



# How to Implement Sanitary Measures for Events?

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Mariana has more than 10 years experience in the MICE industry and is specialized in developing Congresses for BTC, which is a leading event company in Mexico. In this article, she shares her perspectives on how to implement sanitary measures for events when governments eventually allow mass gatherings.

COVID-19 has invited us to reinvent ourselves. All congress organisers around the world are coming to terms with organizing hybrid, online and virtual events. This is having a drastic impact on our industry worldwide.

In Mexico, more than 300 events have been suspended as a preventive measure and many have been postponed until the second half of the year.

So what will events look like in the second half of this year or when governments give us the go ahead to organize events again.

I invite you to ask yourself, in your personal life, do you follow sanitary measures? Do you wash your hands as many times as possible? Do you clean your shopping from the grocery store? These are simple habits that we are adopting in our day to day lives.

Similarly for face-to-face events, all attendees will need to follow stricter hygiene standards. As event organizers, we are following this very closely and we will work in partnership with our clients and under direction of the health authorities to make sure there are strict and innovative ways to implement hygiene standards at all events.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the WHO have set some important guidelines regarding social distancing. Maintaining space between you and others, is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to this virus and delay its spread locally, across countries and around the world. COVID-19 spreads among people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet/2 meters) for an extended period of time.

## But how will we restart?

The World Health Organization and some experts from hotels, convention centers, and airlines, have provided some measures that can help us in the future. Here are some of the suggestions:

### BEFORE the meeting or event

- The decision to proceed with an event should be based on a thorough risk assessment. Event organisers should check the advice from the authorities in the community where you plan to hold the meeting or event.
- Develop and agree a preparedness plan to prevent infection at your meeting or even. As the event approaches, review plans to ensure that they correspond to the most current evidence and recommendations.
- Inform all attendees before the event about the measures that will be applied and the importance of complying with these measures during the event.
- Develop and agree a response plan in case someone at the meeting becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19 (dry cough, fever, malaise).

### DURING the meeting or event

- Provide information at a briefing and in public posters clearly explaining the measures that organizers are taking to make this event safe for participants and the rules that they need to follow.
- Ask all speakers/performers/sponsors to remind attendees of the importance of following the measures.
- Display dispensers of alcohol-based hand rub prominently around the venue.
- Arrange seats so that participants are apart, with distance reflective of health advice in your country
- Open windows and doors whenever possible to make sure the venue is well ventilated.
- If anyone who starts to feel unwell, follow your preparedness plan or call your hotline
- Thank all participants for their cooperation with the provisions in place.

### AFTER the meeting or event

1. Retain the names and contact details of all participants for at least one month. This will help public health authorities trace people who may have been exposed to COVID-19 if one or more participants become ill shortly after the event.
  2. If someone at the meeting or event was isolated as a suspected COVID-19 case, the organizer should let all participants know this. They should be advised to monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days and take their temperature twice a day.
  3. If they develop even a mild cough or low-grade fever (i.e. a temperature of 37.3 C or more) they should stay at home and self-isolate. This means avoiding close contact with other people, including family members. They should also telephone their healthcare provider or the local public health department, giving them details of their recent travel and symptoms.
  4. Thank all the participants for their cooperation with the provisions in place.
- In conclusion, there is still a lot of uncertainty regarding this virus and the actions that we must take. We have to prepare ourselves as professionals and be aware of the steps to follow and how we will develop the future of events.

Don't forget to stay informed:

**Find the latest information from WHO on where COVID-19 is spreading**

**Advice and guidance from WHO on COVID-19**

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