



Rio Blanco County
Department of Public Health and Environment
General Event Planning Guidelines

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/event-planners-and-attendees-faq.html>

This summer will bring new challenges to Rio Blanco County citizens when planning events. In any situation where people are gathering, the risk for communicable disease transmission is increased. COVID-19 is a new virus that spreads quickly, and because it is a novel strain we do not have “herd immunity” at this time. It is because of this that we must all work together to prevent an outbreak from occurring here due to our summer activities. There are many things that you and your organization can do to protect the health of your community. This summer may not look the same as always, but together we feel strongly that we can continue to enjoy the customs and traditions of our community while maintaining the health and safety of our citizens.

1. Consider an Emergency Plan:

Creating an emergency plan for mass gatherings and large community events, such as concerts and sporting events, can help protect the health of your staff,

attendees, and the local community. During times like these, flexibility is key. This planning should include:

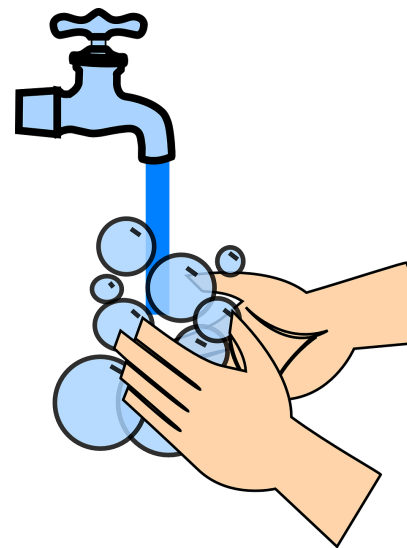
- Encouraging staff and attendees to stay home if sick.
- Developing flexible refund policies for attendees.
- Providing supplies for attendees and staff that can be used to help prevent the spread of germs.
- Consulting local public health officials about your event.

2. Take Preventative Actions

Encourage staff and attendees to take **everyday preventive actions** to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19.

This includes:

- Cleaning your hands often.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Staying home when you are sick.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.



3. Consider postponement when:

Consult with local public health officials and continually assess, based on current conditions, whether to postpone, cancel, or significantly reduce the number of attendees (if possible) at an event or gathering. Triggers for postponement may include an outbreak of new cases of COVID-19 in Rio Blanco County. Please check www.rbc.us regularly in the weeks leading up to your event to find the current case count and most recent testing data for our county. When determining if you should postpone or cancel a large gathering or event, consider the:

- Overall number of attendees or crowd size.
- Number of attendees who are at higher risk of developing serious illness from COVID-19. This includes older adults and people with underlying health problems such as lung or heart disease and diabetes.
- How close together attendees will be at the event.
- Potential ways to minimize economic impact to attendees, staff, and the local community.
- Amount of spread in the local community and the communities from where your attendees are likely to travel.
- Needs and capacity of the local community to host or participate in your event.

4. Think local

If at all possible, before considering postponement or cancellation, consider the ability to downsize or make your event accessible to local residents. For example; could your competition involve only local participants this year?



5. Consider smaller group sizes

By staggering events or presentations, it may be possible to serve the same number of people at different times. For example; would it be possible to schedule a large tournament over several days instead of one? Can competitors at tryouts be broken down into cohorts?

6. Educate:

Share these resources to help people understand COVID-19 and steps they can take to help protect themselves:

- [Prevention and Treatment](#)
- [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
- [Groups at Higher Risk](#)
- [FAQs: Pregnant Women and COVID-19](#)

- [FAQs: Coronavirus Disease-2019 \(COVID-19\) and Children](#)
- [Handwashing: A Family Activity](#)
- [Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives](#)

Signs and electronic communication prior to the event date are good ways to share this information. Encourage participants to self screen and exclude themselves if they are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.

7. Vulnerable and high risk groups

Consider ways to make your event safer for high risk individuals. Going the extra mile to protect these individuals and make events safer for them shows true commitment to the community. For example; can you provide virtual options for those who want to participate from their homes? Can you provide face masks to any staff who will be serving these individuals?

8. Physical Distancing

There are many ways to encourage physical distancing at an event:

- Use tape, stickers, chalk or other markings to give participants a visual aid for maintaining 6 foot distance between themselves and other parties. Here is an example from Central Park in New York:



- Handshakes and “high-fives” are often exchanged at meetings and sporting events, and these can be ways in which COVID-19 can be transmitted from person to person. As a way of decreasing the social pressure to engage in these common behaviors, consider displaying signs (physical and/or electronic) that discourage these actions during the gathering.
- Limit concessions or vendor booths if possible. If vendors are serving food, ensure they are fully licensed and following all infection control regulations currently in place for food service. Try to mark waiting areas to discourage individuals from standing closely to one another while in line or waiting.

9. Frequently clean and disinfect

Provide COVID-19 prevention supplies to event staff and participants. Ensure that your events have supplies for event staff and participants, such as hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, tissues, trash baskets, disposable facemasks, and cleaners and disinfectants. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects with detergent and water prior to disinfection, especially surfaces that are visibly dirty.

- Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. Clean with the cleaners typically used. Use all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.
- For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
 - A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available [here](#)
 - Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.).
 - Additionally, diluted household bleach solutions can be used if appropriate for the surface. Follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Unexpired household bleach will be effective

against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.

- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- Additional information on cleaning and disinfection of community facilities can be found on [CDC's website](#).

10. Encourage face masks

Encourage participants to wear cloth face coverings to the event. Find a local vendor who may be willing to sell masks at your event. This might be a great idea for a local fundraiser.



11. Isolate sick individuals

If possible, identify a space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become ill at the event. Designate a space for staff and participants who may become sick and cannot leave the event immediately. Work with partners, such as local hospitals, to create a plan for treating staff and participants who do not live nearby. Include a [plan for separating and caring for vulnerable populations](#). If any staff member or participant becomes sick at your event, separate them from others as soon as possible. Establish procedures to help sick staff or participants leave the event as soon as possible. Provide them with clean, [disposable facemasks](#) to wear, if available. Work with the local public health department and nearby hospitals to care for those who become sick. If needed, contact emergency services for those who need emergency care. Public transportation, shared rides, and taxis should be avoided for sick persons, and disposable face masks should be worn by persons who are sick at all times when in a vehicle. Read more about [preventing the spread of COVID-19 if someone is sick](#).

12. Contact Tracing

In the event there is an outbreak that originates from your event, collecting a list of names and phone numbers when possible for participants will give public health a head start in containing the spread of the virus in our community. This is not required. If you have a way of communicating with your participants publicly (for example, a facebook page), consider setting up an early warning system that could be used to notify participants of exposure before and after the event.

We hope that you can find these recommendations useful in planning for your summer event in Rio Blanco County. Please contact public health with further questions or for individual event consultation.

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