

# Guidance for Safe Celebrations and Events

Latest updates: A bullet was added with some recommendations for event photography.

This controlling guidance is for event planners, venue managers and owners, catering companies, and others who may be involved in the planning and coordination of celebrations and events. These events may take place in indoor or outdoor venues, including but not limited to, rental space in event centers, fellowship halls and gathering spaces in faith-based buildings, community centers, halls, or outdoor event spaces. Examples of celebrations and events covered by this guidance include but are not limited to catered parties, wedding receptions, funeral receptions, and other social gatherings related to ceremonies.

For the ceremonies themselves, see [Guidance for Gatherings: Faith-based Communities, Places of Worship, and Ceremonies \(www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/guidefaith.pdf\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/guidefaith.pdf). Please note that if a social gathering follows a ceremony, the capacity requirements below apply to that gathering.

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## Requirements

- ✓ Preparedness Plan: All businesses, organizations, and venues where gatherings take place are required to develop and implement an event specific COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in accordance with the guidance below, and other applicable guidance on the Stay Safe Minnesota website ([staysafe.mn.gov](http://staysafe.mn.gov)). This plan must be displayed prominently, so any persons on the premises can easily see this document. Vendors servicing one event may collectively agree to one comprehensive plan, if they so choose.
- ✓ Masks and face coverings: As of July 25, 2020, people in Minnesota are required to wear a face covering in all businesses and public indoor spaces, per Executive Order 20-81. This includes indoor event venues and indoor spaces of combined indoor/outdoor venues. Additionally, the Executive Order requires workers to wear a face covering when working exclusively outdoors in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained. The Executive Order includes exemptions for people who are unable to wear or tolerate a face covering due to medical or mental health conditions or other reasons. There are also situations in which a face covering may be temporarily removed, such as when eating or drinking, if social distancing is maintained between members of different parties and the face covering is put back on when not eating or drinking. Businesses and venues may choose to have more protective requirements than those in the Executive Order.

- ✓ For more information, see [Masks and face coverings](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks) ([www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#masks)).

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## Managing occupancy

- Events in private homes are subject to the social gathering limits in Executive Order 20-74 of 10 indoors and 25 outdoors. Unless the home regularly functions as an event space or venue, events larger than that in a private home are not allowed, even with a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan completed by the homeowner or event planner.
- In event spaces and venues, limit indoor and outdoor occupant capacity to no more than 25% up to 250 persons, so long as social distancing can be maintained. The only exception to this is in the instance of an establishment that operates as a restaurant in the ordinary course of business, then they may adhere to restaurant capacity.
- Limit table to 4 persons, or 6 if part of one household (“household” means a group of individuals who share the same living unit).
- Provide controlled flow of participants as much as possible, including upon start and at end of the event.
- Bands are allowed but must maintain social distancing, even during performance. For more information, see [Music Activities and Performances During COVID-19](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/musicguide.pdf) ([www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/musicguide.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/musicguide.pdf)).
- Modify activities that generally involve close contact between persons, such as dancing, to safely increase physical distance between persons from different households.
- Limit the number of speakers and make arrangements so that they maintain distance from others. Whenever possible, provide individual microphones for multiple speakers. If a microphone must be shared, consider cleaning between speakers or leaving it untouched on a stand.
- Event photography: Standing close together is a high-risk activity, even when it is a shorter period of time. Consider taking individual photos and using editing software to combine them into a group photo. See additional recommendations in the [Industry Guidance for Safely Reopening Faith-based Communities, Places of Worship, Weddings, and Funerals](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf) ([www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safefait.pdf)).

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## Food and beverages

- Food must be prepared and served in accordance with applicable rules and regulations guiding the specific event. Licensed food establishments must follow the [Minnesota Food Code](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/food/rules/foodcode/index.html) ([www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/food/rules/foodcode/index.html](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/food/rules/foodcode/index.html)).
- Control lines at concession areas to ensure social distancing of at least 6 feet between members of different households. This can be done with floor markings or other indicators.
  - Curbside concessions may be available for pickup upon entry to the venue or exit from the premises to minimize crowding at concession stands.

- Use remote payment systems when possible.
- Self-service food and beverage areas are allowed as long as the Preparedness Plan includes protections such as oversight of the self-service area to ensure that social distancing is maintained, hands are being sanitized, and participants wear face masks in the self-service area. The responsible party can be the venue administrator or caterer.
- Best practice would be to serve prepackaged food as much as possible.
- Face coverings may be temporarily removed to enable eating and/or drinking when attendees are seated and apart from members of other households but must be put back on when not eating or drinking.

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## Restrooms

- Mark areas where people may need to line up to ensure social distancing.
- Provide an ample supply of hand sanitizer, or soap and water.
- Clean facilities regularly following the cleaning and disinfection protocol.
- Ensure your maximum number of guests allowed in the restroom will meet current capacity/size guidelines for social distancing.
- Turn off electric hand dryers and rely on touchless paper towel dispensers.

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## Summary

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

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## Resources

- [CDC: Considerations for Events and Gatherings \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html)
- [CDC: Event Planning and COVID-19: Questions and Answers \(www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/event-planners-and-attendees-faq.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/event-planners-and-attendees-faq.html)



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