

ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR MASS GATHERINGS
3/12/2020

ACPHD offers this guidance to help people planning or attending large gatherings to make informed decisions. We have seen evidence of community transmission and increasing cases of COVID-19 across the Bay Area, and we have weighed the potential benefits to our community's health alongside the potential for disruptive impacts on event organizers and attendees.

The goals of this guidance are: (1) to protect people attending and working at the event and the local community from COVID-19 infection; and (2) to reduce community transmission, decrease the introduction of COVID-19 into new communities, and slow and decrease the spread of the virus.

These recommendations have been updated to align with guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) on March 12, 2020, and replace our local guidance issued on March 10, 2020. Effective immediately and through the end of March 2020.

In alignment with CDPH guidance, we recommend that:

- All non-essential gatherings of more than 250 people should be cancelled or postponed.
- Smaller gatherings should be cancelled or postponed if held in spaces that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person.
- Gatherings for people at high risk of complications from COVID-19 should be limited to a maximum of 10 people.
- A gathering is defined as any event or convening that brings together people in a single room or single space at the same time, such as an auditorium, stadium, arena, large conference room, meeting hall, or any other indoor or outdoor space.
- This guidance does not apply to activities such as attendance at regular school classes, work, or essential services; nor to essential public transport, airplane travel, or stores and malls.
- The full CDPH policy can be found [here](#).

People at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should stay home and away from crowded social gatherings as much as possible.

- People at higher risk include those over age 60, and those with underlying health conditions, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, heart disease, chronic lung diseases, or severely weakened immune systems.

For small and essential gatherings that cannot be avoided, we recommend that event organizers consider the following:

- **Size:** Smaller is better. The risk of getting the virus increases as the size of the crowd increases.
- **Duration:** Shorter is better. The risk of getting the virus increases as the duration of the event increases; for example, a 2-hour meeting is lower risk than a 2-day conference.
- **Density:** Less crowded is better. Risk of getting the virus increases in settings where people are within an arm's length of one another.
- **Geographic reach:** Mixing of people across regions, states, and countries increases the risk of viral spread.

If you cannot avoid bringing groups of people together:

- Urge anyone who is sick to not attend.

- Encourage those who are at higher risk for serious illness to not attend.
- Find ways to give each person six feet of space and reduce close contact as much as possible.
- Provide alternative options for attending the event via phone, video, or web applications.
- Encourage and facilitate attendees to follow good health hygiene practices, such as frequent handwashing.
- Clean surfaces with standard cleaner.
- Ensure good ventilation.
- Maintain a registration list of participants and staff to assist local public health officials in contact tracing, in the event a COVID-19 case is later identified as having attended the event.
- Use event messaging and communications to provide COVID-19 updates and promote everyday preventive health messages to your participants and staff.

In deciding whether to hold or attend an event, everyone should stay informed:

- <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>
- <https://www.acphd.org>