

COVID-19 safe events

Updated Framework for COVID-19 safe events and activities in Tasmania (Events Framework)

KEEP IT

COVID
safe

Factsheet | Version 4.0 | 21 May 2022

Overview

Tasmania is synonymous with unique and vibrant events and it is important that as we respond to changing COVID-19 circumstances, we can continue to enjoy events in a COVID-19 safe way.

In 2020, the Tasmanian Government released the *COVID-19 Safe Events and Activities in Tasmania Framework (Events Framework)* to assist event organisers to plan for and host events in a COVID-19 safe manner.

As public health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Tasmania continue to change, the Events Framework has been reviewed and updated.

The most recent change came into effect on 21 May 2022. Organisers of lower-risk events no longer need to register an event or complete a checklist however, large events and music festivals will still need to complete an Event COVID-19 Safety Plan for review and approval by Public Health.

These changes ease requirements significantly but with community transmission of COVID-19 well established across the Tasmanian community, it is important that event organisers continue to consider what measures they can put in place to manage COVID-19 safety.

The Tasmanian Government will continue to support event organisers while prioritising the safety of the community.

Purpose

The purpose of the Events Framework is to help event organisers to identify and manage the risk of COVID-19 spreading at an event. It sets out the process for large and higher-risk events to work with government to deliver a COVID-19 safe event.

Objectives

The key objectives of the Events Framework are to:

- Outline the public health considerations and requirements to plan and implement COVID-19 safety at large and higher-risk events;
- Support organisers of all events to plan and hold COVID-19 safe events;
- Enable the community to engage in events as safely as possible in a changing COVID-19 risk environment; and
- Support the social and economic recovery of the community by supporting Tasmania's vibrant and unique events.

Events and the COVID-19 environment

It is important to remember that public gatherings and events are a high-risk activity for the transmission of COVID-19 and therefore need to be very carefully planned.

COVID-19 spreads mainly between people who are in close contact with each other.

Events, by their very nature, present potential consequences if a person with COVID-19 is in attendance. The large numbers of people in attendance, crowding and queuing, proximity of people, mixing of diverse groups, and activities such as dancing and singing, also contribute to the risk profile of events.

There are requirements in place under Tasmania's *Public Health Act 1997* to help manage COVID-19. These may change at any time to respond to changing COVID-19 circumstances. It is therefore important that organisers regularly refer to the [coronavirus website](#) for the latest information.

Public Health defines a music event, or music festival, to mean a music or dance focussed event where participants are primarily at the event to listen or dance to music either live or pre-recorded for four hours or more and where participants are not expected to be seated.

Event types and requirements

EVENT TYPE	DESCRIPTION	REQUIREMENTS
Music festivals	Any indoor or outdoor music festival/event with 2,000* or more patrons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Event COVID-19 Safety Plan Submit completed Event COVID-19 Safety Plan through the Business Tasmania website Approval from the Director of Public Health required before the event can go ahead
Large events	Any indoor or outdoor event with 5,000* or more patrons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Event COVID-19 Safety Plan Submit completed Event COVID-19 Safety Plan through the Business Tasmania website Approval from the Director of Public Health required before the event can go ahead
Small and medium events	Any indoor or outdoor event with less than 5,000 patrons or music festivals with less than 2,000 patrons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraged to follow public health guidance to manage COVID-19 Safety No application or approval process required

*The total number of people to determine an event type does not include event staff, volunteers, vendors, performers or contractors and is based on the number of patrons attending an event at any one time

Best practice for COVID-19 safety at events

Important considerations that guide COVID-19 safety at events are to:

- Stay home if unwell**
 COVID-19 is spread from people who have symptoms or just before symptoms develop. All patrons and staff at an event should be advised before and during the event not to attend if unwell or if they have been advised to self-isolate. Patrons and staff should also be monitored for unwell individuals displaying cold or flu like symptoms and an appropriate process be in place to help them leave the site if required.
- Keep a distance of 1.5m from others and other social groups**
 COVID-19 mainly spreads between people who are in close contact with each other. Physical distancing at 1.5 metres reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission and should be followed where safe and practicable - it is acknowledged that this will not be possible in all settings.
- Wear a face mask when needed**
 Mask-wearing should be encouraged as extra protection where a person cannot physically distance, work in a public-facing role or are vulnerable to COVID-19. Persons who develop symptoms during an event should also wear a mask.
- Practice hand and personal hygiene**
 A strong defence against most viruses is for people to wash or sanitise their hands regularly and to cover their mouth and nose when coughing and/or sneezing.

All attendees should be provided with easy access to hand washing facilities and/or hand sanitation including a supply of running water, liquid soap and paper towel.

- Clean and disinfect**
 A regular cleaning and sanitising program must be in place and implemented before, during and after the event with a focus on busy areas such as toilets and frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, chairs, tables, food and drink facilities, EFTPOS machines, counters, railings and rubbish bin lids.
- Have a designated responsible person for COVID-19 safety**
 This applies before, during and after an event. A responsible person should know how to deal with patrons that are unwell or not cooperating with COVID-19 safe measures in place for the event. They should also be a contact person if any issues arise.

Risk factors for large events and music festivals

Public Health will consider a range of high risk activities and settings when assessing an event application due to their increased risk for COVID-19 transmission.

These include:

- Service of alcohol, particularly over a long period (4 hours plus). Alcohol consumption may impact on a person's ability to keep physical distance.
- Dancing, moshing with a focal point such as a stage.
- Singing, cheering, loud volume speech.

- Indoor venues. Provided physical distancing and hygiene measures are followed, outdoor venues are lower risk for transmission of COVID-19 than indoor venues.
- Free moving and mixing. Seated events are lower risk because they involve less mixing of people.
- Multi-day events.
- Multiple venues operating at the same time that allow people to mix.
- Crowding, congestion and queuing.
- Multiple, high-touch surfaces.
- Event camping where patrons share living, food preparation and sanitary facilities for extended periods of time.

Event organisers should identify how these risk factors may apply to their event and consider ways to reduce risk.

This can include making the event alcohol free, no or restricted areas for dancing, non interactive events, moving the event outdoors or partly outdoors, seated events, venues with good airflow indoors, zoning to control the mixing of people and the use of face masks.

Music festivals

In settings such as music festivals, there can be behaviours such as singing, dancing, moshing and alcohol consumption that are associated with increased risk of COVID-19 transmission.

With a high number of COVID-19 cases among young Tasmanian adults, maintaining regulation of music festivals is consistent with an overall cautious approach.

Event COVID-19 Safety Plan

An [Event COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) must be completed and submitted for assessment and approval by the Director of Public Health for all large events with 5,000 people or more and all music festivals with 2,000 people or more.

A template is available for event organisers to document the measures they are taking to keep staff, volunteers, performers and players, event patrons and the Tasmanian community safe. Event organisers must provide as much detail as possible when completing the template.

Series of similar type of events at one venue

Where a venue is holding a series of events with similar characteristics, such as a stadium for sporting events, only one Event COVID 19 Safety Plan needs to be submitted to seek approval for the venue or series of events.

A forward-looking calendar of events for the series or venue will need to be provided and a new plan submitted if a substantially changed event or one-off event will be held besides what has been approved. For example, if you

have an approved plan for a sporting event but are hosting a one-off music event, you need to submit a new Event COVID-19 Safety Plan for that event (if it meets the patron threshold).

Either the venue owner or the event organiser may submit the Event COVID-19 Safety Plan, but it must be approved before you host your event. It is best to work together to develop a plan. If you are an event organiser, please check with your venue to see if they already have an approved COVID-19 Safety Plan in place before you start.

Application submission

To submit an application you will need to complete an [Event COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) that contains the following information:

- Event details including event name, contact details of key event personnel, description, date, site plan, event characteristics such as indoor or outdoor, seated or standing, service of alcohol, onsite accommodation and total number of people present at any one time.
- A description of how COVID-19 safe measures will be implemented such as messaging to patrons before and during the event, management of patron flow, queuing and congestion, maintaining physical distance of 1.5m where practicable, personal and hand hygiene, venue cleaning and details of the person responsible at the event for ensuring measures are implemented.

Once you have completed the Event COVID-19 Safety Plan, you will need to submit it via the Business Tasmania website at business.tas.gov.au/eventsframework.

It will then be assessed for approval by the Director of Public Health before the event can proceed.

Timeframes for assessment

An Event COVID-19 Safety Plan must be completed and submitted a minimum of **30 business days** before the date that the event organiser needs to know the outcome of the assessment.

Event organisers must allow sufficient time for their event preparation and Event COVID 19 Safety Plan implementation.

Submitting a COVID-19 Safety Plan well before the event will allow early engagement between event organisers and public health assessors. This helps to support adequate and appropriate COVID-19 safe planning and assessment as quickly as possible.

Implementing your plan

Following approval of your event, you must:

- Implement your approved Events COVID-19 Safety Plan.
- Have a copy of your Events COVID-19 Safety Plan available at the event.
- Ensure all event workers, vendors, contractors and subcontractors have a thorough understanding of how COVID-19 safety will be delivered at the event.

The responsible person must be available during the event to demonstrate compliance with the measures identified in the Event COVID-19 Safety Plan.

Staff from the COVID-19 Safe Events Team attend events to assess compliance.

COVID-19 Marshals

The role of a COVID-19 Marshal is to support event organisers to ensure all measures in a COVID-19 Event Safety Plan are followed. They do not need to be referred to as a marshal, this is just a term that is commonly known.

A marshal should be visible, easily identifiable, appropriately trained and over the age of 18 years.

The types of things a marshal can help with include monitoring for unwell persons, the availability and use of hand sanitiser or soap, cleaning logs, physical distancing and overcrowding and managing high risk activities.

Information and support

The COVID-19 Safe Events Team are available to provide advice and assistance to plan and manage COVID-19 safe events.

Team members can share learnings from other events and offer suggestions to assist with event planning.

Contact the COVID-19 Safe Events Team by email at covidsafeevents@health.tas.gov.au.