

# **Black Hawk County Event Guidelines 2021**

05/21/2021



The intent of this document is to provide guidelines for how to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19 during events and large gatherings. This document is meant to supplement guidance developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) and other professional agencies. The guidance applies primarily to unvaccinated individuals, and the Black Hawk County Health Department encourages all residents age 12 and older to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html> for more information.

## **Event Attendees**

### **What steps can I take to attend events and gatherings safely this summer?**

- If you are sick stay home, and do not attend events or gatherings. You should stay home for 10 days from the start of your symptoms, or 10 days from your positive COVID-19 test if you tested positive and are not having symptoms.
- You should also stay home if in the past 10 days you have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. Close contact is defined as being within 6ft for 15 or more consecutive minutes without a face covering, or living in the same household as someone who tested positive for COVID-19. If you have been fully vaccinated you do not need to quarantine after an exposure.
- The most effective way to prevent becoming ill with COVID-19 is to be vaccinated, and the health department recommends everyone age 12 and older who is eligible, to be fully vaccinated before attending events.
- If you are not fully vaccinated there are additional steps you can take to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. The more steps you take, the safer you will be at events and gatherings.
  - Wear a face covering, especially when it may be difficult to maintain a distance of at least 6ft from other people.
  - Practice social distancing of at least 6ft between you and others outside your immediate household or group.
  - Limit contact with others outside your household or group as much as possible.
  - Outdoor gatherings and activities are safer than indoor gatherings and activities, and you should avoid crowded indoor spaces.
  - Arrive at the event early or at off-peak times to avoid crowds.
  - Practice regular hand hygiene with soap and water, or with hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- If you are traveling for an event or gathering you should follow the CDC travel guidance for COVID-19, and check for travel guidelines for your destination and method of travel, such as airline guidelines.
  - Get tested 1-3 days before traveling, and if you test positive do not travel.
  - Wear a mask and practice social distancing while traveling.

- Get tested 3-5 days after travel and stay home for 7 days, or 10 days if you aren't tested. If you test positive isolate away from others for 10 days.

## **Event Planners**

### **Considerations for Planning Events**

Below is a list of risk factors to consider when planning events. Events with more risk factors have a greater potential for the spread of COVID-19 and additional control measures may be required to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- Number of COVID-19 cases/level of COVID-19 transmission in the community
  - When case numbers or level of transmission is high, there is additional risk to large gatherings. Visit <https://www.bhccpublichealth.org/> for current information on case numbers and level of transmission.
- Travel
  - There is higher risk when people travel long distances for the event, as people may have exposures to COVID-19 during travel, and you are gathering people from different areas where COVID-19 may be circulating at different levels.
  - Travelers may be accustomed to different masking and social distancing regulations depending on where they traveled from. Posting signage in highly visible locations on the social distancing and mask expectations to educate the attendees on what is expected behavior at your event.
- Setting
  - Indoor events are higher risk than outdoor events. Additional precautions may be needed when gathering indoors, and in areas with poor ventilation.
- Length
  - The longer the event and the longer the interactions between people at the event the higher the risk.
- Number of people at the event and crowding
  - The more people that are at an event the more likely it is for an exposure to occur. The event should be large enough for attendees from different households to be able to practice social distancing of at least 6ft between groups.
- Behavior of attendees during the event
  - There is increased risk when people interact with others outside their household, and not maintaining social distancing, or not wearing masks can increase this risk.

### **What can I do to protect my staff and attendees?**

- Encourage staff and attendees to be vaccinated for COVID-19 before attending the event.
- The CDC does not recommend testing all attendees and staff before allowing them to enter.

- Advise attendees and vendors prior to the event and post signage at the event that directs staff and attendees to not enter the event if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days, or if they have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 10 days.
- Be flexible with staff time off to support isolation and quarantine after an exposure or for staff who are ill.
- Consider developing a flexible refund policy for attendees who are unable to attend due to COVID-19 to support isolation and quarantine after an exposure or for attendees who are ill.
- Follow social distancing guidelines to allow 6ft distance between individuals and groups. In instances where distancing cannot be maintained face coverings should be worn. Event planners may also consider other methods to maintain social distancing such as:
  - Adjusting the size of event spaces based on the ability of attendees to social distance
  - Limiting the number of attendees in areas at one time
  - Modify layouts to create additional space or discourage congregating
    - Examples to encourage social distancing include blocking off seats or modifying room layouts.
- The Black Hawk County Health Department recommends that face coverings be worn by staff and attendees, particularly in situations when social distancing of 6ft cannot be maintained.
- Have ready access to hand washing, or hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available.
- Post signs and broadcast regular messages about precautions to reduce the spread of COVID-19.
- Consider screening staff at the beginning of each shift for COVID-19 symptoms (i.e. cough, shortness of breath, fever).
- Develop a schedule and conduct regular cleaning particularly of shared paces and frequently touched surfaces. Cleaning should be conducted between uses as much as possible, and daily at a minimum. Staff should use cleaning products correctly and wear appropriate personal protective equipment during use.
- Prioritize outdoor activities as much as possible, and for indoor or enclosed activities ensure ventilation systems are operating properly, and attempt to increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible.
  - Allow for seating options that are outside or have proper ventilation with outdoor air
- Limit in-person attendance or seating capacity to allow for social distancing, and/or use larger spaces to maximize social distancing.
- Provide guides, markings, and signs to mark social distancing to help ensure people remain at least 6 feet apart in lines and during activities, and to discourage crowding.
- Establish pedestrian traffic flow plans to reduce bottlenecks, and allow for space to social distance.

- Consider using physical barriers in areas where it is difficult to social distance, such as at cash registers.
- Stagger use of shared spaces to allow for cleaning and disinfection between uses as much as possible.
- Consider a parking and transportation plan that staggers arrival times to limit lines and attendees congregating
- Follow food safety guidelines.
- Provide adequate supplies to minimize the sharing of high-touch items as much as possible.

### **What should I do if a staff member is ill?**

- Staff ill with COVID-19 symptoms should be excluded from work according to the guidelines below.
  - Staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 that test positive by PCR **OR** are not tested should self-isolate at home until:
    - At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms started **AND**
    - They have no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) **AND**
    - Their other symptoms have improved
  - Staff with severe, advanced immunosuppression should isolate until:
    - 20 days post symptom onset or date of test **AND**
    - They have no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) **AND**
    - Their other symptoms have improved
  - Staff who test positive for COVID-19 by PCR and did not have any symptoms should self-isolate at home until:
    - At least 10 days have passed since the day they were tested **AND**
    - They continue to have no symptoms since the day they were tested
  - Staff with symptoms of COVID-19 who test negative by PCR **AND** are not a close contact to a person who tested positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home until 24 hours after their symptoms resolve
  - Staff with symptoms of COVID-19 who test negative by PCR **AND** are a close contact to a person who tested positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home until 10 days after their last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19
  - In persons who develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within 3 months after the date of initial symptom onset (if an alternative etiology cannot be identified by a provider) they should be clinically evaluated as appropriate and re-testing should be considered if there is not an alternative diagnosis.
    - The symptomatic person should be isolated again until 10 days after symptom onset, with at least 1 day without fever and other symptoms have improved.

- If a person develops new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19 **more** than 3 months after the date of initial symptom onset (if an alternative cause cannot be identified by a provider) they should be treated as any other newly positive individual.
  - At least 10 days have passed since their symptoms started **AND**
  - They have no fever for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) **AND**
  - Their other symptoms have improved
- Previously diagnosed staff members with COVID-19 that has since recovered and remains asymptomatic:
  - Retesting is **NOT** recommended within three months after the date of symptom onset (or date of test if asymptomatic persons) for the initial COVID-19 infection
- People are considered infectious up to 2 days before the day their symptoms started, or two days before the day they were tested if they were not having any symptoms. When a staff member is ill it is important to look at schedules to see what days the staff member worked while they were infectious. Any days the staff member worked should be reviewed to determine if any other staff members or customers would have been exposed. An exposure is considered to be spending 15 consecutive minutes or more within 6ft of an individual who tests PCR positive for COVID-19. Staff who are exposed should be excluded from work and self-isolate at home for 10 days following their last exposure to the positive staff member.
- Staff and attendees that were exposed to the ill staff member should be notified to self-isolate at home for 10 days following the exposure. Notification should be kept general and should not include any personal or identifying information about the ill staff member. Additional notification beyond those exposed is not necessary, however businesses can conduct additional notification at their discretion provided it does not include any personal or identifying information. For close contacts that are identified as someone who was within 6 feet of a case for 15 or more minutes, and both the case and contact were wearing a mask, the contact should still be notified of the potential exposure. The contact should monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19, but the person does not need to quarantine at home for the 10 days after the exposure. Those who are fully vaccinated do not need to quarantine after an exposure.
- It is not recommended that staff be required to provide a doctor's note in order to return to work. It is also not recommended that staff be required to test negative before returning to work.

**What should I do if a staff member has been close contact to someone with COVID-19?**

- Staff members who have been identified as a close contact to COVID-19 should be excluded from work and self-isolate at home for 10 days following their last exposure.

- Staff members who are fully vaccinated do not need to self-isolate after being identified as a close contact.
- Close contact is defined as:
  - Living in the same household as an infectious person (irrespective of whether face coverings are used in the household)
  - Being less than 6 feet away from an infectious person for more than 15 consecutive minutes
    - NOTE: In non-healthcare and non-household settings, close contacts are persons less than 6 feet away from an infectious person for more than 15 consecutive minutes AND the case, the close contact, or both were not wearing a face covering during the interaction
    - Acceptable face coverings are described in CDC guidance available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>
- Quarantine may end after day 10 without testing if the person has not developed any symptoms following exposure, continues to monitor for symptoms for the full 14 days after exposure, and wears a face covering when outside of the home for the full 14 days after exposure.
- Quarantine may end after day 7 if the person has tested negative by a PCR test collected at least 5 days after last exposure to the positive case, has not developed symptoms following exposure, continues to monitor for symptoms for the full 14 days after exposure, and wears a face covering when outside of the home for the full 14 days after exposure. The negative test must have been received prior to ending quarantine, for example if test results are still pending on day 8 the person must continue to be in quarantine until they receive their test results.
- Persons can discontinue quarantine at these time points only if the following criteria are also met:
  - Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure
  - If they have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact their local public health authority or healthcare provider
  - Wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash their hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- If at any time after ending quarantine, the person develops symptoms of COVID-19 they must start isolating at home immediately, and contact their health care provider about being tested.
- Fully vaccinated staff members are not required to quarantine after an exposure, but should continue to monitor for symptoms, and isolate if they become symptomatic.
- Previously diagnosed staff members with COVID-19 that has since recovered and remains asymptomatic:

- Quarantine is **NOT** recommended in the event of close contact with an infected person during the three month time period, as long as the previously diagnosed person remains asymptomatic (i.e., has not developed symptoms of a new illness)
- Notification of a staff member that has been exposed does not need to be made. As long as the staff member has not tested positive by PCR or does not start showing symptoms within 2 days of their last day of work, then there would be not risk to other staff members or customers. If a staff member starts showing symptoms or tests positive by PCR then they should be treated as a case, and any days the staff member worked while infectious should be reviewed for potential exposures.