

## **Phase Two Guidance** **Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19): Guidance for Entertainment Venues**

During Phase Two, the public and businesses are required to adopt behaviors and rigorous safeguards to reduce risk for all. **This guidance is intended for entertainment venues (including venues for musical, theatrical, and other artistic performances) which will be allowed to open in Phase Two with strong safeguards and physical distancing.** This guidance does not apply to multipurpose event spaces (e.g., spaces that host business meetings, conferences, conventions, and other private events such as weddings). This guidance also does not apply to sporting events. The following measures must be implemented to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission amongst staff, performers, guests, and the community. For additional information, visit [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov).

Please note that any individual experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, or who is required to isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19 diagnosis or exposure<sup>1</sup>, must not work in or visit an entertainment venue due to the risk of exposing others. Symptoms of COVID-19 may include: fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.

### **Phase Two General Information for Entertainment and Event Venues**

- Starting May 1, 2021, entertainment venues may re-open to the public.
- Entertainment venues may re-open and hold events only to the extent that social distancing among workers, performers and groups of guests can be maintained.
- Virtual events continue to be encouraged.
- Outdoor events are safer than indoor events and are encouraged, weather permitting.
- Attendance is limited to no more than 25% capacity or up to 500 persons indoor or outdoor, whichever is fewer. This number shall include venue staff (including employees, contractors, and volunteers), performers, and stage crew.
- Events larger than 500 persons will require approval of submitted plans to the Government of the District of Columbia through the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA). Plans may be submitted via their website: [coronavirus.dc.gov/waiver](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/waiver). Outdoor events are more likely to be approved than indoor.
- The following distance must be maintained between the stage and the audience:
  - A minimum of 12 feet must be maintained from the audience if performers are masked.
  - A minimum of 18 feet must be maintained from the audience if performers are unmasked.
- The number of performers on a stage may not exceed 10 persons at any time. Performers must be at least 6 feet away from all other performers.
- Traditional choir/chorale configurations pose an unacceptably high risk of COVID-19 transmission and are prohibited at this time.
- Contact between performers is prohibited (for theatrical performances, this includes no kissing or stage combat).
- Contact between performers and the audience is prohibited. Performers must remain on the stage while they are performing.
- Audience members may be in groups of up to 10 people, preferably from the same household or if fully vaccinated.
- There must be six feet between guests or groups of guests, in all directions.
- All guests must be seated and remain in their seats throughout the performance.
- All seats must be pre-assigned/reserved prior to an event. Seating assignment charts/guest

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, including information about quarantine and testing exemptions, please see *Guidance for Quarantine after COVID-19 Exposure* at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance)

information must be saved for 30 days and must be made available to DC Health within 24 hours upon request.

- Performers coming from out of the District-Maryland-Virginia area must follow the *Guidance for Travel* found at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance).

### Staff, Guests, and Performers Should Practice Everyday Prevention Measures

- **Get the COVID-19 vaccine. Find out where are** [coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/vaccine).
- **Stay at home if you are sick** or were recently exposed to someone with COVID-19<sup>2</sup>.
- **Practice social distancing.** Keep at least 6 feet of distance between you and other people who are not in your household. This includes in staff and performer areas such as break rooms and backstage areas.
- All persons **must** wear a face covering or facemask while at the venue.
  - Masks are most effective if they fit snugly to the face and have 2-3 layers of tightly woven fabric.
  - Masks are not required for children younger than age 2.
  - For more information about mask wearing see Masks and Cloth Face Coverings for the General Public at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance).
- If the venue offers food service, face coverings or masks may be removed **for the limited purpose and limited time period necessary** to consume food or beverages. No food and beverages shall be consumed in any area that does not provide sufficient space to maintain social distancing between groups.
- Interacting with more people in any setting raises your risk, so it is important to follow social distancing and mask/cloth face covering recommendations.
- Avoid shaking hands and physical contact with people who don't live with you. Instead wave and verbally greet people.
- Perform frequent hand hygiene (with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer).
  - Key times to perform hand hygiene include:
    - When arriving at the venue,
    - Before eating or drinking
    - Before and after preparing or distributing food,
    - After using the toilet,
    - Before and after putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings,
    - Before and after work shifts and work breaks,
    - After handling trash,
    - After handling another person's belongings, and
    - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

### Employer Considerations to Encourage Staff, Guest, and Performer Safety

- Employers are responsible for providing a safe workplace.
- Employers must conduct a thorough assessment of the workplace to identify potential workplace hazards that could increase risks for COVID-19 transmission
- Employers must communicate COVID-19 policies to staff, guests, and performers (e.g., on venue website, social media sites, prominent signage at entrances and throughout the venue, message screens and public announcements before and during the event).
- Utilize virtual training for staff wherever feasible.
- Signage must be posted at the entrance(s) stating that nobody with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted to enter the venue and that individuals must wear a mask or face covering.

<sup>2</sup> For more information, including information about quarantine and testing exemptions, please see *Guidance for Quarantine after COVID-19 Exposure* at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance)

- Display signage throughout the venue reinforcing social distancing and hand hygiene policies.
- Employers must provide adequate supplies to allow for frequent hand hygiene (e.g., soap and water and alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol) for use by staff, guest, and performers. Ensure that hand sanitizer is readily accessible throughout the facility (e.g., at entrances, lobbies, ticket booths, in auditoriums, staff workstations, break areas, backstage areas, practice areas).
- Employers must provide staff with cloth face coverings and appropriate personal protective equipment (e.g., masks, gloves) per their job responsibilities. Gloves must be worn as indicated per routine job responsibilities.
- Consider providing disposable facemasks to guests and performers if they need one, supplies permitting.
- Staff who handle food must wear disposable gloves to minimize bare hand contact with any food products
- Employers must stagger staff shifts, start times, and break times as much as possible. Limit number of staff in a breakroom at any given time to ensure social distancing.
- Implement leave policies that are flexible and non-punitive, and that allow sick employees to stay home. Leave policies are recommended to account for the following:
  - Employees who report COVID-19 symptoms
  - Employees who were tested for COVID-19 due to recent exposure, travel, or symptoms, and test results are pending
  - Employees who tested positive for COVID-19
  - Employees who are a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19
  - Employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members
- Encourage and support staff to get the COVID-19 vaccine by providing leave options for staff to get the vaccine and if they experience common side effects.
- Keep abreast of current law, which has amended both the DC Family and Medical Leave Act and the DC Sick and Safe Leave Law and created whole new categories of leave, like Declared Emergency Leave.
- Learn about and inform your employees about COVID-related leave provided through new federal law, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and all applicable District law relating to sick leave.
- Educate staff about COVID-19. Refer to [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov) for more information.
- **For information regarding operation of on-site gift shops or restaurants**, please see *Guidance for Non-Essential Retail Establishments* and *Guidance for Restaurants* at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance)
- **For additional information specific to events and gatherings**, see the CDC website at [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html)

### **Avoid Close Contact and Reduce Touchpoints**

- Minimize face-to-face passing. Have separate entrances and exits for the venue to allow one-way flow of guests.
- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors and sidewalks and signage, to ensure that individuals remain at least 6 feet apart in queuing areas, both inside and outside the venue.
- Protective barriers (plexiglass or similar) must be installed in all areas where there is staff/guest interaction that cannot occur with 6 feet of social distancing, such as ticket booths and cashiers.
- Implement virtual and contactless payments as much as possible (e.g., ticket sales, food payments) and minimize cash transactions. Options include online payments and pay-by-phone.
- Consider options for guests to place food orders ahead of time such as mobile ordering to minimize time spent in line and physical contact with staff.

- Use visual cues to help prevent congregating in lobby areas.
- Reconfigure or mark seating arrangements in venues to delineate physically distant seating.
- Do not allow people to congregate. Actively monitor areas prone to congregation (e.g., common areas, lobbies, restrooms, concession areas, staff breakrooms, backstage areas).
- Avoid activities that encourage guests to cluster.
- Arrange staff workstations, break rooms, and common areas to ensure at least 6 feet between individuals.
- Avoid staff using shared phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment.
- Eliminate shared food service items (e.g., condiment dispensers, straw, utensil or napkin dispensers, salt and pepper shakers) in favor of single use items or touchless dispensers. Shared fountain drink stations must also be eliminated.
- Any items handed out to guests should be single use items whenever possible.

### Screening and Monitoring for Symptoms

- Businesses must perform screening (e.g., symptom questionnaires) of staff daily, prior to entering the business, over the phone or in person.
  - For **Screening Tool Guidance**, visit [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance)
- Facilities must place signage at the business entrance to inform staff and guests of screening procedures.
- Staff who report symptoms or testing positive for COVID-19 must not enter the business.
- If a staff member or guest develops any symptoms of COVID-19 while at the venue, there must be a plan in place for that individual to immediately isolate, notify their supervisor, and leave the premises.
- Business must maintain a daily record of individuals who have visited the business for at least 30 days to assist with contact tracing. Information collected must include name, date and time of visit, phone number, and email (if available). This information must be provided within 24 hours if requested by DC Health if a case of COVID-19 occurs at your establishment, in order to assist with contact tracing.

### Cleaning and Disinfection

- Facilities must develop a comprehensive plan for increased routine cleaning (and disinfection as needed) of common spaces and frequently-touched surfaces within the venue (e.g., countertops, sink handles, workstations, computers, cash registers, handrails, door handles, light switches).
  - Ensure that any other group that uses the facility follows this cleaning protocol.
- Cleaning procedures throughout the venue must be developed in advance of opening and shared with staff. Management must properly train staff on cleaning procedures and monitor cleaning schedules to ensure compliance.
- If the venue has been closed, it must be thoroughly cleaned prior to re-opening.
- Event or performance spaces must be thoroughly cleaned between events or performances.
- Frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned at least daily.
- Clean any shared objects frequently, based on level of use.
- Restrooms must be cleaned and disinfected at least every 4 hours, with special attention to high-touch surfaces (such as faucets, toilets, stall doors, door handles, countertops, diaper changing tables, and light switches). Restrooms should be appropriately marked and monitored to ensure social distancing guidelines are followed (please note neighboring stalls may be used). Ensure an adequate supply of soap and paper towels is present at all times.
- If portable toilets are used at an event, provide handwashing stations close to the portable toilets. Ensure the handwashing stations are also kept well-stocked with supplies for the duration of the event.
- All food contact surfaces must be cleaned and sanitized at least once every 2 hours.
- Use disposable gloves when handling trash bags. Once done handling trash, dispose of gloves in a lined trash can. Do not reuse gloves. Perform hand hygiene after removing gloves.

- Follow manufacturer’s instructions for cleaning sensitive electronic equipment (e.g., ticket machines, assisted listening devices).
- **For comprehensive guidance on cleaning and disinfection**, please see the following DC Health Guidances at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance):
  - *Guidance on Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19*
  - *Guidance on Routine Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities*

### Building Considerations

- Consider making the following improvements to improve building ventilation ([cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)):
  - Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example by opening windows and doors. Use fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows.
    - Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms).
  - Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and provide acceptable indoor air quality for the current occupancy level for each space.
  - Decrease occupancy of spaces with poor ventilation.
  - Improve central air filtration to the highest level compatible with the filter rack, and seal edges of the filter to limit bypass.
  - Check filters to ensure they are within service life and appropriately installed.
  - Turn off any demand-controlled ventilation (DCV) controls that reduce air supply based on occupancy or temperature during occupied hours.
  - Consider portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) fan/filtration systems to help enhance air cleaning (especially in higher risk areas).
  - Keep systems running longer hours, 24/7 if possible, to enhance air exchanges in the building space.
  - Consult with a specialist to see what works for your building.
- If the building was closed for an extended period of time, ensure all water systems are safe to use. For more information, see CDC’s Guidance for Reopening Buildings after Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html).

### Establish a Plan for COVID-19 Exposure

- Establish a plan in the event a staff member or guest is diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Identify a point of contact at the establishment that a staff member or guest can notify if they test positive for COVID-19 and choose to disclose this information.
- If a staff member chooses to report to the establishment that they are positive for COVID-19, the establishment must have a notification process to share the following with other staff:
  - Education about COVID-19, including the signs and symptoms of COVID-19
  - Referral to the Guidance for Contacts of a Person Confirmed to have COVID-19, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov).
  - Information on options for COVID-19 testing in the District of Columbia, available at [coronavirus.dc.gov/testing](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/testing).
- Refer to the guidance “*First Steps for Non-Healthcare Employers when Employees Test Positive for COVID-19*” at [coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance](https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance).
  - A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of a person who tested positive for COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period, during that person’s infectious period.
  - The infectious period starts two days before symptom onset and typically ends 10 days after symptom onset (or test date for people who do not have symptoms).
- Establishments must notify DC Health when:



- A staff member who frequently interacts with guests notifies the establishment they **tested positive for COVID-19** (not before results come back)
- AND**
- the person was in the building or at the event **during their infectious period.**
  - Notify DC Health by submitting an online form on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting Requirements website [dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements](https://dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements):
    - Submit a **Non-Healthcare Facility COVID-19 Consult Form.**
  - An investigator from DC Health will follow-up within 48 hours to all appropriately submitted notifications. Please note this time may increase as cases of COVID-19 increase in the District.

The guidelines above will continue to be updated as the outbreak evolves. Please visit [coronavirus.dc.gov](https://coronavirus.dc.gov) regularly for the most current information.