

Guidance for Providing Food and Beverages for On-site Consumption at Indoor and Outdoor Gatherings

JUNE 12, 2020 | STAY SAFE MN PHASE III

Gatherings taking place in indoor and outdoor venues such as event centers, faith-based buildings, community centers, rental halls, or at similar outdoor spaces and that are providing food and beverages for on-site consumption must assign responsibility to develop and implement a COVID-19 Business Preparedness Plan. Examples of events include wedding and funeral receptions, parties, and social events after a service.

[COVID-19 Preparedness Plan](#)

www.dli.mn.gov/sites/default/files/doc/COVID_19_business_plan_template.docx

The Plan addresses the following components and is to be used in addition to other applicable requirements and guidance. The responsible party can be the venue administrator or caterer. The responsible party must ensure the Plan is evaluated, monitored, executed, and updated under the supervision of a designated Plan Administrator. The Plan must be posted at the event in readily accessible locations that will allow for the Plan to be readily reviewed by all participants, volunteers, and workers, as required.

Visit [Stay Safe MN \(https://staysafe.mn.gov/\)](https://staysafe.mn.gov/) to find information about how to develop your COVID-19 Business Preparedness Plan. **This guidance is intended to be used in combination with other guidance provided at Stay Safe MN.**

Key requirements

- Have adopted and implemented a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

GUIDANCE FOR PROVIDING FOOD AND BEVERAGES FOR ON-SITE CONSUMPTION AT INDOOR AND OUTDOOR GATHERINGS

- Ensure a minimum of 6 feet of distance between participants not in the same family unit throughout the event.
- Limit indoor and outdoor occupant capacity to no more than 25% up to 250 persons.
- If seated, limit table to 4 persons, or 6 if part of one family unit.
- Require workers to wear masks at all times and strongly encourage attendees to wear masks when not eating or drinking.

Food and beverages

- Food must be prepared and served in accordance with applicable rules and regulations guiding the specific event. Follow the Minnesota Food Code, as applicable.
- Self-service food and beverage areas are allowed as long as the COVID-19 Plan includes protections such as oversight of the self-service area to ensure social distancing is maintained, hands are being sanitized, and participants or customers are strongly encouraged to wear face masks in the self-service area. Best practice would be to prepackage food ahead of time as much as possible. Please refer to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture guidance [Customers Best Practices For Reusable Bags & Food Takeout Containers \(www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/inline-files/COVID-19%20Reusable%20Bags-Takeout%20Containers%20BPs%20Mar%202020.pdf\)](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/inline-files/COVID-19%20Reusable%20Bags-Takeout%20Containers%20BPs%20Mar%202020.pdf).

Protocols for managing occupancy

- Indoor seating at up to 25% occupancy, with a maximum of 250 individuals is allowed. A maximum of 250 individuals is allowed at outdoor seating. All customers must be seated, including at bars.
- Post signage at the venue entrance outlining established protocols.
- Event planner must limit number of participants, customers and clients as necessary to allow for the required social distancing and not exceed allowed percentage of occupancy where required.
 - Provide controlled flow of participants as much as possible, including upon start and at end of the event.
 - Number of participants or customers at any one time is limited to the number for whom physical distancing of 6 feet can be maintained.
 - If seated, limit table to 4 persons, or 6 if part of one family unit.
 - Bands are allowed but must maintain social distancing even during performance.
 - Activities that generally involve close contact between persons, such as dancing, should be modified to safely increase physical distance between persons from different households.

Protocols to lower the risk of exposure to COVID-19

- Encourage participants, customers, and clients who are considered “high risk” to consider not attending the event.
- Have participants, customers, and clients respond to the screening survey questions (see item 4, below) upon arrival and check-in, and verify that they have read the screening-survey and can respond “no” to all questions.
 - Advise participants, customers, and clients of the added COVID-19 precautions that will be taken prior to arrival at the site. Use websites, social media, pre-appointment phone calls and confirmations, and other outlets to educate participants, customers, and clients on the steps being taken for their protection and the protection of workers.
 - Email or text a screening survey on the day of the event or reservation and/or post screening questions at the entrance.
 - Have participants, customers, and clients respond to the screening survey questions upon arrival and check-in, and verify that they have read the screening-survey and can respond “no” to all questions.
 - Decline to allow participation in event if there is any suspicion that they are sick or symptomatic, and advise them to leave the facility.
- Face coverings are strongly encouraged whenever one is gathering or in a setting with others from outside their household. Face coverings help to keep the person wearing the covering from infecting others. Evidence suggests that the virus causing COVID-19 can be spread by respiratory droplets when a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, sings, speaks, or breathes, even if the infected person is not showing symptoms.
 - [MDH: Facemasks and Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/guidance.html#ppe) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/guidance.html#ppe)
 - [CDC: Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html) (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)
- Event attendees and employees/volunteers should not attend if they or someone in their household are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
 - See the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)’s [Visitor and Employee Health Screening Checklist](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf).
 - The checklist is also available in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish at [MDH: Businesses and Employers: COVID-19](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html).

Social Distancing while in uncontrolled venues

- Practice social distancing (stay at least 6 feet from people from other households).
- “Household” means all the people living in the same home or residence, including a shared rental unit or other similar living space.
- If it is not possible to maintain social distancing throughout the event or activity, then you should only participate in that activity with members of your household.
- Do not carpool to events or venues with people other than those in your household. Similarly, only use equipment that is sanitized between uses and maintain social distancing when around people from outside of your household.
- Avoid congregating in common areas like entryways, restrooms, or hallways.
- See also the guidance on how to [Stay Safe MN \(https://staysafe.mn.gov/\)](https://staysafe.mn.gov/).

Summary

We all have a role to play in protecting ourselves and fellow Minnesotans from COVID-19. By following currently applicable [Executive Orders from Governor Walz \(https://mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp\)](https://mn.gov/governor/news/executiveorders.jsp) and these guidelines, we can enjoy activities and events while providing for public health, slowing the spread of COVID-19, and decreasing the potential for added strain on local communities and health care systems in Minnesota.



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Contact health.communications@state.mn.us to request an alternate format.

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