

Essential Considerations for Safely Reopening Exhibitions and Events

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Essential Considerations for Safely Reopening Exhibitions & Events

Version One

INTRODUCTION

The IAEE Health and Safety Task Force, in collaboration with associations representing convention centres, contractors, stand builders and others, has written *Essential Considerations for Safely Reopening Exhibitions and Events* to provide information for exhibition organisers to consider when planning for and producing an exhibition during a pandemic. For scientific backing, IAEE has worked with the [Global Biorisk Advisory Council \(GBAC\)](#) to review the information in this document.

These considerations were written to not be prescriptive in nature, but rather to provide general information and areas for special attention. Each exhibition or event is different. The audience, size, industry, complexity, venue and city must be taken into consideration when planning for the exhibition. Exhibition organisers should understand the current laws of the country, state/province and city in which their event is being held, working with local officials to ensure the event is in compliance. Regularly reviewing the guidance in the U.S. of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and globally, the [World Health Organization](#) is strongly advised.

Finally, the current situation with COVID-19 is a fluid one with new information about the virus becoming known almost daily. As information is released, this document will be updated, and the reader is encouraged to regularly check for updates on the IAEE [website](#). It is our hope, as the crisis lessens, that some of the preventive measures in this document will no longer be necessary. IAEE is committed to keeping its members, and the exhibitions and events ecosystem, updated as new information is made available from our association partners.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization continue to update the primary guidelines that are key to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. Exhibition organisers will need to continually monitor (daily) the guidance from CDC and WHO as the science of the virus develops.



Proper coordination and collaboration amongst exhibition organisers, venues and exhibition service contractors are critical to the proper planning and execution of health and safety measures.

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Section 1: General Principles for Health and Safety Operations

A major consideration each organization needs to review are some basic principles and practices which have been adopted to promote a safe physical environment. These practices are simple and easy to follow, such as wearing a face mask or physical distancing, yet they are practices that will help mitigate the spread of the various. Therefore, we would encourage you to be mindful of these basic principles and practice them in your daily routine. In addition, the implementation of these reasonable and practical health and safety measures are the best ways to protect the environment surrounding your event. This document contains no best practices; however, the General Principles should be the cornerstone of producing a successful event in this COVID-19 environment.



It is important for event organisers to develop a communication plan for attendees, exhibitors, venues and all other suppliers and contractors, after a thorough risk assessment has been completed. The exhibition organiser should be familiar with country, state/province and city jurisdiction requirements for operations and public interactions, as the range of state and local jurisdiction mandates varies significantly.

Risk assessment for an exhibition and/or event includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Location in which the attendees and exhibitors are traveling from.
- The capacity and resources of the local health system.
- The types of interactions planned amongst the attendees and exhibitors.
- Health and age of the attendees and exhibitors.
- Venue type.
- Event duration.

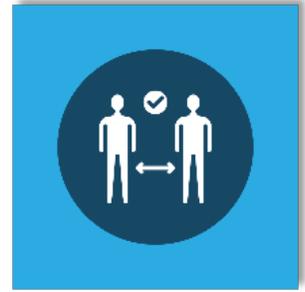
Physical Distancing

Transmission of COVID -19 may be mitigated through physical distancing protocols. Organisers and venues may consider the following to promote physical distancing within the venue, including the exhibition floor: state and municipal health guidelines stress, whenever possible, all persons should leave at least *6 feet (approximately 2 meters)* of empty space to the person closest to them.

Other Physical Distancing Management Considerations:

- Use signage and any other visuals which encourage and promote physical distancing.
- Designate separate entrances and exits for the venue and exhibit halls.
- Provide directional signage as physical distancing reminders to maintain 6 feet (2 meters), and where applicable, to indicate one-way attendee and exhibitor traffic flow.
- Encourage proper distancing between attendees by requiring attendees to sit in every other seat and/or alternate rows of seating.

- Create floor markings designating acceptable incremental physical distancing (6 feet or about 2 meters) on floors (i.e., registration, restrooms, etc.).
- Anticipate areas of high-volume traffic where people are unable to keep moving, thus making physical distancing more difficult. Institute plans for alleviating congestion (e.g., registration, restrooms, escalator banks, etc.).
- Develop protocols for confined spaces like elevators by limiting ride capacity. These protocols will need to be coordinated with the venue.
- Consider physical barriers such as plexiglass or masks as options.



Face Masks and Face Coverings

Face masks may be required of persons attending the exhibition. When required, face masks or face coverings shall be worn whenever people are within 6 feet (approximately 2 meters) primarily due to COVID-19 being spread through respiratory droplets, according to CDC and WHO. The face mask is intended to prevent the spread of germs. To encourage compliance, post signage throughout the venue that informs all stakeholders of new processes. Instructions to include on signage:

- Individual(s) should wash their hands before putting on a face covering.
- Same side of the mask should be placed against the face/mouth each time to avoid wearing the “contaminated side” against the nose and mouth.
- Face covering should be removed using the straps, and avoid touching the part which protects the face.
- Reusable face masks should be worn no more than twice, then wash or replace with a fresh mask.
- Workers, including all vendors, temporary staff, venue personnel and anyone having access to the venue during an event will be required to wear a minimum of a face covering. Other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves, face shields, etc., may be optional or required based on a risk assessment. This should be coordinated and discussed with the exhibition organiser and all essential vendors prior to and at show site.

Touching the Face

AVOID touching the eyes, nose and mouth. Microphones, headphones or other equipment should not be shared, and should be sanitised before and after each use.

Hand Sanitisers

Position touchless hand sanitiser stations at key locations throughout the event, including, but not limited to, restrooms, food and beverage area(s), meeting rooms and the exhibit hall. In addition, regular hand washing should be encouraged; world and country health organisations recommend alcohol-based hand sanitisers to prevent the spread of infections and decrease the risk of getting sick. Exhibition organisers are committed to make hand sanitiser stations readily available throughout the event space, particularly at key locations.

Hand Washing

Frequent hand washing with soap and water is encouraged and will help combat the spread of any virus.

Wash hands a minimum of twenty seconds at least every 60 minutes, and dry thoroughly. As an alternative to frequent hand washing, a sanitiser containing at least 60 percent ethanol or 70 percent isopropanol can be used (according to CDC hand washing/hygiene recommendations).

Cough and Sneeze Etiquette

Follow proper coughing and sneezing protocols as advised by CDC and WHO. Individuals should use tissues, or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available, followed by thorough handwashing or sanitisation after.

Temperature Screening

At each point of entry, temperature screenings may be conducted using 'no-touch' thermometers. Individuals displaying a temperature, defined by local, state or federal recommendations, should be removed and taken to a private area for a secondary temperature screening.

Surface Transmission

The science of surface spread continues to develop. IAEE will continue monitoring these developments and update this information as it becomes available. The latest information regarding the spread by surfaces from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as of 22 May 2020: "Based on data from lab studies on COVID-19 and what we know about similar respiratory diseases, it may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by **touching a surface or object that has the virus on it** and then touching their own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads, but we are still learning more about how this virus spreads."

Symptomatic Individuals

If an individual displays symptoms of acute respiratory illness upon arrival to the venue, or becomes sick during the day and the show organiser is aware, the in-house medical personnel should be notified and the individual should be quarantined and then sent home, to a local medical facility or to a quarantine room located within in the venue for further examination.



Section 2: Communication, Education and Awareness

A robust and carefully cultivated event communications plan is key to create awareness and educate all event stakeholders, including attendees, exhibitors, venue and all other suppliers and contractors. It is crucial that the audience understand actions the show organiser is taking to create a safe environment. The communications plan should convey the practical steps required in creating a safe environment, and resources available to them. Communication on COVID-19 protocols should be easy to understand and include as much information as possible shared via multiple channels (e.g., event website, event mobile app, posters, infographics, physical media, email communications, communications from leadership, etc.). In addition to what is included in this section, the exhibition organizer should consider including the principle elements in Section 1, including physical distancing, face coverings, and hand washing.

Event Website, Apps and SMS

Communication should be conducted through all channels, with the specific details available on the event website and mobile app. Immediate or urgent messages may be sent via SMS. Communication is a critical factor in building confidence for all stakeholders who participate in and visit your event.



Exhibitor Manuals

Exhibitor Manuals may be updated to include components of an event's safety protocols and guidelines with specific details of what exhibitors need to execute regarding all safety and hygiene measures. As a key reference guide, an Exhibitor Manual can be updated to include all the appropriate safety protocols for exhibitors. This single source of information should be the go-to guide for referencing frequently asked questions; standard operating procedures; and any new, enhanced measures to ensure an event's customers, including exhibitors and attendees, are protected.

Event Signage

Prominently display on-site event signage to include information regarding common signs and symptoms of COVID-19 as communicated by state or local health authorities as well as any actions needed to take place if one exhibits symptoms. The signage may be displayed prominently in all common areas of the event. Organisers' programme of enhanced measures provides assurance and confidence that the event's priority is the health and safety of its customers.

Public Address System

Throughout the event, program public address announcements to repeat messages about the importance of maintaining physical distance and the importance of washing and sanitising hands in addition to other best practices. Organisers may work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure the biosafety measures in place are practical and effective and considered best practices by trusted health organizations (e.g., CDC and WHO).

Pre-Show Messaging

Messaging in advance of the event should communicate relevant information, including updates from global and local health authorities, hygiene briefings, health protection measures, and event admission

policies. By communicating to attendees and exhibitors in advance, exhibition organisers will set proper expectations, especially in regard to updated or new policies.

Educate all staff, temporary personnel, vendors and suppliers of the following:

- Understanding the impacts of COVID-19 on the general public.
- Recognizing this is the single most important item regarding the success of the event.
- Communicate months in advance, prior to the event opening.
- Communicate clearly and openly as to how and when attendees and exhibitors will be notified.



Suppliers/Vendors/Venue Personnel Screening

The show organiser should coordinate a communication plan with its supplier and venue partners on screening protocols that partners have in place. Upon arriving to the venue, personnel may be required to be pre-screened (through self-assessments, symptom checks and temperature checks) to clear for entry into a convention venue. In addition, new entrance policies may be instituted. Pre-event communication should be explicit and clear so employees know what to expect when arriving to work.

- Outline entrance protocols for employees, contracted labor, and visitors, including how, when and where screenings will take place.
- Use simple, branded, visual signage as a straightforward approach to remind people to reduce their risk and let visitors know what the organisation is doing.
- Introduce new behaviors to employees in anticipation of arrival back on show site through adequate training.
- Provide instructions for bringing work equipment back into the venue utilizing sanitation protocols.
- Alert employees to changes in the work environment (e.g., availability of meeting rooms, occupancy restrictions, relocation of work stations, etc., to allow for physical distancing).
- Describe how the venue or site was prepared for arrival of employees (e.g., cleaning and disinfecting).
- Leverage multiple communication channels to reach the labor/employees including phone, SMS, apps, video, verbal, digital displays, speaker systems, flyers, posters, email and traditional mail.

Personnel and Policy Changes

Because of the pandemic, exhibition organisers and producers will need flexibility in many policies which will have to be reassessed regularly. To guard against future outbreaks of the virus, and to be better

prepared, organisations will likely need to create new roles and responsibilities for individuals. This realignment will need to be communicated to internal staff.

- Outline the new responsibilities for existing roles to ensure health and safety in the wake of the pandemic and how employees are expected to engage with the new roles.
- Convey in detail why certain protocols and design changes were adopted.

Communication with Venue

- Coordinate with the venue and/or show-contracted cleaning contractor on scheduling move-in, event times and move-out for scheduling sanitation of public areas, meeting space and exhibit hall space.
- Work with the venue to create an integrated infection control procedure and response plan. This plan should address procedures specific to the venue, specific to the show, and those that are shared between both parties.
- Determine response protocols from the venue on those who do not follow local or state mandated physical distancing mandates.
- Be prepared to share an infection prevention and response plan with the venue. Include at a minimum:
 - Ingress and egress adjustments and planned social distancing requirements.
 - Mask/Face covering requirements.
 - Cleaning contractor contact information and procedures, chemistry selection, and cleaning frequencies.
- Have a plan for staff/contractors/volunteer arrival and departure to minimize gathering in common entry/exit points.
- Coordinate with the venue to determine a specific break area for staff/contractors/volunteers and identify cleaning responsibilities for show and venue depending on the location.
- Coordinate which party is providing the following:
 - Signage
 - Line queueing equipment
 - PPE
 - Hand sanitiser and hand sanitiser stations
- Reduced set capacities will likely require more square footage in exhibit halls, meeting rooms and ballrooms to meet target capacity. Discuss options with the venue understanding that utilizing more space may drive costs for both the show and the venue.



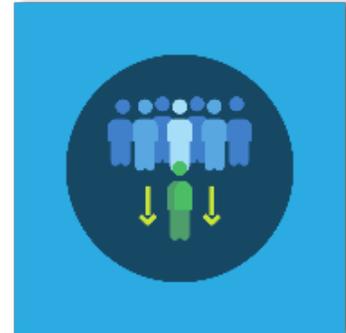
See Section 4 for more information on venues

Section 3: Exhibition and Event Operations

IAEE has worked closely with the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) and the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) on measures facilities will implement for public areas/lobbies. The venues will focus on the sanitation and cleanliness of the venue infrastructure. Below are considerations an exhibition organiser can make in designing and managing the areas of leased space it occupies.

Monitoring and Control of Exhibitions

Consideration should be given to designate a staff person as the knowledge expert regarding any new protocols and procedures put in place due to COVID-19. This person will be responsible for encouraging physical distancing protocols are followed at each event and the latest information and updates are shared with the appropriate stakeholders. The stakeholders include attendees, exhibitors, venue and all other suppliers and contractors affiliated with the event. With a specific person identified and trained, this person will be accountable for all considerations developed to create a safe environment and serving as a key member of the organiser's crisis management team.



Other measures to consider:

- Increase event or exhibition hours to allow for staggering of attendance by designated groups.
- Utilize personnel to maintain flow and break up crowding (enhanced floor manager role).
- Utilize crowd density technology (beacons, RFID).



(Image credit: GES)

Foot Traffic/Flow and Density

Crowd Density Standard (CDS)

IAVM has created a framework for floor density as follows: Current physical distancing requirements in the United States are based on a 6-foot radius (approximately 2 meters) space separating individuals. With each person having a radius of 3 feet of space (6 feet between each other), the physical distancing space per person is approximately 28 sq. ft (2.6 sq. meters) per circle. If physical distancing requirements are practiced during an event, then total available space for the event might have to be divided by the physical distancing space requirements per individual to determine the maximum number of space occupants.

Therefore, the maximum number of attendees when physical distancing is required equals the gross square footage, which includes the exhibit hall, registration area, lobby areas and meeting rooms. To calculate floor capacities, divide your total square footage/meters by the number of square feet required per person.



For example, for 100,000 gross square feet (9,293 gross square meters) of space with the venue requiring 6 feet (approximately 2 meters) as the recommended physical distance between people (which therefore requires 28 square feet or 2.6 square meters per person), divide 100,000 by 28 and your capacity would be 3,571 people. (This calculation assumes each individual must have at least 28 square (2.6 square meters) feet of space.

The organiser's ability to follow the Crowd Density Framework will illustrate a commitment to prioritizing health and safety and enabling successful interactions amongst attendees. The exhibition organiser should work closely with its venue partner in accordance with local health and safety authorities.

IAVM's protocol is their recommendation. However, the exhibition organiser is encouraged to check local/state regulatory guidelines to ensure compatibility with suggested IAVM protocols. Controlling the volume of people on the exhibition floor, also referred to as "density," will allow appropriate physical distancing.

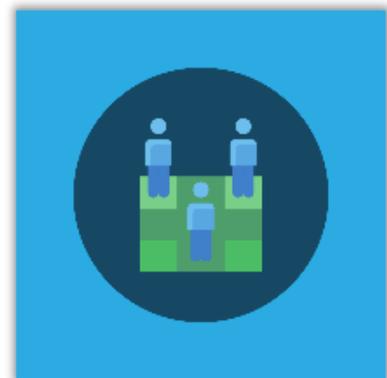


Exhibit Hall

Staggering Show Floor Access – Although not ideal, staggering show floor access may be a consideration, but not a requirement for events. Trade show hours may be divided into time slots (AM/PM) across the days of the event. Exhibition organisers may provide the event's attendees with access to the trade show floor during designated time slots in order to evenly spread the attendance, in combination with pre-arranged meeting times. Controls over the maximum number of visitors (attendees) may also be set.

It will be challenging to enforce and manage one-way aisle traffic, while maintaining CDC or WHO guidelines at all times. The challenges may include crowding and cross-traffic in main cross aisles. Clearly marked exhibition floors should be easily identifiable for attendees, which will assist with traffic flow. If

the exhibition organiser has incremental excess space within the exhibit hall, increasing aisle widths may be a consideration but not required as long as the customer observes all physical distancing guidelines.

Service Contractors

The Exhibitor Service Contractors Association (ESCA) is developing procedures for service contractors to consider in reopening. These measures focus on key areas that show organisers should be aware of, including but not limited to the following:

- Exhibit warehousing sanitation and processing procedures. Organisers may consider encouraging exhibitors to ship to the advanced warehouse in order to more manage freight processing in a more controlled environment.
- The sanitation and inspection process for the following should be considered and coordinated with the show's service contractor:
 - Carpets (new and multi-use) and other floor coverings. The installation of carpets and floor coverings may need to be scheduled in a way to promote physical distancing.
 - Equipment, such as fork lifts, pallet jacks, carts, etc.
 - Temporary structures and exhibits (décor). The sanitation procedures for these items may vary based on type of materials (hard surfaces, fabric, vinyl, or metal). Crew scheduling and crew size may need to be adjusted to promote physical distancing.
- Exhibitor Move-in/out:
 - Management and distribution of dock credentials (such as wrist bands) in advance, to limit the handling of credentials.
 - The health screening process of exhibitors and EACs entering the hall during move-in/out.
 - Scheduling specific times/dates to exhibitors to manage capacity.
- Exhibitor On-site Ordering:
 - Electronic billing and on-site service orders, reducing or removing paper.
 - Remote billing and on-site orders to eliminate or reduce the queue at the exhibitor service center.
 - Reconfigured exhibitor service center to maintain physical distancing of 6 feet (2 meters).
 - Sanitation of touch points at the exhibitor service center.



Labor

Labor, defined as individuals who install and dismantle exhibits, transport freight onto the exhibit floor, electricians, plumbers, security guards, foodservice workers, etc., should adhere, support and comply with the facilities and show organisers rules, regulations and recommended safety protocols, as well as any contractual obligations specified in the various collective bargaining agreement.

Prior to the show organiser going to show site, it is encouraged an understanding of protocols is established in order that proper safety measures are being implemented and adhered to. These should include, but are not limited to:

Adherence to Health & Safety Recommendations

- Properly trained managers/supervisors to the GBAC STAR™ accreditation program (if working in a STAR Certified facility).
- Utilization of pre-screening protocols for all employees who are called to work.
 - Have you had a fever (as defined by local, state or federal recommendations) in the past 24 hours?
 - Have you had flu-like symptoms in the past 14 days (fever, cough, headache, shortness of breath, loss of smell, loss of taste)?
 - Have you been in close contact with or cared for someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
- Availability of PPE for all staff with instruction on proper wear and care.
- Conduct daily briefings to be mindful of frequent hand washing/sanitising and consistent physical distancing.



Operational Processes

All labor should adjust operational processes and policies in order to manage and maintain health and safety standards. Suggested areas for consideration are:

- Include plenty of extra PPE (for exhibit workers PPE should be staged in gang boxes).
- Conduct daily briefing of staff on no-touch policy (i.e. no shaking hands, exchanging money, business cards and order forms).
- Begin each shift and/or each day with a safety briefing.
- Provide reminder signs (outlining what measures are in place to provide safety for employees and clients) at labor check in areas, including the service desk.
- Clean and disinfect all shared utensils, equipment and tools etc., prior to it changing hands and at the end of every shift.
- Clean and disinfect all high touch surfaces regularly with methods which meet CDC requirements (or GBAC STAR™ requirements) with disinfectants which are effective against viruses and bacteria.
- Access credentials should be provided in advance to alleviate any possible congestion at on-site labor check-in areas.
- Enact a “signing for” policy to reduce the sharing of devices or equipment.
- Use email for daily timecards in order to reduce paper handling. Consideration should be given to electronic time cards, labor check-in and any other paper intensive processes. Limit staff at the check-in areas or service desk areas and other areas of congestion.
- Limit the number of employees allowed to simultaneously take breaks, or lunch. Consider staggering schedules. Consideration should be given to staggering labor calls in order to limit congestion at ingress and egress points.
- Consider “work teams” when work cannot be accomplished by an individual to provide consistency and limit exposure to others.

- Consideration should be given to establishing a new position whose responsibility would be to monitor the health and safety for the various tradespersons working on the exhibition floor.

Exhibit Booths (Stands)

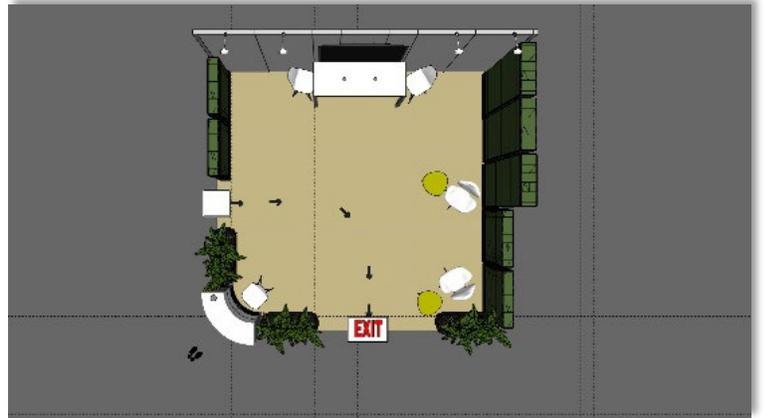
Exhibit booth design and layout should incorporate established best practice guidelines to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Booth design and layout should follow specific standards outlined by the event organisers and facility. Design considerations should include the following:

- Establishment of booth density numbers (staff and visitors allowed based on total square footage).



For example, for 100 square feet of exhibit space with 6 feet required (approximately 2 meters) as the recommended physical distance between people, divide 100 by 28 and your capacity would be 3.5 people. (This calculation assumes each individual must have at least 28 square feet (2.6 square meters) of space.

- Ensure exhibitors and attendees can maintain 6' of distance from each other.
- Establish one-way traffic flow with marked entrances and exits.
- Include transparent dividers in areas where people will be in close contact.
- Consider touchless (electronic and digital) alternatives to engagement, collateral material and giveaways.
- Account for PPE apparel (e.g., staff masks, shields, gloves, etc.).
- Incorporate signage promoting health and safety best practices.
- Plan for cleaning of spaces and surfaces throughout the day along with bio-enhanced cleaning practices before and after each day of the show.



(Images credit: CORT Events)

Registration

Increased use of technology by exhibition organisers provides a means to minimize queuing and contact during the registration process. The use of QR codes can facilitate seamless and contactless access upon entry and exit. Additionally, digital credentials can eliminate physical badges and lanyards where appropriate and enable contact tracing. Encouraging or requiring advance online registration provides an achievable means to minimize on-site contact at a number of touchpoints. That effort combined with the reduction of queues allows visitors to enjoy a safe and enhanced experience where their time on-site is maximized for effectiveness. Considerations for registration include:



- 6 feet (approximately 2 meters) of separation of counters and queue separation.
- Touchless check-in.
- Plexi glass separators between registration staffing and registrants.
- Masks for registration check-in personnel.
- Self-serve check-in counters/mobile badge printing.
- Registration App (self-check-in via phone).
- Cleaning protocols for touch screens.
- Badge scanning at access points.
- Dispersed registration/remote kiosks at venues.
- Credit cards preferred/Venmo type tech.
- Mail name badges.

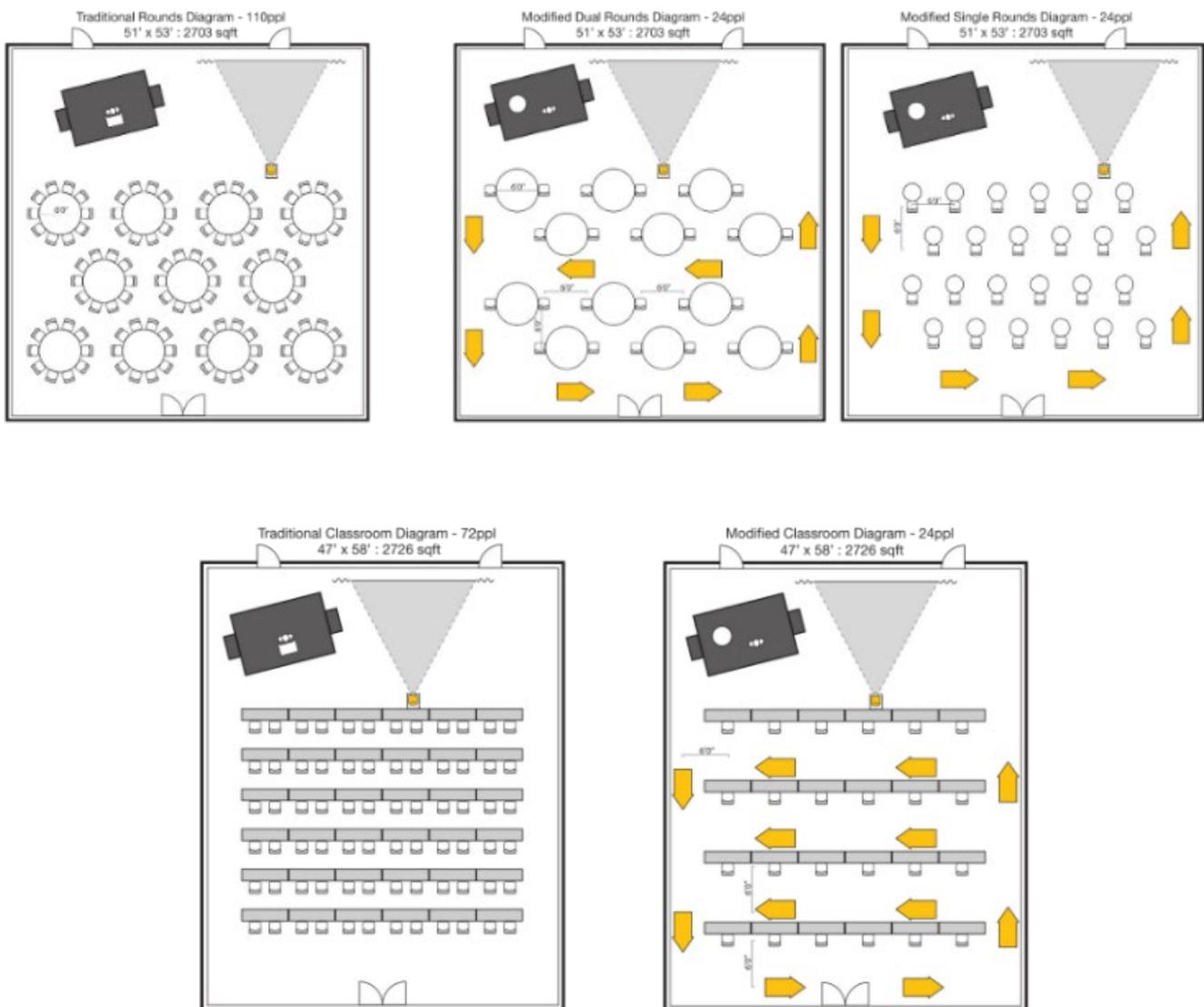


(Images credit: T3 Expo)

Meeting Space

Event organisers should obtain written documentation from the venue on sanitation procedures for meeting space. It will be important for exhibition organisers to coordinate the schedules of meeting room use to ensure appropriate gaps of time between use are designated for sanitation.

On set-up, follow the physical distancing guidelines, currently indicated as 6 feet (approximately 2 meters), to create separation to establish room set up and capacity. The exhibition organiser will need to determine capacity by working with the venue and local health and safety authorities. Below are some examples of meeting room set up design accounting for physical distancing.



(Images credit: PSAV)

Social functions held by the exhibition and event organiser should be based on a risk assessment and follow local, federal and provincial guidelines, including meal functions, receptions, awards and other gatherings. When possible, consideration should be given that speeches and educational sessions/panel discussions could be delivered as a hybrid event (combining virtual and physical). Organisers may consider offering the capabilities of following a more conservative approach than the guidance of local or state authorities.



(Image credit: CORT Events)

Food Sampling and Food Service

New food and beverage protocols are under development in the industry. It is important to refer to local health departments and the contracted food and beverage provider for specific rules in each location. Many of the items below are related to concession and restaurant service, applicable to exhibitions with these components.

Foodservice/Counter and Bar Hygiene

Foodservice workers/bartenders and foodservice support staff should continually wear a face covering and gloves when they are serving customers or behind a bar.

Ordering

Menus may be posted electronically or printed on single-use paper to avoid transmitting germs on reusable plastic menus. Encourage electronic ordering when available. In lieu of being served by waitstaff, customers may be notified via text when their order is ready and placed at a designated pick-up location, creating a touchless experience and also avoiding crowds of customers waiting for their food.

Counter/Line Service

At a self-serve restaurant or concession stand, limit the number of counter staff in order to practice physical distancing guidelines. Foodservice workers should place food and beverages on the table, counter or other surface rather than handing purchased food directly to customers. Workers who handle money should wear gloves and should not serve food or beverages. Contactless payment should be encouraged instead of cash payment. Foodservice workers must monitor lines at quick service areas, such as coffee bars and food pick-up areas, to ensure customers remain physically distanced. If lines get too long or take up too much space, foodservice vendors may consider opening additional service or pick-up areas.



Partitions

Where practical, barriers such as clear plastic partitions should be installed at registers and foodservice counters.

Point of Sale (POS) Terminals

Assign POS terminals to one worker where possible, and sanitize between and after each use. Where a point of sale system requires a signature or entry of a PIN, a disposable stylus may allow a touchless transaction.

Grab and Go Prohibited

Foodservice workers should place requested items on the counter for customers in order to reduce touching of food or packaging.

Tables and Chairs

Sanitise dining tables, bar tops, stools and chairs after each use. Foodservice workers, or the cleaning contractor should clean and disinfect furniture before, during and after events. Furniture may be positioned to allow physical distancing and placement should be marked on the floor.

Reduced Seating

Tables, bar stools and booths should be removed in order to allow 6 feet (approximately 2 meters) between each unrelated party or as the local public health authority requires. Consideration should be given to substitute upgraded box lunches versus individually plated dishes. All table settings should include hand wipes.

Trays

Sanitise trays and tray stands after each use.

Utensils

To replace individual eating utensils, customers can be provided pre-wrapped cutlery, etc., or they can take what they need from individual dispensers.

Beverage Packaging

Self-serve fountain drinks can be replaced with bottled beverages.

Condiments

Single or personal use condiments should be utilized. Open condiment service buffets should be prohibited.

Additional Waste

Sanitary food and beverage practices will result in more refuse; therefore, trash disposal should be monitored on a more frequent basis.

Separate Entry and Exit Points

Create separate entry/exit points to food and beverage areas if possible.

High-Touch Items Related to Food and Beverage Service

Safe service of food and beverages will require frequent sanitization of many small items, such as the following:

- Bottle and can openers
- Cutting boards
- Grill scrapers
- Ice buckets
- Ice scoops
- Knives
- Ladles
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Pots and pans
- Pour spouts
- Serving spoons
- Spatulas
- Squeeze bottles
- Tabletops
- Tongs
- Wine keys

Transportation

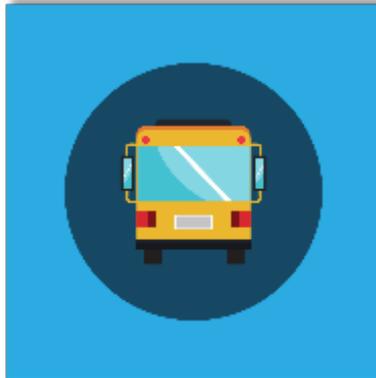
Shuttle transportation plays a vital role in moving attendees to/from event facilities, hotels and airports. The context of these considerations is in respect to contracted attendee shuttle transportation systems and not to mass transit. For mass transit considerations, refer to the local mass transit authority(s) for guidelines and updates in operating during COVID-19.

Key considerations for a contracted shuttle transportation company include the following:

- Health screening and operation policies for drivers.
- Mask and glove requirement for drivers.
- Cleaning and sterilization process for the vehicles.
- Hand sanitiser stations within the vehicles.
- Passenger mask requirements.
- Protective shields behind the drivers.
- On board restroom service restrictions.



- On board food and beverage service restrictions.
- Seating configuration adjustments/physical distancing considerations.
- Quarantine procedures for vehicles with suspected or known COVID-19 cases.
- Vehicle air filtration systems



Section 4: Convention Centre/Venue Cleaning Prevention Measures

Introduction

IAEE has worked with the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM), the Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC), and other industry organisations to develop standardized cleaning procedures. This section will assist the exhibition organiser in understanding best practices for sanitation within exhibition and event venues. There may be other internal and external certification programs, like GBAC STAR™, adopted by venues with sanitation guidelines. It will be important for the exhibition organiser to consult with its venue partner on programs it adheres to for proper sanitation guidance.

The following GBAC STAR™ Event / Convention Centre template is intended to provide process and procedural options for cleaning, disinfection and infectious disease prevention for event and convention facilities. This template is based on GBAC guidelines and are meant to assist a venue in developing the highest standard of cleaning methods.

It is recognised that some of the framework may be considered restrictive as facilities initiate the re-start of their businesses. In general, most cleaning and sanitisation protocols will most likely change and be updated based on public health advice, PPE recommendations or requirements, physical distancing requirements, and other recommendations, to be implemented to be consistent with business needs.

GBAC will continue to monitor information from international health associations and regulatory agencies. If a venue is GBAC STAR™ Certified, GBAC will communicate these changes, requirements and recommendations as the situation changes. GBAC will communicate to GBAC STAR™ Facilities via the GBAC STAR™ Communications network.

It is recognised in many facilities that a service contractor will service the show floor areas and the venue may service the common areas of the property. This program is designed so there is no disruption of services as both contractors and facilities will have GBAC or otherwise trained and competent technicians on staff.

General Cleaning/Sanitising Considerations

Current public health guidelines outline the need for appropriate hand hygiene accomplished by hand washing and/or the usage of hand sanitisers. While handwashing with soap and water is the preferred option for hand hygiene, the number of handwashing facilities is normally limited and the use of portable hand wash facilities might not be feasible in all locations.

In addition to current protocols of floor care for both hard surface and carpet, consideration should be given to the following:

- The use of High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) vacuums on all carpet, followed by spray disinfection using venue approved spray technology and approved disinfectants compatible with the materials being disinfected when required by GBAC STAR™ program risk assessment.



- The use of approved floor scrubbers, mops and tools with approved chemistry on hard floor surfaces. The cleaning and disinfecting of hard surface floors is critical.
- Frequency of cleaning will depend on usage and local risk assessment and/or official requirements.

Public self-serve water stations with any touch point will not be permitted.

Documentation is also an important part of the process. The risk assessment, cleaning and disinfection protocols including the use of PPE need to be documented in advance.

Hand Sanitisation

Hand Sanitization: Approved hand wipes, alcohol hand sanitizer and hand sanitizer stations should be provided at the venue during move-in/out and show days.

Locations and capacity needs must be based on occupancy needs, usage records and user feedback.

Hand sanitiser station locations – examples include but are not limited to:

- At every entrance, one or more station(s) depending on volume.
- Show aisles/show floor– one every 200 feet, with a minimum of one per aisle.
- Meeting rooms – as a general guidance, one for every 50 people scheduled in the room; one should be placed at each entrance.
- Lobbies – one per 5,000 sq. feet of lobby space.
- At the entrances of all Food and Beverage locations.
- At all elevator banks and escalators (note position so as not to interrupt traffic flow).
- At employee time clocks and entrances and employee dining area based on use.



During pre- and post-event activities, it may be more effective to provide individual hand alcohol sanitiser to all workers, event management personnel and exhibit personnel. Hand sanitization stations may be stationed in the lobbies and meeting rooms but may get in the way of set up and tear down operations on the show floor.

Pre-Event – Move In

- Prepare and inspect floors for readiness (criteria to be determined by risk assessment and/or official requirements).
- Require masks and gloves (gloves may not be necessary) to be worn by workers, exhibitors and support staff during move-in activities.
- When required, a temperature monitoring program may be utilized for all workers, exhibitors and support staff during move-in activities.
- Place signage during move-in describing requirements for all move-in personnel. Requirements will include physical distancing, hand hygiene and the wearing of masks.

- Spray disinfection requirements of certain areas within the venue need to be based on the risk assessment during the move-in stage.
- Other set up considerations to be followed when possible include:
 - Staggering of the exhibitor set up times.
 - Maintaining a single point of entry and separate single point of departure for contractors and exhibitors.
 - Posting signage which includes appropriate distancing for exhibitors, contractors and employees.

Pre-Event - The Night Before

- The move-in schedule must include several hours overnight for disinfection services to be completed after the aisle carpet has been installed.
- Strategically place hand sanitisation stations.
- Place physical distancing floor markings where and when appropriate.
- Place signage including but not limited to physical distancing reminders, mask reminders, and handwashing reminders (GBAC STAR™ signage, if the venue is GBAC certified).
- Follow floor care guidelines listed above including the use of HEPA filters on all carpeted areas; and floor scrubbers, mops, etc. on hard floor surfaces.
- Disinfect using approved systems such as electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems with approved disinfectant(s). Disinfection will include but is not limited to exhibits, aisles, lobbies, restrooms and meeting rooms. Any off-limit items, areas, etc., need to be clearly identified.

Show Days – Custodial Services Professional

Open Event Times – Exhibit Floor

- Wear approved and required PPE.
- Schedule normal routine cleaning rounds and document for completion, frequency to be determined by usage and risk assessment (e.g., every 2 hours during high occupancy times for frequently used areas).
- Collect all trash.
- Check hand sanitiser stations are in place and replenished. It is recommended stations are checked every 2 hours during the event. Frequency can be adjusted upon actual usage needs and document when checked.
- Sanitise/disinfect high touch points like registration counters, information booths, touch screens, etc.
- Replenish all items as needed.



End of Day

- Wear approved and required PPE.
- Collect all trash.
- Commence with meeting room cleaning with approved chemicals.
- Sanitise all frequently used touch points.
- Replenish all items as needed.
- Check hand sanitiser stations are in place and replenished.
- HEPA vacuum carpets when and where applicable.
- Use floor scrubbers/mops when and where applicable.
- Document that cleaning has been completed.

Show Days - Disinfection Technician

The Disinfection Technician always enters area wearing approved PPE. Areas and objects to be treated are to be determined by risk assessment and/or official requirements. Disinfection Technicians will sanitise/disinfect all surfaces on the exhibit floor starting at either the back of the room working toward the exit door or starting from the middle working their way out. Sanitation/disinfection will be completed using approved systems such as electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems with approved disinfectant(s).

Surface sanitisation/disinfection to be included, but not limited to:

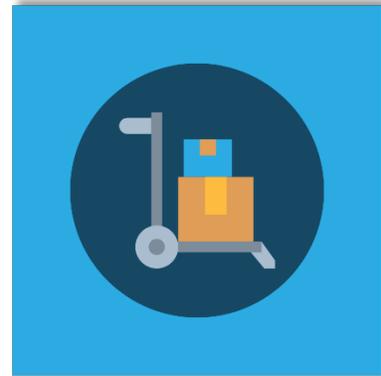
- Flooring
- Exhibit booths
- Walls (up to eight feet/just over 2 meters)
- Doors
- Drawer and door handles
- Tables
- Chairs
- Trash cans
- All touch points
- Document that the disinfection has been completed



See Convention Centre / Venues section below for other space recommendations

Post Event/Move-Out (Also daily during post event activities)

- Masks and gloves will be worn by all workers, exhibitors and support staff during tear down activities.
- When required, a temperature monitoring program will be utilized for all workers, exhibitors and support staff during move-out/post-event activities.
- Disinfection using approved systems such as electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems with appropriate disinfectants will be conducted each night.
- After everything has been cleared from the event floor, final floor cleaning will be conducted. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Removal of all tape.
 - Sweeping of entire surface.
 - Using floor scrubbers/mops when and where applicable.
 - Sanitizing/disinfecting (e.g., electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems) with approved disinfectant(s).



NOTE:

During pre- and post-event activities (move-in/out), it may be more effective to provide individual alcohol hand sanitisers to all workers, event management personnel and exhibit personnel. ★ Hand sanitiser stations may get in the way of set up and tear down activities.

Convention Centre/Venue Spaces

Venue Lobbies – Daily Operations

Venue lobbies vary from facility to facility, from small intimate lobbies to grand scale large lobbies. Special attention must be made for several reasons including the volume of foot traffic experienced. The Lobby Attendant always enters lobby area wearing required PPE and performs the following tasks:

- Remove all trash.
- Clean area with approved chemicals and equipment, paying careful attention to all touch points.
- Check that hand sanitiser stations are in place and replenished. It is recommended stations are checked every 2 hours during high occupancy times. Frequency can be adjusted upon actual usage needs and documented.
- HEPA vacuum carpets when and where applicable.
- Use floor scrubbers/mops when and where applicable.
- Ensure safety signage are placed in lobby (including GBAC STAR™ Certification, if applicable).
- Document room cleaning has been completed.

Lobby surface disinfection might include but is not limited to the following:

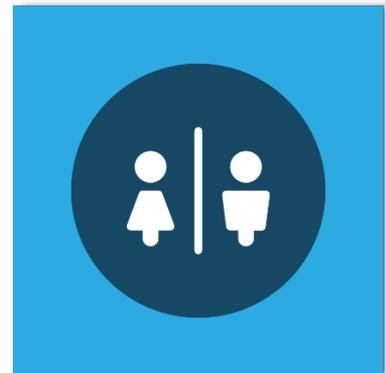
- Registration/Reception desk.
- All doors in lobby area including entrance/exit doors.

- Drawer and door handles.
- Flooring.
- Walls (8 Feet or 2.5 meters up).
- Tables.
- Chairs.
- Trash cans.
- All touch points such as light switches, lamps, phones, etc.

Public Restrooms

The Restroom Attendant always enters the bathroom area wearing approved PPE and performs the following tasks:

- Bag all trash.
- Gather all soiled linens and place in laundry bag.
- Commence with room cleaning with approved chemicals.
- Pay careful attention and wipe down all touch points.
- Replenish all items as needed.
- Use floor scrubbers/mops when and where applicable.
- Ensure signage is in place, including personal hygiene signage (i.e., “Remember to Wash Your Hands for 20 Seconds”).
- Document that bathroom cleaning has been completed.



Disinfection protocols of public bathroom surfaces include but are not limited to the following:

- Cordon off restrooms during spray disinfection service.
- Starting at the back of the restroom, the Disinfection Technician begins disinfecting all surfaces in the restroom.
- Each stall door, door handle, stool and urinal must be spray disinfected.
- All other surfaces including but not limited to counter tops, faucets, hand dryers and paper towel dispensers must also be disinfected.

Common Hallways

- Hallways are vacuumed daily using a HEPA vacuum.
- Ensure hand sanitiser stations are in place and replenished.
- Hallways will be sanitised/disinfected using systems such as electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems with approved disinfectant nightly.
- Floors and touch points will be treated as required.

Elevator Lobbies, Elevators and Escalators

The Lobby Attendant always enters the elevator lobby and elevator wearing approved PPE. Check elevators frequently during high occupancy times. Set a schedule and document that the activity has been completed.

- During high occupancy, it is recommended elevator lobbies and elevators are checked and cleaned every 2 hours.
- Elevators will be cleaned with high attention to touch points (e.g., elevator buttons, railings).
- Elevator lobby floor surfaces will be cleaned/HEPA vacuumed daily.
- Hand sanitiser stations need to be checked that they are in place and replenished as needed. Locate at least one hand sanitiser station at every elevator entrance.
- Escalators are checked and cleaned every 2 hours.
- Document that lobby cleaning has been completed.

The Disinfection Technician always enters elevator lobby and elevator wearing approved PPE and performs the following tasks:

- Sanitise and disinfect escalator rails at a minimum daily.
- Elevator lobbies including all touch points, buttons and floors will be sanitised/disinfected using systems such as electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems with approved disinfectant nightly at a minimum.
- Elevators will be sanitised/disinfected using systems such as electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems with approved disinfectant nightly at a minimum.

Meeting Rooms

The Room Attendant always enters meeting rooms wearing approved PPE and performs the following tasks:

- Bag all trash - excluding all unused consumable items such as notepad paper.
- Commence with room cleaning with approved chemicals. Pay careful attention to all touch points including electronics and AV equipment.
- Replenish all items as needed.
- Hand sanitiser stations need to be checked that they are in place and replenished as needed. As a general guideline, one for every 50 people for larger meetings.
- Floor surfaces will be cleaned/HEPA vacuumed as last step prior to exiting the meeting room.
- Place tag on door that room is ready for sanitisation/Disinfection Technician.
- Document the meeting cleaning has been completed.



Meeting room surface disinfection might include but is not limited to the following:

- Flooring
- Walls (up to 8')
- Closet doors (open)
- Drawer and door handles
- Podium

- Tables
- Chairs
- Trash cans
- All touch points such as light switches, lamps, phone, TV Controls, etc.
- Mark the room with an identifying door tag to signify room is completely clean and disinfected (including GBAC STAR™ designation, if applicable)

Follow manufacturers' recommendations for electronics and AV equipment regarding cleaning and disinfection. This includes but is not limited to clickers, keyboards, pointers, AV equipment and microphones. Some equipment may need to be hand sanitised and disinfected; some may be able to be spray disinfected.

Restaurants, Cafés and Bars

Continue to clean and disinfect restaurants, cafés and bars in accordance with venue protocols with attention to the following:

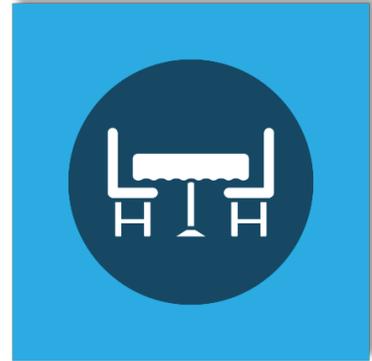
- Wait staff, porters, bus staff, wait assistants and bartenders will clean, sanitise and disinfect using approved disinfectants in accordance with venue policy.
- Linens are replaced and washed in between customer usage.
- Table placement is at least 6 feet (approximately 2 meters) apart while physical distancing requirements are in effect.
- Make disposable menus and check presenters. If non-disposable menus or check presenters are used, they must be sanitised after each use.
- Place hand sanitiser stations at the restaurant/bar entrance, kitchen entrance, and restroom entrance area. Depending on the size of the restaurant/bar, consider other station locations.
- Hand washing stations should be available for all staff in the back of the house.
- Wait staff and servers will wear masks when physical distancing is in effect.
- Wait staff should wear gloves when serving food.
- Disposable utensils may be used when and where applicable. When not utilizing disposable utensils, flatware must be wrapped or in a roll up.
- All condiments must be personal use.
- Conduct frequent cleaning and disinfection.



The Restaurant Attendant should perform nightly cleaning of the restaurant/bar/kitchen/café / food prep areas wearing approved PPE.

Dining/Bar Area

- Document restaurant cleaning has started in venue documentation system.
- Bag all trash.
- Using approved chemicals and equipment, commence restaurant/bar cleaning in accordance with the venue restaurant/bar cleaning policy. Pay careful attention to all touch points.
- Replenish all items as needed.
- Hand sanitiser stations need to be checked that they are in place and replenished as needed. It is recommended that a review cycle is scheduled, such as every 2 hours during high occupancy times. Place hand sanitiser stations at the restaurant/bar entrance, kitchen entrance, restroom entrance area and on the bar. Depending on the size of the restaurant, consider other station locations.
- HEPA vacuum carpets when and where applicable.
- Use floor scrubbers/mops when and where applicable.
- Ensure signage is in place (including GBAC STAR™ Certification if applicable).
- Document that restaurant/bar cleaning has been completed in venue documentation system.



Kitchen

- Document kitchen cleaning has started in venue documentation system.
- Bag all trash.
- Using approved chemicals and equipment commence kitchen cleaning in accordance with the venue cleaning policy. Pay careful attention to all touch points.
- Replenish all items as needed.
- Hand sanitiser stations need to be checked that they are in place and replenished as needed.
- Use floor scrubbers/mops when and where applicable.
- Ensure hygiene signage is in place such as hand washing reminders and SOPs.
- Document that kitchen cleaning has been completed in venue documentation system.

Food Prep Areas

- Document Food Prep Area cleaning has started in venue documentation system.
- Bag all trash.
- Using approved chemicals and equipment, commence Food Prep Area cleaning in accordance with the venue Food Prep Area Cleaning policy. Pay careful attention to all touch points.
- Replenish all items as needed.
- Hand sanitiser stations need to be checked that they are in place and replenished as needed.
- HEPA vacuum carpets when and where applicable.



- Use floor scrubbers/mops when and where applicable.
- Ensure hygiene signage is in place such as hand washing reminders.
- Document that Food Prep Area cleaning has been completed in venue documentation system.

The Disinfection Technician enters the restaurant/bar/kitchen/café / food prep areas wearing approved PPE (nightly). Areas and objects to be treated are to be determined by risk assessment and/or official requirements. The Disinfection Technician begins disinfection of all surfaces in the restaurant/bar/kitchen/café/food prep areas, working from one side of the room to the opposite side. Disinfection using systems such as electrostatic sprayers or other suitable delivery systems with approved sanitiser(s)/disinfectant(s) is required. *Special attention to approved chemical list must be taken into consideration in areas where food is prepared and served.*

Restaurant/café/bar surface sanitation/disinfection might include but is not limited to the following:

- Flooring
- Walls (8 Feet or 2.5 meters up)
- Doors
- Tables
- Chairs
- Trash cans
- All touch points such as light switches, lamps, phones, etc.
- Prep kitchen (only needs to be done at the conclusion of use)

Ballrooms

Since ballrooms are a combination of foodservice area and meeting space, recommendations for both should be followed.

The Back of the House/Heart of the House (which includes kitchens, storage rooms, corridors, service corridors, tee up the food, triple deck warmers with food, loading docks, locker rooms, employee restrooms, etc.) will require the following:

- Routine cleaning and disinfection policies and procedures must be established for all spaces in the “Back of the House/Heart of the House.”
- At a minimum, spray disinfect all spaces every 24 hours for food preparation areas, service stations, locker rooms, employee restrooms, cafeterias and snack bars.
- When required, a temperature monitoring program will be utilized for all employees and contract support staff. This can be accomplished by automated temperature monitoring stations at employee entrances or implemented by a security officer with a temperature scanning device.
- When required, masks will be worn by all event attendees, exhibitors and support staff. The wearing of gloves may also be required for certain tasks and/or positions.

Section 4 information was provided by the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM)

Section 5: Legal Considerations

The legal community would like to be able to tell the events industry “Do the right thing and you will be legally protected,” but life is not that simple. COVID-19 lawsuits have already been filed against more obvious targets such as landlords, nursing homes and cruise lines, and the circle of defendants will broaden as the courts reopen. Event organisers will have numerous legal factors to consider.

- **Follow the Laws and Orders**

There will be laws and orders regarding safety requirements wherever the event takes place. Learn about these laws and orders as they are rapidly changing, and will continue to change, depending on new outbreaks and changing scientific theories. Failure to follow laws and orders in effect on the lead up to and on each day of the event will be evidence of recklessness and may result in liability.

- **Conduct Forms the Basis of Liability**

The general standard against which the actions of event organisers will be judged is negligence, and the more serious standards, gross negligence, malfeasance and recklessness. In short, the plaintiff’s lawyer will have to prove that the organiser did something wrong. Organisers should take practical steps to avoid contributing to the plaintiff’s case. Looking at lists of factors like the ones in this document and making decisions about what can be done under the circumstances of the show will lessen the chance of spreading both disease and litigation.

- **Document Your Efforts**

Providing paper evidence of safety measures is crucial. It will not support your defense in a later lawsuit to have provided hand sanitizer every 20 feet if you cannot prove you did so. Personal memory is subject to attack as flawed. A written record of each action, checked and confirmed by another staffer in writing, will provide your defense counsel with better support. A date stamped film of the space as used would also be useful.

- **Organisers as Employers**

Making sure that the safety precautions are extended pre-show, post-show and in employee-only show areas will help protect staff, who are our most valuable assets. Workers compensation insurance will be the first line of defense for employee claims, but the insurance company will want to see evidence that the employer’s actions were within the limits of the policy. Now is a good time to check your policy to determine what the employer will have to prove (e.g., No gross negligence? No reckless conduct?)

- **Consider Waivers for Attendees**

It is tempting to require all attendees to sign waivers of liability, releasing the exhibition organiser from claims arising from the contraction or spread of disease. The waiver could appear prominently on the registration form. It could require a separate “check the box” or “type name here to agree,” to minimize the risk that the attendees will later claim they did not see the waiver and thus never agreed to it. Exhibition organisers will have to assess the risk of aggravating or offending their attendees by requiring a waiver against the protection it offers. Waivers are not viewed as bullet proof barriers by plaintiffs’ attorneys. Another important consideration is whether the sponsor and its leaders are willing to enforce the waiver requirement on everyone. Permitting some to attend without signing the waiver will weaken its efficacy as a first line of defense.

Contributors

IAEE appreciates the collaborative efforts of the industry associations in developing a framework for holding exhibitions and events as safely as possible. Special thanks to:

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International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM)

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Useful Links:

[CDC Mass Gatherings Guidelines](#)
[WHO Mass Gatherings](#)
[GBAC STAR Elements and Sample Guidance](#)