Best Practices to Prevent COVID-19
Guidance for Mega Events

For the latest version of this guidance, please check http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/bestpractices/largeevents/.

Updates

2/16/22: Updated to reflect updates to the County Health Officer Order, effective 2/16/22 unless otherwise specified:

- Attendance thresholds for what constitutes a Mega Event have been increased from 5,000 to 10,000 attendees for outdoor Mega Events and from 500 to 1,000 attendees for indoor Mega Events.
- Attendees at Outdoor Mega Events are no longer required to wear face masks at Outdoor Mega Events, except when visiting indoor portions of the venue.

Given the ongoing community transmission of COVID-19 and the presence of new and emerging variants, a layered approach to prevention that includes masking indoors, full vaccination with a booster dose, if eligible, and good ventilation is essential to slowing the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

Per published reports, factors that increase the risk of infection, including transmission to people more than 6 feet away, include:

- Enclosed spaces with inadequate ventilation or air handling that allow for build-up of exhaled respiratory fluids, especially very fine droplets and aerosol particles, in the air space.
- Increased exhalation of respiratory fluids that can occur when an infectious person is engaged in physical exertion or raises their voice (e.g., exercising, shouting, singing).
- Prolonged exposure to these conditions.

Below is a summary of requirements and best practices for businesses that host Mega Events to enhance safety for their workers, customers, and communities, and to lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission within their establishments. Mega Events include indoor events with more than 1,000 attendees and outdoor events with more than 10,000 attendees. Mega Events must follow the requirements of the LA County Health Officer Order. Examples of Mega Events include, but are not limited to: conventions, conferences, expos, concerts, shows, sporting events, live entertainment, fairs, festivals, parades, theme parks, amusement parks, water parks, marathons or endurance races and car shows. Operators that host smaller events should review and follow DPH Best Practice Guidance to Prevent COVID-19 in Smaller Events and Cultural Institutions.

In addition to the provisions of the Health Officer Order, please note:

- Mega Events must also follow State Guidance for Mega Events. Please note that the directives in the LA County Health Officer Order (outlined in this guidance below) must be followed when they are more stringent than the State Guidance.
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- Indoor events with fewer than 1,000 attendees and outdoor events with 5,000-9,999 people held in the city of Los Angeles must comply with the LA City Vaccination Verification Ordinance as described on this page and at the SafePass LA website and FAQ. Establishments in LA that are already verifying vaccination status in compliance with the LA County Health Officer Order (e.g., Mega Events) do not need to follow the Ordinance and should continue to follow the requirements of the Health Officer Order.

- Requirements for employees are different than those for attendees. Employers must follow the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards (Cal/OSHA ETS) and the LA County Health Officer Order. Please note that the directives in the LA County Health Officer Order must be followed when they are more stringent than the Cal/OSHA ETS.

Please be sure to read and follow the general guidance for businesses and employers. The specific best practices below are intended to supplement the general guidance.

Best Practices and Requirements to Enhance Safety at Higher-Risk Settings

✓ Higher Risk Settings: Mega Events are higher risk for COVID-19 transmission because the attendees are spending long periods of time physically close to large numbers of people they don’t usually interact with, thereby increasing the risk that respiratory particles will be transmitted between attendees and participants if someone present is infected. Places that serve food and beverages indoors are also higher risk, because persons are indoors for an extended period of time and may remove their masks when they eat or drink. It is strongly recommended that event operators serve food and beverages only in designated dining areas.

✓ To enhance safety and lower the risk of transmission at Mega Events, the LA County Health Officer Order requires:

  ✓ Indoor Mega Events:
    ▪ All attendees must show proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 or a negative viral test result prior to entry. Children under age 2 are exempt. If providing a negative test result, it must be either:
      ▪ A PCR test taken within 2 days of the event; or
      ▪ An antigen test taken within 1 day of the event.
    ▪ Operators must cross-check proof of full vaccination or negative COVID-19 viral test result against photo identification for attendees who are 18 years or older.

  ✓ Outdoor Mega Events:
    ▪ All attendees ages 5 and over must show proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 or a negative viral test result prior to entry.
    ▪ If providing a negative test result, attendees must provide either:
      ▪ A PCR test taken within 2 days of the event; or
      ▪ An antigen test taken within 1 day of the event.
    ▪ Operators must cross-check proof of full vaccination or negative COVID-19 viral test result against photo identification for attendees who are 18 years or older.

✓ See the DPH Business Compliance Toolkit for helpful implementation resources and the Mega Event FAQ for answers to frequently asked questions about the Health Officer Order.
Follow mask rules for employees and attendees

✓ Attendees: All persons attending indoor Mega Events are required to wear masks, regardless of vaccination status, the event, except while actively eating and drinking in designated areas. Attendees must also wear masks at outdoor events when they enter indoor areas, such as restrooms, restaurants, retail shops, concourses, or concession stands, even if the event is not large enough to be considered a Mega Event.

  ✓ Masks must be worn except when customers are actively eating and drinking. When actively eating and drinking indoors or at outdoor Mega Events, customers must be seated or positioned at a table, counter, or other stationary location. "Actively eating or drinking" refers to the limited time during which the mask can be briefly removed to eat or drink, after which it must be immediately put back on. The customer must wear a mask whenever they are not actively eating or drinking, such as when they are waiting to be served, between courses or drinks, or while seated after finishing the food or drink.

  ✓ Operators are responsible for messaging, signage, and compliance with mask requirements. Operators are to make masks available to all attendees.

✓ Provide masks at large crowded outdoor events for those who are not fully vaccinated and arrive without them. Employees*: All employees, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear masks when working indoors, or in shared vehicles. Masks need not be worn indoors if the employee is alone in a room or actively eating or drinking. Public Health strongly recommends that all employees who are eating or drinking indoors be spaced at least 6 feet from other persons.

  ✓ Employees who work in an indoor setting where they are in close contact with other employees or customers must be provided with and required to wear a well-fitting medical grade mask, surgical mask, or higher-level respirator, such as an N95 face filtering respirator or KN95, at all times while indoors at the worksite or facility.

  ✓ Upon request, employers are required to provide employees who are not fully vaccinated with a correct-size N95 respirator for voluntary use, along with basic instructions on how to use the N95 respirator. Respirators must be replaced if they get damaged, deformed, dirty, or difficult to breathe through. For more information about free and low-cost PPE for businesses and organizations visit: http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/FreeAndLowCostPPE.pdf.

  ✓ Consider requiring staff to also wear eye protection in addition to a respirator if they are not fully vaccinated and have frequent close contact with others, in particular, if they work in the food and beverage service areas where customers are actively eating or drinking.

  ✓ Performers or presenters must wear face masks indoors except when performing a task that cannot feasibly be done while wearing a mask. For ongoing productions, test performers and any crew who are not fully vaccinated and working closely with others at least once before the production and then two times per week for the duration of the production. More guidance for professional performers is available here.

  ✓ See the Los Angeles County Health Officer Order page and the Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards page for more information about mask requirements. Please note that
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the directives in the LA County Health Officer Order must be followed when they are more stringent than the Cal/OSHA temporary standards.

* Some independent contractors are considered as employees under the State Labor Code. For more details, check the California Department of Industrial Relations’ [Independent contractor versus employee](http://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc/contractor/contractorversusemployee.htm) webpage.

Summary of mask and testing/vaccination rules that apply to large events

Risk varies based on the size of an event and whether it occurs indoors or outdoors. Outdoor events and those with lower numbers of attendees pose less of a risk of transmission compared to large, indoor events. Below is a table that describes the different rules that apply based on these two event characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Location</th>
<th>Number of attendees</th>
<th>Masking rules</th>
<th>Proof of full vaccination (or negative test)* required for patrons?</th>
<th>Performer requirements?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| INDOOR         | Under 1,000         | Required for all – fully vaccinated and not fully vaccinated. Employees in close contact with others must wear a medical grade mask, surgical mask or higher-level respirator (N95, KN95) when indoors | Required if venue is located in the City of LA**; otherwise, strongly recommended | • Performers may unmask to perform indoors if certain criteria are met.***  
• They may also unmask outdoors.  
• Ideally, performers should be at least 12 feet from audience members. |
|                | 1,000 or more (Mega Event) | Required for all – fully vaccinated and not fully vaccinated. Employees in close contact with others must wear a medical grade mask, surgical mask or higher-level respirator | Required |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTDOOR</th>
<th>(N95, KN95) when indoors</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5,000</td>
<td>Recommended but not required</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000-9,999</td>
<td>Recommended but not required</td>
<td>Required if venue is located in the City of LA**; otherwise, strongly recommended</td>
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<tr>
<td>10,000 or more (Mega Event)</td>
<td>Recommended but not required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A person is fully vaccinated for COVID-19: two weeks or more after they have received their second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer or Moderna), two weeks or more after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson/Janssen), or two weeks after receipt of another vaccine authorized by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 testing must be conducted on a sample taken within 1 day for an antigen test and within 2 days for a PCR test prior to entry into an event. See the Business Compliance Toolkit for helpful resources on implementing a vaccination requirement for your business.

** Indoor events with fewer than 1,000 attendees must comply with the LA City [Vaccination Verification Ordinance](#) as described on this page and at the SafePass LA website and FAQ. If you are not sure whether your facility is located in the city of Los Angeles visit [https://appcenter.gis.lacounty.gov/districtlocator/](https://appcenter.gis.lacounty.gov/districtlocator/) and type in the address where your event will be held.

*** Performers may unmask during performances only if they are tested regularly. Testing cadence must be as follows:

- Performers that are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations (e.g., fully vaccinated and not yet eligible for a booster, or fully vaccinated and have received a booster dose, if eligible) must be tested once weekly.
- Performers that are fully vaccinated and eligible for a booster dose but have not received one yet must be tested twice weekly.

For more guidance on professional performers see [Special Considerations for Professional Performers](#).
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Screen attendees

✓ Screen guests, staff, performers, and crew for symptoms before they attend the event and instruct them not to attend if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if they are under isolation or quarantine orders.

✓ As described above, attendees at Mega Events must show proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 or a pre-entry (diagnostic) test result prior to entry. See detailed requirements above and visit the Business Compliance Toolkit for helpful resources on implementing a vaccination requirement for your business.

Reduce crowding, especially indoors

✓ Establish procedures to prevent crowding among persons waiting to enter or exit an event.

✓ If there will be a presentation or performance, maintain at least a 12-foot distance from performers and audience members unless there is verification that everyone is fully vaccinated. Place any unvaccinated performers that sing, yell, or play wind and brass instruments at least 12 feet away from others.

✓ Follow DPH Food and Beverage Service recommendations if you serve refreshments at your event. Dining outdoors is best. If indoors, it is strongly recommended that you have a separate area in your venue for drinking and dining to minimize mixing of people who are wearing masks continuously and those who are removing their masks while they are actively eating or drinking. Diners must be sitting or standing in a stationary place or in their ticketed seat while eating or drinking.

Support handwashing

✓ Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizer at entry and outside communal bathrooms with signage promoting use.

✓ Encourage frequent handwashing.

✓ Posters in multiple languages that remind people to wash or sanitize their hands and show how to wash their hands are available in the signage section of the Best Practices for Businesses and Employers webpage.

Ventilate

✓ If your event is held indoors, make sure your building’s HVAC system is in good, working order.

✓ Maximize ventilation. Options include installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building’s air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in all working areas.

✓ When weather and working conditions allow, increase fresh outdoor air by opening windows and doors. Consider using fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows – position window fans to blow air outward, not inward.

1 Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after being exposed to the virus and may include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. This list does not include all possible symptoms of COVID-19. Some people with COVID-19 never get symptoms. Visit ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare to learn more about what to do if you are sick.
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✓ Decrease occupancy in areas where outdoor ventilation cannot be increased. Consider use of carbon dioxide monitors to monitor the effectiveness of your ventilation in more densely occupied indoor spaces.

✓ If your event is held indoors and has performers that will generate aerosols (such as singers or musicians playing wind or brass instruments) take the following steps:
  ✓ Assess the direction of the air flow in the room to determine where the air is exiting the room. In buildings with HVAC systems, this will be the air-return vents; if doors or windows are open, check the direction that the air is flowing.
  ✓ During performances (including rehearsals), position aerosol-generating performers closer to the locations where the air is exiting the room.

✓ See State [Interim guidance for Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments](https://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus).

**Communicate**

✓ Assign staff to remind attendees that they must wear a face mask at all times when indoors at large events, except when they are actively eating or drinking, as specified above. Event operators are responsible for messaging, signage and compliance with masking requirements.

✓ Use advanced registration as much as possible for your event so you know how many people will attend. Advanced registration can also help you to convey your COVID-19 safety plans to guests before they attend.

✓ Use your online platforms to communicate your COVID-19 safety policies to the public, including the requirement that all attendees must wear a face mask while indoors.

✓ Make sure all guests are aware of and follow the Los Angeles County Department of Health [Travel Advisory](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus).