

UK EVENT OPERATIONS GUIDELINES DURING COVID-19

For Agencies and Live Events Professionals

THESE GUIDELINES

Infections can be transmitted during an event, during transit to and from an event and in a person's 'home' community on their return from an event. The purpose of these guidelines is to outline an approach to running an event as permitted under the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic.

As with all guidance published to assist businesses during the pandemic, users of this guidance must ensure that they are operating in accordance with current guidance from the government and Public Health England (PHE) on the following areas

HYGIENE <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/879221/Coronavirus_COVID-19_-_personal_protective_equipment_PPE_plan.pdf

SOCIAL DISTANCING <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

At the time of issue (15/6/20) no meetings, other than those for households/support bubbles as directed, can take place indoors.

How to use these guidelines

These guidelines have been prepared to aid you with creating your own operational procedures in relation to holding events in the new Covid-19 era.

You will still need to refer to the latest government guidance (see specific areas above re **Hygiene**, **PPE** and **social distancing**), your legal advisors, your insurers, your clients and H&S professionals in addition to these guidelines.

You are still responsible for operating under The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and you are required to adhere to the current prohibitions, requirements or restrictions as issued at the time by the Secretary of State under the Coronavirus Act 2020 and subsequent Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 – or regional equivalent for such as Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Further guidance has been sought via [Covid Secure Guidelines](#).

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INTERNAL AGENCY OPERATIONS

Accountability

- The responsibility and application of control measures in relation to event operations during Covid-19 should be allocated to an employee within your business at senior management level. For the purpose of this document we have called this role Infections Mitigation Co-ordinator.
- This individual should be responsible for keeping up to date with the latest guidance, provided by the Government, Public Health England (PHE) and National Health Service (NHS) (See Page 1 for specific guidance re **Hygiene, PPE** and **social distancing**).
- This individual should provide a continuous assessment and reassessment of the situation relating to Covid-19 to ensure appropriate and dynamic risk controls are put in place.
- Lines of communication should be clearly defined between the Infections Mitigation Co-ordinator, the directors of the business and the event project teams.

Training

- Specific Covid-19 training should be mandatory for all employees. A training record should be kept to document dates of training
- A specific onsite Covid-19 training session should be delivered for each event for any employees going onsite. This should be shared with the venues, the client and all contractors working onsite (again a training record should be kept).
- Create checklists for each stage of the project (pre event planning, onsite operations, post event communications) so that the project manager can ensure that the risk measures are being assessed and the relevant levels of controls are being implemented. These should be documented for your records.

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PRE-EVENT PLANNING

Event Concepts

- During the design stage, determine in the first instance how the event needs to run. You should explore if other formats of events can meet your clients brief and lower the risks, explore virtual meetings, hybrid meetings, smaller satellite gatherings, roadshows etc. staggering attendees throughout the day or shortening the day to avoid catering requirements.
- Create an event agenda and content which allows for staggered comfort breaks.
- Consider if the current capacity of the NHS could be overwhelmed because of increased transmission at or following the event.

Covid-19 Impact Assessments

- Use a risk scoring matrix to establish if a face to face event is appropriate and viable.
- It is recommended you complete a Covid-19 Impact Assessment (CIA) for each event, in the same way you complete a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) in relation to data privacy.
(Author's note: HBAA is creating a 'CIA' template).

Contracts and insurance

- It is recommended that you ensure your contracts with your clients, venues and contractors detail the cancellation terms and any flexibility around changes required due to Covid-19.
- Legal issues should be considered at contract stage, and if pertinent, specialist legal advice sought. Consider all parties liabilities if a personal injury claim in relation to Covid-19 arises from an event. As with all events, venues/suppliers, event organisers, clients as employers of delegates and individual delegates themselves all have a legal duty of care relating to safety. You need to ensure there are no breaches in that duty of care and understand where the responsibility for this lies: this must be identified at contract stage with all parties and agreed.
- It is recommended that venues provide their risk assessments prior to contracting an event with a break clause if these conditions are not met.
- You should ensure that your risk assessments and contracts align with those of the venue, your client and contractors, to ensure these measures don't contradict each other or prevent the success of onsite events.

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Venue Sourcing/Management

- It is recommended that you work with venues with accreditations such as Quality in Tourism's Safe, Clean and Legal award, mia's AIM awards and other accreditations from recognised awarding bodies wherever possible. All venues must have a thorough and robust published policy including evidence that they have carried out a COVID-19 risk assessment which meets with all aspects of government and PHE guidance (refer to **Hygiene/PPE/ social distancing** guidance as indicated on Page 1). This provides the assurance that minimum cleaning protocols under Covid-19 measures are being met.
- Consider location and 'R value' and risks associated should this increase and agree alternative location or method of event delivery.
- Preferred venues will be those which
 - o are fully air-conditioned
 - o have specialised air filtration systems
 - o have ample outdoor space for your event, and for other guests/events which may be taking place at the same time.

Layouts/Floor plans

- Ensure that room designs have been created to ensure current government social distancing requirements are met (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>).
- Utilise exam room layout if tables are required or theatre style with required distance between chairs and rows. Depending on the event date, prepare alternative plans based on 2m, 1.5m and 1m distancing. In all cases review delegate flow to manage potential cluster points/crowding.
- Ensure that room capacities have enough space for any event crew (graphics operators, technical crew etc.) to socially distance behind the stage set.
- Where possible, conference spaces should be segregated from public areas and any other events taking place at the same time to ensure processes cover all involved. Event attendees should have separate entrances/car parks/bathrooms and so on.
- All areas to be well ventilated using open windows/air conditioning/air filtration as appropriate.
- Utilise outdoors for catering and for breakouts if feasible.

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Contractor Sourcing/Management

- Ensure that all contractors and suppliers have submitted their risk assessment documents detailing how they are minimising the risks for event attendees and their own staff in relation to Covid-19.
- Ensure that all contractors and suppliers are familiar with your specific control measures as outlined in your risk assessment and have received copies of your documentation.

Delegate/Client Communications

- Registration for all events must be mandatory. It is advised that a registration platform which allows you to access live data and to communicate with all registered attendees before, during and after the event across multiple channels of communication, is used.
- Attendees should be asked to
 - o confirm their travel history (if applicable)
 - o complete a Health Declaration
(see 'Travelling to and from Events' below).
- Assess which communication channels will work best for you to be able to send updates to all event attendees, crew and contractors quickly and in real time with specific Covid-19 related messages through text, WhatsApp, event websites, registration or ticket sites, email, social channels, event apps and onsite signage.

Risk Assessment

A Covid-19 risk assessment should be completed for each event, which assesses all the information relating to risks and details how these risks can be mitigated. This should be supplementary to your standard risk assessment.

- The key aims of the Covid-19 risk assessment are to
 - o Identify infected persons where possible and prevent them from attending the event
 - o Determine a response plan for suspected cases of Covid-19 identified at or after the event
 - o Reduce the spread of the virus
 - o Communicate relevant updates from the authorities if the circumstances change before, during or after the event.

Your risk assessment must reflect latest government guidance on **Hygiene, PPE** and **social distancing** as indicated on Page 1.

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Travelling to and from Events

- Delegates/clients, staff and contractors should be kept up to date with the latest advice by your Infections Mitigation Co-ordinator
- Delegates/clients, staff and contractors should be advised to travel independently avoiding using public transport, to use their own vehicles, to cycle or walk if possible.
- If travel on public transport is necessary, you should plan your event timings to avoid peak travelling times wherever possible.
- Travellers should be advised to ensure
 - o They uphold current government social distancing requirements
 - o Comply with protective clothing requirements (at the time of issue, wearing a face mask is mandatory when using public transport)
 - o they have anti-bacterial hand rub and face coverings (for use in enclosed areas)
 - o they wash their hands regularly in accordance with government guidelines
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>
 - o they know what they should do if they feel unwell whilst travelling.
- Before travelling to an event, all delegates/clients, staff and contractors should complete a Health Declaration (example shown below)
 1. Do you have a high temperature/fever (+ 37.8 °C)?
 2. Do you have a continuous cough and/or find it difficult to breathe?
 3. Have you lost your sense of taste or smell?
 4. In the past two weeks, have you been in close contact with someone displaying any of the above symptoms?
 5. Are you self-isolating according to government advice for clinically or extremely clinically vulnerable persons?
 6. Have you been contacted by track and trace to say you could be at risk but have not yet obtained a test to confirm a negative result for Covid-19?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions you **SHOULD NOT** attend the event.

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At the end of the event

- Delegates/clients, staff and contractors who travelled to the event should be advised that if after returning home, they develop any Covid-19 symptoms, they should stay at home and self-isolate, avoiding close contact with other people. They must also contact NHS 111 and your Infections Mitigation Coordinator so that others they came in contact with during the event can be notified and offered the appropriate advice. **You should refer to the government guidelines for the latest advice on all aspects of the above as this is constantly being updated.**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- All delegates/clients, staff and contractors should be advised that if a case of infection occurs during or post event, then it is likely they will be contacted by an approved test, track and trace service and must provide any requested information and follow the advice given.

ONSITE OPERATIONS

Medical – in all aspects refer to the latest government guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Useful supplementary advice

<https://www.acas.org.uk/working-safely-coronavirus/if-someone-has-coronavirus-at-work>

- Ensure there is adequate medical cover at the event and that first responders are aware of the latest government guidance.
- Provision of non-reusable protective clothing including face masks may need to be available for crew where they are not able to socially distance (refer to your supplier risk assessment for specifics).
- A final declaration of health should be taken at the point of entry to the event. Consider making this a condition of entry, the declaration must be completed - using an event app for example.
- Provide additional hand washing stations and consider providing each delegate with a small hand sanitiser pack. Where this is not possible, ensure pre-event communications advise attendees to bring their own hand sanitiser.
- Consider if thermal scanning is required/appropriate.
- Consider temperature checking all delegates and staff that enter the event space.
- Review the potential for delegate testing in the future.
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- Determine a process for dealing with those displaying symptoms onsite, this should be detailed in your risk assessment.
- On-site first aiders should have appropriate protective clothing available to them
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>
- Ensure pre-event communications cover all relevant points to delegates/clients, staff and contractors and prepare approved communications in the case of an attendee being diagnosed with the infection.

Technical

- Digitise as much as possible: no lanyards, badges, paper print-outs etc.
- Manual check-in should be avoided if possible, consider the use of QR codes, or facial recognition for contactless check-in. If manual check-in is unavoidable, use a dedicated person to avoid multi-touch device handling and provide sneeze screens where possible.

Venue and Catering

- Work with the venue to manage social distancing onsite, consider where cluster points will be (check-in/registration, toilets, catering etc.) and implement solutions to limit these clusters.
- Consider the provision of temporary structures/additional toilet facilities to ease the pressure on cluster points.
- Work with the venue to communicate with attendees through signage (e.g. floor graphics) to ensure attendees maintain social distancing.
- Work with the venue to ensure a robust cleaning schedule during the event including sanitation of all equipment and 'high touch' areas.
- All public/high touch areas should have anti-bacterial gel/barriers available (toilets/taps/door handles).
- Work with the venue on catering provisions: consider mobile ordering, contactless collection, pre-packed options, pre-plated individual dishes (sustainable packaging should be considered to minimise waste). Staggered catering times should also be explored and socially distanced seating.

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Communications

- Ensure you have robust systems in place to communicate with attendees before, during and after the event.
- Event timings should be staggered to reduce the numbers of people at the event at one time and reduce stress on cluster points such as registration or during catering.
- Consider creating arrival time slots and communication with delegates via an event app, e.g. *"Please do not leave your car until called."*
- Include floor markings to mark social distancing and delegate movement e.g. one-way systems, corridor systems, guidance to walk on the left etc.
- The use of signage should advise attendees to uphold current government social distancing requirements at all times, to wash hands regularly for 20 seconds, especially after arriving at the event, before and after eating, after using the toilet, before smoking, before leaving the event and on arrival home.
- The use of graphics, such as floor graphics can be used to support social distancing requirements.

Suppliers and Crew

- As with delegates, all suppliers and crew attending the event must complete the same Health Declaration.
- Before an event rig commences a detailed safety-briefing should include Covid-19 training and protocols should they develop symptoms themselves or become aware of event attendee needing medical assistance. Attendance at the training should be recorded for compliance.
- Make contingency plans for any key personnel, speakers, crew or entertainers who may need to be replaced at short notice, should they develop symptoms before or onsite.
- Ensure checklists are in place to act as a reminder to your staff to complete actions as per your risk assessment, during each phase (pre-event, onsite, post-event) and to record what was undertaken.
- Ensure you have full contact information for all contractor personnel onsite in case of the need to initiate track and trace protocols post-event.

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POST-EVENT COMMUNICATIONS

- Communication throughout the event process is critical pre-event, onsite, and keeping these channels open post-event in case there is a need to track and trace.
 - Maintain accurate attendee data through your registration system to provide the ability to communicate with your attendees post-event e.g. ensure you know who attended and can exclude any cancellations and no-shows from further communications.
 - Ensure your risk assessment details how you will manage track and trace post-event, should this be required.
 - Implement a post-event de-brief with your team, the venue and suppliers, to assess the efficacy and suitability of control measures and review your procedures going forward.
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HBAA thanks the agency members involved in contributing to this document which has been led and created by Jennifer Houlihan of Dotted Lines. It has incorporated feedback from the Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport following their review of an initial draft version.

HBAA commits to regular reviews of this document to ensure it reflects changes to official guidance from government, PHE and NHS and any other government authorised body.

