



# COVID-19: Public events in WA

**Please note that this information is current as at 12 March 2020. The situation is changing rapidly, and future development may alter or invalidate this advice. It is important that you always look for the most up-to-date information at: [www.health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus)**

This information sheet provides advice to Western Australian event organisers, venue managers and local governments regarding events in the current and rapidly changing COVID-19 climate.

## Can events continue to be held in WA?

Business can continue as normal. Events do not need to be cancelled. The cancellation of an event is at the discretion of the event organiser.

However, advice may change so it is important to refer to the Department of Health website for the most up to date information.

## Key public health messages

The following behaviours should be promoted:

- **practice good respiratory and hand hygiene:**
  - o wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 - 30 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand rub
  - o wash your hands before and after eating,
  - o don't touch your face,
  - o cough or sneeze into your elbow and dispose of used tissues immediately;
  - o hand hygiene after coughing, sneezing or blowing nose
- **practice social distancing;** refrain from hand shaking, keep one metre from others where possible; and
- **stay home if you are unwell:** even if you don't think you could have COVID-19

## Organisation of events

Event organisers should work collaboratively with the local public health unit and the local government to agree in advance the circumstances in which public health risk-mitigation measures need to be enhanced or the event postponed or cancelled. Prior agreement on potential trigger points which are detailed in the event risk management and communications plan will facilitate these discussions should they become necessary.

Event organisers should consider issuing specific advice about potential risks to vulnerable eventgoers (the elderly, people with other underlying health conditions or compromised immunity) in crowded places, especially if COVID-19 is already circulating in the community.

All messaging to eventgoers must be coordinated, up-to-date and consistent with advice being provided more broadly by the Federal and WA Department of Health.

A range of communication methods is recommended including:

- websites
- event apps
- printed media and
- social media.

### Public health mitigation strategies to consider

If the decision is made to proceed with an event, organisers should consider the following risk mitigation strategies:

- People should be advised to stay away from the event if they feel ill
- Consider offering refunds to those who cannot attend due to illness or are required to self-isolate
- Promote appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette in venues, with signage in key locations (e.g. entries, bathrooms)
- Provide soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitisers and tissues in all common areas, and especially at first aid posts, in bathrooms and on event-related transport
- Review frequency of cleaning bathrooms, public areas and transport vehicles
- Ensure all food and beverage services in line with Food Safety Standards, avoid using self-service mechanisms for food service
- People who become ill while at the event should be isolated and given a face mask (if available). *NB: Face masks are recommended for those who have respiratory symptoms (for example, cough); they are not recommended for healthy people.*
- Crowding should be minimised where possible, and event organisers should consider using distancing measures to reduce close contact among people during the gathering (for example, by increasing the frequency of transport, staggering arrivals, diverting departures and minimising congregation at sanitary stations and food and water distribution areas).

### Further information

For more information regarding planning recommendations in the context of the current COVID-19 outbreak, please visit:

- **World Health Organisation** [who.int/publications-detail/key-planning-recommendations-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-the-current-covid-19-outbreak](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/key-planning-recommendations-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-the-current-covid-19-outbreak)
- **Department of Health – Covid-19 updates** [health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/coronavirus)
- **HealthyWA** – [www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A\\_E/Coronavirus](https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus)