

Checklist for Special Events & Gatherings

This checklist is one of several resources intended to support special events and gatherings (e.g., fundraisers, festivals, wedding/funeral receptions, etc.) to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by implementing public health measures. It is to be used in conjunction with other public health directives. Please review [Guidance for Professional Meeting and Event Facilities During COVID-19](#). Also, review [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) and [A Framework for Reopening our Province: Stage 3](#) for more information on Stage 3. Sector-specific guidelines can also be found [here](#).

In addition to this guidance, if you are serving food at your event or offering personal services (e.g. nail services, tattooing, etc.), please review and follow applicable requirements on [Hosting a Special Event](#) on the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) website.

All planners, organizers, and operators of events/gatherings, regardless of their purpose or size, have a responsibility to assess the risks associated with their event/gathering, and their ability to mitigate these risks. They are responsible for implementing measures to reduce the risk of infection among all those who participate in their activities (e.g., staff, volunteers, performers, attendees).

Visit wdgpublichealth.ca for ongoing updates and links to additional resources. WDGPH is unable to review individual policies and protocols. These are not legal documents.

General

Considerations	Details
<p>What is the level of risk associated with your event or gathering?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consider an outdoor setting whenever possible. The likelihood of transmission of COVID-19 is higher in an indoor setting than an outdoor setting where air flow is greater and there is more space for individuals to keep physically distanced. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider who will be attending your event. There is a higher risk for severe illness in people over the age of 60, and those with weakened immunity or underlying health conditions. There may also be an increased risk if attendees are coming from outside the local area. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider limiting the size of your event. Risk of transmission increases as the number of people attending event increases. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider offering online attendance options.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consider the length of time for your event. Risk of transmission increases the longer people are in contact with each other. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider the types of activities people will be engaged in. Risk of transmission may increase with certain activities such as singing, cheering, playing wind instruments, and sharing food or drinks. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider the importance of your event in light of the risks associated with spreading COVID-19 in the community.
<p>What is the gathering limit for your particular event or gathering?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The number of attendees permitted in the venue at any one time is limited to the number that can maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) from every other person in the venue, and in any event is not permitted to exceed, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 50 persons, if the venue is indoors <input type="checkbox"/> 100 persons, if the venue is outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> The indoor gathering limit of up to 50 persons can be applied on a per room basis, excluding staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Each 50-person dedicated space/room should be distinct or separated by an impermeable barrier <input type="checkbox"/> Trade shows or any events requiring guest to mingle are prohibited at this time <input type="checkbox"/> As a general rule, you should not exceed one person for every 4 square meters (43 square feet) of space <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor gatherings for the purposes of <u>religious services, rites or ceremonies, and wedding ceremonies or funeral services</u> are only limited to 30% of the venue's capacity (not to the Stage 3 gathering limit of 50 people) <input type="checkbox"/> Social gatherings associated with weddings, funerals or religious ceremonies (e.g., receptions) must comply with Stage 3 indoor and outdoor gathering limits <input type="checkbox"/> Drive-in and drive-through venues are not subject to gathering limits <input type="checkbox"/> People at their place of work, including performers and workers, do not count towards gathering limits <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor gathering limits apply to events that are fully or partially indoors. Indoor events and gatherings cannot be combined with an outdoor event or gathering to increase the applicable gathering size. <input type="checkbox"/> Events held in businesses, services, and public spaces are subject to indoor and outdoor gathering limits

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gathering limits also apply to organized public events and social gatherings held within private dwellings. <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses unable to reopen in Stage 3 or are experiencing challenges with restrictions can work with the government on a reopening plan at Ontario.ca/reopen.
<p>How can you safely partition a room into more than one space?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure height and width of the partition reflects the room dimensions and has the ability to effectively physically separate groups. <input type="checkbox"/> The height of the partition should be above the breathing zone of standing individuals to prevent the spread of droplets expired by guests <input type="checkbox"/> Install a partition that is made of a hard, non-porous surface that can be easily and routinely cleaned and disinfected between uses <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure there is no physical contact with the partition by patrons <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure partitions are secured appropriately and following fire and building code requirements to allow for evacuation in case of an emergency

Screening

Considerations	Details
<p>What is your screening process for staff/volunteers and attendees?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Before your event, communicate with staff/volunteers and attendees of your policies restricting people from the facility who screen positive on a COVID-19 screening tool (e.g., text, email, social media). <input type="checkbox"/> Direct staff/volunteers/attendees to self-assess using a COVID-19 screening tool (or the Ontario online self-assessment tool) prior to attending your event. <input type="checkbox"/> Place signs near entrances informing attendees not to enter venue if they have symptoms, travelled outside Canada in the past 14 days, or been in contact with someone with who is sick or confirmed COVID-19 without PPE.

Physical Distancing

Considerations	Details
<p>How will you ensure that the appropriate number of attendees are at your event at any given time?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have attendees register/RSVP for your event ahead of time and ask for proof of registration or have list of attendees prepared for the event <input type="checkbox"/> Designate a staff/volunteer to monitor number of attendees at event (e.g., entrance points) <input type="checkbox"/> Access to the facility should only be permitted to registered guests attending the event, security, workers and the event organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Limit the need for patrons to access a room through other rooms that are not part of the same event <input type="checkbox"/> Once a guest leaves the event, the facility should not allow entry of a new guest to that event <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure guests stay within their event space/room and do not mingle with guests from other event spaces/rooms
<p>How will you ensure that staff/volunteer and attendees at your event maintain 2 metres (6 feet) distance from each other at all times?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plan and modify the layout of your setting (including parking lots) to ensure enough space is provided for attendees, vendors, performers and staff/volunteers to maintain physical distancing. <input type="checkbox"/> Manage how and where people can travel through your venue by using indicators on the floor, signs, and/or blocking areas off. <input type="checkbox"/> Use barriers/structures to enclose the event space/venue and manage pedestrian traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Mark spaces on the floor where people can stand at ticket and concession stands with intervals of 2 metres (6 feet) for patrons to line up. If physical distance cannot be maintained, barriers such as plexiglass may be used. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage use of contactless payment methods such as purchasing tickets online or debit/credit card machines with tap function. <input type="checkbox"/> Design any seating arrangements or tables to permit 2 metres (6 feet) of distance between each household/patron: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assign seats to each attendee wherever possible <input type="checkbox"/> Close or restrict access to non-essential common areas (e.g., photo booths with props, communal lounges).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid activities that do not allow physical distancing (e.g., group photos, party games, receiving lines, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Discourage hugging, shaking hands, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure guests remain seated as much as possible <input type="checkbox"/> Use signs throughout the facility to remind people about physical distancing guidelines.
Additional considerations for live performances .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Singers and players of brass or wind instruments must be separated from any spectators by plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure performers maintain physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) except if it is necessary for the purposes of the performance or rehearsal.
Additional considerations for drive-in/drive-through movies or performances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attendees must remain in their vehicle designed to be closed to the elements except <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To purchase admission food or beverages <input type="checkbox"/> To access a washroom <input type="checkbox"/> For the purposes of health and safety <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that vehicles are positioned at least 2 metres (6 feet) from each other

Face Coverings (Section 22 Order)

Considerations	Details
How will you ensure that face coverings are worn by staff/volunteers and attendees when required?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Determine if staff/volunteers and attendees are required to wear face coverings for your event by reviewing the Section 22 Class Order <input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, ensure that staff and patrons are aware of the rules regarding the Section 22 Class Order before attending event. <input type="checkbox"/> Review the Frequently Asked Questions in regards to face coverings. <input type="checkbox"/> Patrons may remove their face covering while eating or drinking.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff or patrons may be exempt from wearing a face covering if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> They are under the age of 2 years; or a child under the age of 5 years either chronologically or developmentally and he or she refuses to wear a face covering and cannot be persuaded to do so by their caregiver <input type="checkbox"/> Wearing a face covering would inhibit their ability to breathe in any way <input type="checkbox"/> For any other medical reason, they cannot safely wear a face covering such as, but not limited to, respiratory disease, cognitive difficulties or difficulties in hearing or processing information <input type="checkbox"/> The obligation to provide reasonable accommodation under the Ontario Human Rights Code requires exemption from this requirement. <input type="checkbox"/> Train staff on the proper way to wear and care for face coverings. <input type="checkbox"/> Post signs at entrances and inside your venue to remind patrons about wearing face coverings. <input type="checkbox"/> Face coverings are not required in outdoor areas or areas that are not accessible to the public, including private events. <input type="checkbox"/> If the Section 22 Class Order for mandatory face coverings is not applicable to your event, you should still consider making face coverings mandatory especially if physical distancing will be difficult to maintain. <input type="checkbox"/> Face coverings do not replace the need for physical distancing, hand washing, and staying home when sick.
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Hand Hygiene & Respiratory Etiquette

Considerations	Details
<p>How will you ensure that staff/volunteers and attendees adhere to proper hand hygiene protocols and respiratory etiquette?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure staff and patrons are aware of proper handwashing and respiratory etiquette (e.g., sneezing or coughing into the crook of their elbow) and post signs throughout your facility <input type="checkbox"/> Have alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol) available at all entrances and exits as per the Section 22 Class Order <input type="checkbox"/> Have hand sanitizing stations available throughout your venue <input type="checkbox"/> Limit sharing of objects and tools by staff/volunteers and attendees (e.g., pens, guest books, hand-held microphones, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> When handling gifts, follow proper hand hygiene practices <input type="checkbox"/> Consider dedicating separate tasks for concession staff (e.g., separate the role of taking orders from those who fill the order) <input type="checkbox"/> Remind staff/volunteers to wash/sanitize their hands properly and regularly after: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Processing payments <input type="checkbox"/> Coughing, sneezing, or touching the face <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces <input type="checkbox"/> Upon starting a shift, returning from a break <input type="checkbox"/> Receiving deliveries <input type="checkbox"/> Any other time which may cause hands to become contaminated <input type="checkbox"/> Glove use among staff/volunteers is not a requirement. Good hand hygiene and proper hand washing is preferred. Incorrect glove use can lead to cross-contamination of surfaces. If staff choose to use gloves, they should practice proper handwashing before they put gloves on, and after they take gloves off. Gloves need to be changed frequently, as often as hands should be washed and upon becoming contaminated. Plastic, latex, and nitrile gloves are intended to be single-use only.

Cleaning & Disinfection

Considerations	Details
<p>How will you ensure that there is enhanced cleaning and disinfection of your venue?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent cleaning and disinfection of all areas of your venue should take place especially on commonly touched areas/surfaces using disinfectants approved by Health Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Follow guidance for public washrooms <input type="checkbox"/> All seating areas/tables should be cleaned and disinfected between uses <input type="checkbox"/> Consider closing any additional amenities such as vending machines if they cannot be adequately cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis. <input type="checkbox"/> Limit the use of, or close drinking fountains.
<p>How will you ensure there is proper ventilation throughout your facility?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure ventilation systems are operational and appropriate for the activities practiced within <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid stagnant air conditions. Bring in fresh air by maximizing the outdoor air ratio of the heating, venting and air conditioning (HVAC) system settings or by opening windows <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid recirculation of air as much as possible <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure HVAC systems are maintained as required, such as regular filter replacement <input type="checkbox"/> Limit the blowing of air across people and surfaces. The use of fans should be limited as they blow people's exhaled droplets to others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High ceiling fans (e.g., 25 feet up) are less of a concern than fans on low ceilings <input type="checkbox"/> Pedestal fans or high-powered fans on/near the floor should not be used

Food or Personal Service Vendors

Considerations	Details
<p>What do you need to consider if you are serving food or have vendors that are offering personal services to the public (including tattooing, body piercing, nail services, etc.)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review and follow requirements on Hosting a Special Event on WDGPH website <input type="checkbox"/> Organizers and vendors need to ensure the event meets the requirements of Ontario Food Premises Regulation 493/17 and the Ontario Personal Service Settings Regulation 136/17 as applicable. <input type="checkbox"/> Review and follow COVID-19 guidance for different settings as applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 Guidance for Restaurants and Other Food Premises <input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 Guidance for Mobile Food Vendors <input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 Guidance for Famers' and Fresh Food Markets <input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 Guidance for Food Caterers <input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 Guidance for Personal Service Settings
<p>If you are serving food at your event what else do you need to consider?</p> <p>Review COVID-19 Guidance for Food Caterers for additional guidance on food service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Self-serve buffets are prohibited. Staff/volunteers are permitted to serve patrons cafeteria style with the usual precautions in place including, but not limited to, physical distancing, one-way flow, barriers, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Attendees must be seated when eating or drinking. Dancing is not permitted. <input type="checkbox"/> Tables and chairs must be configured so that attendees seated at different tables are separated by a distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) or plexiglass or some other impermeable barrier (barrier needs to be high enough and positioned in such a way as to prevent respiratory droplets from passing between groups of people). <input type="checkbox"/> Provide separate tables for households/social circles. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider providing single use individually wrapped utensils, condiments, and straws.

Attendance Policies

Considerations	Details
<p>What attendance policies do you have to ensure the safety of your staff/patrons?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Remind staff/volunteers about the importance of reporting illness to their supervisor/manager. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If a staff/volunteer becomes sick while at work, they should go home immediately and self-isolate. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff/volunteers experiencing symptoms can call Telehealth, their health care provider, or go to an assessment centre for testing. <input type="checkbox"/> For more information on what to do if an employee becomes ill or tests positive for COVID-19, please review the COVID-19 Guidance for Reopening Businesses (WDGPH). <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a record of staff/volunteers and attendees at your event to support contact tracing, if needed. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider allowing patrons to cancel their tickets and be reimbursed/credited should they become ill. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure you have a plan in place should any staff/volunteer or attendee become sick during an event that includes immediate isolation of the individual.
<p>If you are responsible for a food establishment at the event (not take-out), what process do you have in place to support contact tracing, if needed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> As required under O. Reg 364, all indoor and outdoor food or drink establishments are required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Record the name and contact information (phone number or email, date and time of visit) of at least one member of every party of patrons that enters an indoor or outdoor dining area <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain the records for a period of at least one month, and <input type="checkbox"/> Only disclose the records if requested by a medical officer of health or a public health inspector under the Health Protection and Promotion Act for the purposes of contact tracing in the event that a COVID-19 positive case is linked to your establishment <input type="checkbox"/> Establishments can create patron logs or ask patrons to record their information <input type="checkbox"/> Post signage to inform patrons of this requirement

Additional Resources

[Guidance for Professional Meeting and Event Facilities During COVID-19](#) (Government of Ontario)

[A Framework for Reopening our Province – Stage 3](#)

[Reopening Ontario: Frequently asked questions about Stage 3](#)

[Risk Mitigation Tool for Gatherings & Events](#) (Government of Canada)

[COVID-19 Guidance for Public Washrooms](#) (WDGPH)

[COVID-19 Guidance for Theatres & Concerts](#) (WDGPH)

[Considerations for Events and Gatherings](#) (CDC)

[Signs & Posters](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Would a tent count as an indoor or outdoor venue?

It depends on whether the sides of the tent are up or down as this will determine the air flow for this space. Tent with the side walls down would be considered an indoor space and tent with walls up and a roof only would be considered an outdoor space.

Is dancing permitted?

Dancing by patrons/guests is not permitted in a venue where food/beverages are being provided. A person or group under contract with the establishment may dance, sing or perform music provided they adhere to the safety protocols outlined in the [Ontario Regulation 364/20](#) which include: 1) singers and players of brass or wind instruments must be separated from any spectators by [plexiglass or some other impermeable](#) barrier, and 2) performers must maintain physical distance of at least 2 metres (6 feet) except if it is necessary for the purposes of the performance or rehearsal.

Is a receiving line permitted?

It is recommended that you avoid activities that do not allow physical distancing including receiving lines.

How many people can be at a table?

Separate tables should be provided for each household or [social circle](#).

What types of food service is permitted?

Service of food should only be done by table service or by having staff/volunteers serve patrons directly via a walk-through service. **Self-serve buffets are prohibited.** Also, “family-style” service (patrons serving themselves) should not be permitted.

What are the requirements for washrooms?

Review the [COVID-19 Guidance for Public Washrooms](#)