

Private Property Event Guidelines

All events must follow all public health measures outlined in the [Health Protection Act Order](#), including (but not limited to) gathering limits, physical distancing and masking.

This document provides guidance to people who wish to host weddings, receptions, catered events and other invitation-only private gatherings and events at their own private property (such as inside their home or in their backyard) or at a private property that they rent or use (such as a cottage).

These guidelines do not apply to other private properties such as faith facilities, hotels, rental halls and other venues and facilities that host events and gatherings as part of their operations.

Events taking place inside enclosed outdoor structures including tents are considered indoor events regardless of whether side panels are removed, or walls are open.

Events that are hosted by an individual

- When a person hosts an event or gathering indoors or outdoors at their own private property or at a private property that they rent or use (such as a cottage) without engaging a recognized business or organization to manage it, they must follow the informal, at-home gathering limit outlined here: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/restrictions-and-guidance/#gatherings>

Events that are hosted by a recognized business or organization

- When events take place inside a private home and are hosted by a recognized business or organization, they must follow the informal, at-home gathering limit outlined here: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/restrictions-and-guidance/#gatherings>
- When events take place outside in the backyard of a private residence or on private property that is rented or used for the event and are hosted by a recognized business or organization, they may operate with larger gathering limits: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/restrictions-and-guidance/#gatherings>

- Physical distancing of 2 metres (6 feet) must be maintained except among people in the same household or social group for both indoor and outdoor events.
- Capacity of the event (within gathering limits) should be determined by the ability to physically distance guests, provide traffic flow areas, considering space required for tables, chairs, washrooms, temporary infrastructure etc. Development of an event site map is strongly recommended.
- Catering/event staff, entertainers, officiants and other service providers are included in the total capacity gathering limits for indoor and outdoor events that are held at a private property.
- Recognized businesses and organizations could include professional event managers, wedding planners, restaurants, caterers etc. They are allowed to host events with the larger gathering limits because they have experience in event management.
- The event organizer/host is required to develop a COVID-19 safety plan and have a copy of the plan onsite during the event.
- The recognized business or organization takes on full responsibility for all the public health protocols being followed during the event.
- Whether a private event is held indoors or outdoors, masks are strongly recommended, especially if physical distancing cannot be maintained at all times.
- Catering staff and any other service providers who are interacting with guests or participants should be masked at both indoor and outdoor events.
- Portable toilets should be provided, along with portable hand washing stations. There should be 2-3 units per 100 people. They should remain stocked throughout the duration of the event.
- Hand sanitizer stations should be located throughout the event (e.g. by drink or food stations, at the entrance/exits of tents, etc).
- Organizers should develop a maintenance plan for the toilets and handwashing stations which include cleaning and disinfecting. Information on appropriate disinfectants can be found here [Hard-surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\): List of disinfectants with evidence for use against COVID-19 - Canada.ca](#)
- Food should be provided by a licensed caterer. Potluck style receptions are not recommended. Information on catering can be found here <https://www.novascotia.ca/nse/food-protection/docs/factsheet-cater.pdf>
- Food and drink, including alcohol, must be consumed while seated.
- If alcohol will be sold at the event, the caterer must apply for a Special Occasion Liquor License. Contact Alcohol, Gaming, Fuel and Tobacco for more information - 1-877-565-0556 or <https://novascotia.ca/sns/access/alcohol-gaming.asp> This process should begin as far in advance of the event as possible.

- You are permitted to have a bar where attendees can walk up and order a drink, however physical distancing measures must be in place. Attendees must remain seated at their table except when waiting to be seated, going to the bar to order, going to the bathroom and getting ready to leave. (i.e. no stand up receptions)
- Dancing is allowed for licensed and unlicensed events. Attendees must maintain physical distancing except for those in the same households or close social groups, as described in the current gathering limits.
- Non-medical masks should always be worn while dancing.
- If hiring a DJ or musicians, the event organizer/host must ensure physical distancing is maintained between all participants except between households or close social groups, as described in the current gathering limits.
- Members of a performing group should not mingle with guests or staff during or after performances.
- Attendee contact information should be collected by the host and maintained for a minimum of 30 days in case COVID-19 is detected and contact tracing is required.
- In addition to these guidelines, there may be other requirements resources that are relevant for your event. Please review guidance documents at <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/resources/>