



Coronavirus Disease 2019

COVID-19

Novel Coronavirus – Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Statewide Community Mitigation and Large Event Guidance

Summary:

The Department of Public Health and Environment is recommending all mass gatherings and community events scheduled for over 250 people be cancelled or postponed. This includes social, spiritual and recreational activities including, but not limited to, community, civic, public, leisure, faith-based, or sporting events; parades; concerts; festivals; conventions; fundraisers; and similar activities. Community venues where people are in transit, such as airports and malls, are excluded. Guidance for schools can be found here.

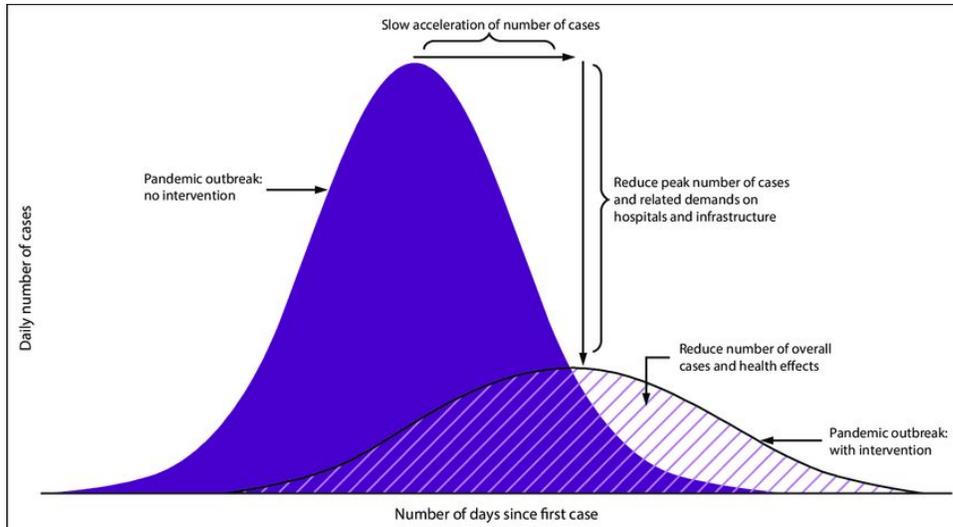
See Appendix A for additional information about COVID-19

Control Measures of Spread

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. This guidance is being issued immediately to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 through Colorado communities.

CDC recommends that cancelling large gatherings can have a significant impact in reducing community-wide spread and the number of people who become ill. While public events are an important part of our social fabric in Colorado, they also introduce additional risk of spreading COVID-19. Cancelling events at this scale will cause broad social and economic disruption and will have lasting impacts on our economy and fiscal condition as a state. Nonetheless, it is the most appropriate way to slow the spread of the virus and ensure that our healthcare system is able to manage the stress and demands that are expected in the coming months.

The goal of community mitigation is to reduce the number of cases and lower the health effects. This helps reduce the demands on our medical system, so that those most affected can get the care they need. Graph 1 illustrates this intent. We want to move from the purple “wave” to the striped “wave”.



GUIDANCE FOR GATHERINGS OF LESS THAN 250 PEOPLE

If you are the organizer of an event for fewer than 250 people, use the following community risk levels as your guide.

Community Risk Levels

- Low Risk Phase
 - a. **Little to no known COVID-19 illness** in the community.
 - b. No evidence of person to person transmission within the community.
- Moderate Risk Phase
 - a. **Known COVID-19 illness in the community**
 - b. Limited evidence of person to person transmission within the community.
- High Risk Phase
 - a. **Known COVID-19 illness in the community and**
 - b. **Evidence of widespread person to person transmission** within the community / State of Colorado.

Low Risk Phase of Community Risk Exposure to COVID-19

If there is no evidence that person to person transmission is occurring within the community. The following points are guidance for your decision making process.

1. Identify a communication plan for sharing info with staff and attendees.
2. Increasing space and reducing contact between attendees are important steps for reducing any potential exposure to the virus. For example, modify seating arrangements to increase space between attendees, find a larger venue, stagger event schedules, and discourage attendees from crowding around bathrooms and food stations.
3. Signage - Use signage to notify attendees, vendors and staff, warning them to *not* enter if they are sick or not feeling well, have recently traveled outside of the US, or may have come into contact with someone with the COVID19. Post directions for attendees to leave the event if they have any respiratory symptoms. Here is an example of signage that you can adapt at your facility.
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/COVID-19-CoronavirusAnnouncementforVisitors.pdf> and
<https://paltc.org/sites/default/files/Attention%20Visitors%20All%20facilities.pdf>
4. Plan ways to care for attendees and staff who get sick during an event and to separate them from attendees and staff who are well.
5. Have supplies on hand for workers and attendees, such as soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, tissues, trash baskets, and disposable facemasks. If available, disposable face masks should be provided to someone who appears to be sick.
6. Explore alternative site design and set-up, such as:
 - c. Prop doors open to avoid touching (May need to consider additional security.)
 - d. Increase ventilation within the facility
 - e. Increase the number of hygiene stations, including hand sanitizer stations
7. Connect with your local public health department to review or develop your plan for your event or gathering.
8. Consider sick leave policies for staff. Plan for alternative coverage of job duties as needed.
9. Identify ways to reach staff and attendees with information about the event and risks of attendance (for example, web-based broadcasts, email, television, or radio).
10. Evaluate your reimbursement policies.

Communicate with event staff prior to the event.

Staff should take the following precautions to prevent possible transmission before, during, and after the event:

- Wash hands often with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cough and sneeze into the elbow or into a tissue. Throw away the tissue immediately after use and wash hands.
- Practice social distancing. Stay six or more feet away from people.

- Frequently clean and disinfect surfaces in your home and workplaces.
- Encourage staff to remain home if they are sick with cough, sneezing and/or fever. Inform them about sick leave policies and/or the ability to work from home, if possible.
- Inform them of your plans for communicating with attendees.
- Provide them with information on any venue and process changes that will help mitigate the spread of illness.
- Training on how to address obviously ill attendees, such as respectfully asking them to leave the facility or wear a mask.
- Setting up barriers between staff and attendees. For example, placing tables or other barriers between staff and attendees to keep a six-foot distance. If that isn't possible, staff should stand to the side of traffic flow.
- Encourage staff to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects often (doorknobs, countertops, etc.).

Communicate with attendees prior to the event.

Provide a brief description of the current status of COVID-19 in your area.

www.colorado.gov/cdphe/2019-novel-coronavirus.

Encourage those in higher-risk groups not to attend your event. This includes people over 65, those who are immune-compromised, and/or those with underlying chronic medical conditions.

Require that attendees stay home if sick with cough, sneezing and/or fever.

For those who still plan to attend, recommend that they can take the following precautions to prevent possible transmission before, during, and after the event:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
- Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
- Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
- Engage in social distancing, whenever possible maintain a distance of 6 feet between people.

Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers in your communications. The information you share should be easy to understand and accessible to all attendees. Learn more about reaching people of diverse languages and cultures by visiting: www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Audience/index.html

Moderate Risk Phase of Community Risk Exposure to COVID-19

There is known COVID-19 illness in the community and limited evidence that person to person transmission is occurring within the community.

1. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment suggests that you cancel your event if there is evidence of person to person transmission within your or a neighboring community leading to a situation where it is unclear who might be contagious.
2. Consider alternative attendance such as web-based, televised only, remote attendance options. If you determine to hold the event, be aware that the health officer may determine the risk is too high and may order the event canceled.

Considerations for canceling/rescheduling the event

1. What does your Local Health Officer recommend?
2. Do you have enough staff to operate your event?
 - a. Have you addressed staffing fears?
 - b. Is a high volume of your staff out sick?
 - c. Do you have access to surge staffing or have you developed surge staffing plans?
3. Can you provide for the safety of all attendees?
 - a. Do you have hygiene stations for handwashing?
 - b. Do you have appropriate space for allowing 6 feet distancing between attendees?
 - c. Do you have processes in place to exclude sick attendees?
4. Is the event indoors or outdoors?

Outdoor venues have better air circulation and permit more distance between people than indoor environments.
5. Are attendees predominantly from vulnerable groups?

Over 60 years old, those who are immune-compromised, those with underlying chronic health conditions.
6. Can you use increased medical surveillance of attendees?
 - a. Non-invasive monitoring
 - b. Trained medical staff onsite
 - c. Separate room for evaluating potentially ill persons

7. Are there alternatives to holding the event?
 - a. Teleconference
 - b. Online
 - c. other

If you cancel the event:

- Communicate to your staff and attendees that the event is canceled and why.
- Consider how you might reimburse attendees.

If the event is permitted to continue, consider the following steps:

1. Develop a communication plan for sharing information with staff and attendees.
2. Connect with your local public health department to review or develop your plan for your event or gathering.
3. Consider flexible attendance and sick leave policies for staff. Plan for alternative coverage of job duties as needed. (Alert the local health department if there are large increases in absenteeism due to symptoms like those accompanying COVID-19.)
4. Identify ways to reach staff and attendees with information about the event and risks of attendance (for example, web-based broadcasts, email, television, or radio).
5. Communicate with event staff prior to the event.
6. Staff should take the following precautions to prevent possible transmission before, during, and after the event:
 - a. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - b. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
 - c. To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
 - d. Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
 - e. Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
 - f. Engage in social distancing, whenever possible maintain a distance of 6 feet between people.

Identify and address potential language, cultural, and disability barriers in your communications. The information you share should be easy to understand and

accessible to all attendees. Learn more about reaching people of diverse languages and cultures by visiting: www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Audience/index.html

High Risk Phase of Community Risk Exposure to COVID-19

There is known COVID-19 illness in the community and widespread person-to-person transmission of the disease within Colorado.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment requires that all events that involve the potential for disease transmission and that cannot accommodate alternative attendance be canceled or postponed.

Communicate to your staff and attendees that the event is canceled and why.

Consider how you might reimburse attendees.

Consider alternatives to holding your event.

1. Web-based attendance
2. Televised only (no audience)
3. Other remote attendance options
4. Reschedule the event

It is hard to cancel events that have been planned for a long time. However, social distancing measures, such as canceling or postponing mass gatherings, reduce opportunities for person-to-person virus transmission and will help slow the spread of the disease as well as save lives. We appreciate your help in this effort.

Additional Recommendations:

- Opt for virtual engagement whenever possible, including conference calls, video chats, and other technological tools that allow for interaction.
- Smaller is better. The risk of getting the virus increases as the size of the crowd increases.
- Shorter is better. The risk of getting the virus increases as the duration of the event increases (e.g., a 2-hour meeting is lower risk than a 2-day conference).
- Risk of getting the virus increases in crowded settings. If the venue or setting doesn't enable people to keep social distance (more than arm's length of one another, or 6 feet), the risk of spreading the virus increases. People should avoid crowded places where large numbers of people are within arm's length of one another.
- Geographic reach increases risk (mixing of people across regions, states, and countries).

- Cancel smaller community events (fewer than 100 people) where people at increased risk of severe illness (older adults and those with chronic medical conditions) will be congregating.

For those events that still plan to occur as planned, the following recommendations are required:

- Ensure that handwashing stations and hand sanitizers are available to meet event participant demand.
- Monitor staff and do not allow any staff with respiratory illness to work at the event.
- Ensure that [CDC COVID-19 prevention messaging](#) is made available in event messaging platforms.
- Inform the following groups that they may want to consider not attending the event:
 - People who traveled to one of the areas with widespread sustained transmission within the past 14 days.
 - People who have symptoms of respiratory illness.
 - People at high risk of complications from COVID-19 illness, including adults over the age of 60 and those with underlying medical conditions.

Appendix A

What is Novel Coronavirus?

The disease called COVID-19 is caused by a novel (new) coronavirus. This means the virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the [coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans](#) and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

Signs and Symptoms

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Incubation period

Ranges from 2-14 days

Contagious Period and Spread

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. There is not enough information about the transmission of the virus to completely understand when a patient can spread the virus to others.

Colorado currently has 44 presumptive positive COVID-19 cases. Many of these are individuals who have traveled to affected regions, but we also have many recent cases without known high-risk exposures. This means Colorado likely has confirmed spread in communities. According to early information from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), older adults and individuals with serious chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease experience higher mortality rates and risk getting sick due to this virus.

Treatment

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.