and coordinate with them on broader planning efforts for the gathering.
- Identify actions to take if the event needs to be postponed or cancelled.
- Private events may be held at venues provided they can comply with these guidelines.

Enforcement

Guidelines for All Business Sectors and the sector-specific guidelines appear [here](#). The Virginia Department of Health shall have authority to enforce section A of this Order. Any willful violation or refusal, failure, or neglect to comply with this Order, issued pursuant to § 32.1-13 of the *Code of Virginia*, is punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor pursuant to § 32.1-27 of the *Code of Virginia*. The State Health Commissioner may also seek injunctive relief in circuit court for violation of this Order, pursuant to § 32.1-27 of the *Code of Virginia*. In addition, any agency with regulatory authority over a business listed in section A may enforce this Order as to that business to the extent permitted by law.