

# Safety Guidelines for Event Organizers, Venues and Facilities

*October 4, 2021*

As we enter phase 5, living with COVID-19, there are several steps organizers and staff of events, tournaments, venues and facilities can undertake to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses. Events, venues and facilities should encourage and continue with preventive public health measures. These personal and public health measures will not only help to prevent the spread of COVID-19, but other illnesses such as the cold and influenza.

This document is designed for event organizers and staff of venues and facilities that host large gatherings or events. This document will guide you through some of the preventive public health measures organizations can undertake to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

In addition to these measures, the Nova Scotia Government has implemented the [COVID-19 Protocol for Proof of Full Vaccination for Events and Activities](#). It requires that people be fully immunized against COVID-19 to access discretionary, non-essential services, events and gatherings. If your event, venue or facility are included in this protocol, you will be expected to follow it in addition to these guidelines within this document.

We should also recognize that some people may struggle more than others as we continue to live with COVID-19. Events, venues and facilities are encouraged to recognize this challenge and consider how they can adapt policies and activities to recognize these sensitivities and changes we now face.

## Proof of Full Vaccination

- As of October 4, 2021, proof of full vaccination is required for everyone aged 12+ to participate in most discretionary events and activities – including attending sport and culture related events and activities. There are minimal exceptions.
- Proof of vaccination is not required under the provincewide protocol for employees of businesses and organizations that offer these events and activities. However, it is required for volunteers involved in hosting, leading or organizing these events and activities.
- Businesses and organizations are encouraged to set their own vaccination policies. Any policies should take legal and ethical implications into consideration. People need to be able to access essential services.

## Ticketing and Crowd Management

- Consider seating arrangements that can accommodate physical distancing from other groups to accommodate those who may feel challenged about returning to large public crowds.
- If attendee contact information is being collected anyway, such as through the ticket sale process, consider securely keeping this contact information for a minimum of 30 days after the event or activities to aid in contact tracing if needed. There is no need to collect contact information at the door.
- Place communication on tickets or in pre-event communications that discourages attendees, volunteers and others from coming into the venue or facility when sick, to get tested if they have symptoms consistent with **COVID-19**, and to stay home until well.

## Venue/Facility Cleaning Practices

- Continue regular cleaning and disinfecting of all general surfaces that are frequently touched, such as doorknobs, handrails, equipment, etc. Increase the frequency of cleaning with increased use.
- High touch surfaces, like those found in a washroom, should be cleaned, and disinfected twice daily at a minimum and more often if necessary.
- Use a Health Canada-approved disinfectant, which is stored away from children.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizing stations (minimum 60%) should be located throughout the facility zones and at seating area entrance points with posted signage to support hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- If you are providing portable toilets (outdoor events), you must provide portable handwashing stations and ensure that they remain stocked throughout the duration of the event. If possible, also provide hand sanitizer stations, ideally ones that are touch free.

## Building Ventilation

- Building mechanical ventilation systems(s) should be checked before the event, and each day after, to ensure equipment is operating as intended.
- Ensure ventilation is adequate for the number of people attending, the size of the venue, and the nature of the event or activity.

## Food and Beverage Service

- All vendors must have a food permit, unless exempt. Information on food permits can be found at: <https://novascotia.ca/nse/food-protection/retailers.asp> or by calling 1-877-936-8476.
- Provide hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol or hand washing facilities at all entrances and exits, each vending area, as well as near highly touched surfaces such as elevators and check-outs.

## Communications / Signage

- Consider communication prior to the event or activities taking place that outline preventive measures to attendees, suppliers, volunteers and others who are attending the activities.
- Communicate to participants, workers and volunteers in advance of the event, the importance of staying home if feeling sick.
- Post signage at the venue/facility entrances that discourages attendees, volunteers, and others from coming into the venue or facility when sick, encourages them to practice good hand hygiene and cough/sneeze etiquette, to get tested when two or more COVID-19 symptoms develop, and to stay home until well.
- Keep signs visible (including back of house) to remind employees, patrons, and participants to properly hand wash or sanitize and to use good respiratory hygiene practices.
- Use in-venue digital signage (if available), such as a video scoreboard or concourse signage, to reinforce both facility and personal hygiene protocols.
- Use facility social media channels and website to post the protocols.
- Consider post-event evaluations to survey attendees or others on measuring their level of comfort or facility cleanliness. This can provide important feedback and provide you an evaluation of your measures.

## Masks

- At such time as masks are no longer required, it is strongly recommended that masking continue in indoor public places. Some attendees, volunteers or other may choose to wear masks at public or larger gatherings. Until that time, continue to follow masking requirements under the Health Protection Act Order.

- Promote and strongly encourage the use of masks when physical distancing is not possible for longer periods of time.

## Healthy Workplace Policies

- Encourage your employees, participants, and volunteers to get tested if experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or are directed by Public Health to isolate and/or be tested.
- Encourage your employees and volunteers to get fully vaccinated. Businesses and organizations are encouraged to set their own vaccination policies. Any policies should take legal and ethical implications into consideration.
- Discourage attendees, volunteers, and others from coming into the venue or facility when sick, to get tested if COVID-19 symptoms develop, and to stay home until well.
- Even at such a time as masks are no longer required, encourage the use of masks if working indoors and distancing is not possible, in particular during times of the year when communicable diseases are spreading.
- Good health and safety program is crucial for developing a sustainable workplace safety culture. Government has developed a set of guidelines that can be used by workplaces to incorporate into their operations where warranted. Nova Scotia Government Protocols for Workplaces <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/COVID-19-Protocols-for-workplaces.pdf>

## Process for illness and exposure

- Consider keeping an isolation space in the venue/facility that can be used should someone show signs of COVID-19 symptoms that can be close to exits to encourage the individual to return home, isolate, and seek testing.
- Advise attendees, volunteers, staff and others to adhere to public health advice regarding isolation and contact notification, should they test positive for COVID-19.