

Event Planning for Mass Gatherings in Phase 2 Reopening Beginning June 1, 2020

Montanans have succeeded in limiting the spread and impacts of COVID-19 by working together and following guidance that has been provided. This has presented an opportunity to move to Phase 2 of the Reopening the Big Sky strategy. We now have an option for limited mass gatherings in our community. **A mass gathering is a planned or spontaneous event with a large number of people attending that could strain the planning and response resources of the community hosting the event.** Examples include concerts, festivals, conferences, weddings, rodeos and sporting events.

This guidance suggests strategies to help you plan for and implement ways in which to better protect all involved in a mass gathering. Organizers should continually assess, based on current conditions, whether to postpone, cancel, or significantly reduce the number of attendees (if possible) for mass gatherings. Please note the following **requirements** for Phase 2 beginning **Monday, June 1, 2020**:

1. Assess the health of all staff and organizers at the beginning of each shift. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 must be sent home. Symptoms include cough, difficulty breathing, fever, repeated shaking with chills, chills, body aches, headache, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell.
2. Encourage participants to stay away from your event if they're sick and to leave if they start having symptoms of COVID-19.
3. Post signs to remind attendees to go home if they have any signs of illness. Posters are available at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov). We also have posters available at BCPHD.
4. Strongly encourage or require the use of cloth face masks for attendees and staff.
5. Follow frequent sanitizing protocols.
6. Share information about COVID-19 with staff, participants, suppliers, vendors, and others. Keep them up to date on your local situation, and designate a way for them to communicate with you if they have concerns.
7. Make sure surfaces and objects at your venue that people will touch are disinfected before your event. Consider disinfecting common hand-contact areas (like doorknobs and pens) at least once each hour during the event.

Group Size:

1. Continue to enable physical distancing of at least 6 feet between individuals and non-family groups in gatherings of any size.
2. Groups may be no larger than 50 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing.
 - a. Cancel groups larger than 50 people unless physical distancing can be maintained.
 - b. If you are planning an event with more than 50 people, the Broadwater County Board of Health requires that you consult with Public Health or Environmental Health on

guidelines for planning your event to implement adequate social distancing. We have examples of plans to help you prepare for your event. If you have less than 50 people we suggest that you take advantage of our planning services to keep our community safe. We are working on these plans as quickly as possible so the turn around time is only a few days.

- c. Consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidelines, event cutoff threshold is at the discretion of community leadership based on current circumstances in your community.

Your Staff /Organizers

1. If you've hired staff or designated people to fill certain roles during your event, keep in mind that they might have to stay home if they're sick or caring for a sick child or other family member.
2. If you're working with a caterer or other event provider, make sure they have information about COVID-19 and require their staff to stay home if sick. Make sure food servers wear gloves and follow required food-safety standards. Self-service food bars and buffets are not permitted at this time.
3. Identify critical job functions and positions, and plan for alternative coverage by cross-training for those roles, including your own. Consider avoiding the use of event staff who are at high risk for complications from COVID-19, like those over age 65 and those who have chronic medical conditions.

Broadwater County Public Health has the following **additional guidance** to help protect you, your staff, guests and customers from disease.

1. **Develop a written plan** to manage Phase 2 operations. Be sure to address any issues unique to your operations and location. We have sample plans available at the health department and environmental health department.
2. **Support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.**
 - a. **Encourage the use of cloth face masks** that fully cover the mouth and nose.
 - i. A cloth face covering will help contain respiratory droplets from the wearer and protect other people. You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
 - ii. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing and good personal hygiene.
 - iii. You can make cloth face coverings at home or purchase them. If you want to make your own face mask, links to reliable sources for patterns can be found on the CDC web site.
 - b. Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles throughout the facility.
3. **Hand Washing**

- a. Provide hand-washing facilities with soap and water and single-use towels. If soap and water are not readily available, provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- b. Place hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol in several locations to encourage hand hygiene.

4. **Routinely clean** all surfaces touched by guests or customers.

5. **Develop a roster** of all attendees with contact information if needed for contact investigations should someone at the event test positive later for COVID-19. We have attendee roster forms available.

If you have questions, please call Broadwater County Public Health Department at 266-5209 or Environmental Health at 266-9209. Thank you for protecting our community from COVID-19.