



## Senior Center and Community Services Guidance    March 14, 2020

The Department of Public Health recognizes the unique risk COVID-19 can pose to the elderly and infirm. Likewise, the Department also recognizes the many essential needs your facility and organization provides.

Under the order of the Riverside County Public Health Officer, due to the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 **no gathering at or above 250 individuals may take place in Riverside County until April 30.** However, gatherings below this number may still pose some risk of the disease to the community and your client population. This guidance is designed to allow you to self-assess your event and determine if, possibly with mitigations, it can still take place.

### General guidance

- ***Non-essential events should not be held.*** What constitutes essential is based on your clients' needs and the social need for the event in the community you serve. If you have good contact information for your clients, telephone checks or counseling may be a way of maintaining a connection to your clients and giving them a social outlet without exposing them to additional risk.
- Event planners should attempt, where possible, to precisely estimate attendance volumes and know who is likely to be present. If you are a senior center, or your event is likely to serve individuals who are senior citizens or the medically infirm, state and local guidance is that you should **allow no more than 10 individuals.**
- Do not allow sick staff to work until their symptoms are gone for 24 hours. Similarly, staff who have traveled to countries with CDC Level 3 travel advisories ( see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html> ) must complete 14 days of home quarantine before returning to work.

### Event attributes of concern

These attributes may make an event less safe to hold.

- **Population.** The larger the event, the greater the probability that an ill individual may be present and may be present longer before they are detected.
- **Uncontrolled guest list.** If a case is detected, the Department of Public Health will need the guest list to deal with the case and potential contacts. Without a guest list, especially in a general "open to the public" event, the Department of Public Health may not be able to intercept a source case or find contacts to them. Likewise, you may not know if you have substantial out-of-region attendance without it.



- **Indoor air spaces.** Outdoor air can dilute a communicable agent and reduce transmission. Conversely, indoor air spaces may concentrate them and increase the probability of an individual being infected.

## Recommended mitigations

Although these steps may make an event more safe to hold, they may not be able to fully mitigate all concerns.

- Provide sanitizer or handwashing stations at entrances and exits, and post signage encouraging attendees to use them.
- Frequently clean high-touch surfaces. Regular cleansers are sufficient.
- Post signage at entrances saying ill people should not enter. Consider using a telephone line for home services if you offer them.
- Consider restricting visitors by either allowing only your usual clientele or not allowing attendance by individuals who would not typically qualify for your services.
- If your operation has an indoor service counter or area where services are typically provided, do not allow more individuals inside or in line if a six foot space between clients, or between a client and your staff, cannot be maintained. This number will depend on the size of the room.
- If your event charges an admission fee, consider modification of and publicizing your refund policy to allow day-of refunds for individuals who are ill, so that they can remain home without bearing the cost of admission as well.
- In your event messaging to attendees, stress the need to stay home if ill for any reason. Encourage the use of sanitizer or handwashing stations at the event, and to promptly report anyone who is sick.
- Select your venue so that individuals can maintain a minimum of 6 feet between them, even in outdoor spaces. If you set out chairs, enforce this distance by placing chairs already separated. If you use fixed seating areas, consider marking seats with the proper spacing apart already so that it is easier for guests. If you cannot maintain social distance, your operations may not be safe.

## If someone is sick at the event

- If the individual does not appear severely ill, maintain your distance and suggest they return home. If your event has a refund policy, encourage them to call for a refund. If the individual refuses to leave the event, notify local law enforcement and ensure the dispatcher knows the individual is ill.
- If the individual does appear severely ill, separate them from other guests and call 911. Ensure the dispatcher knows the individual is ill. In addition, please notify the Department of Public Health at 951 358 5107. Please note that individuals, including staff, who have contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 may be required to complete quarantine under health officer order.