



**Note: This guidance is no longer in effect. Most businesses now follow the [COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards](#). Visit the California Department of Public Health's [COVID-19 website](#) for the current COVID-19 public health guidance. This document is provided only for historical purposes.**



# COVID-19 GUIDANCE: Community Sporting Events

**April 30, 2021**

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**Effective May 1, 2021**

*This guidance is designed to address sectors and activities opening statewide. However, local health officers may implement more stringent rules tailored to local epidemiological conditions, so employers should also confirm relevant local opening policies.*



# OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the health of Californians. Reported illness ranges from very mild (some people have no symptoms) to severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups, including those with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk of hospitalization and serious complications. In addition, the risk of more severe disease and death increases with increasing age. As the pandemic has unfolded, we have learned that many organs can be affected by COVID-19 and there are many ways the infection can affect someone's health.

While most persons with COVID-19 recover and return to their baseline level of health, some people can have symptoms that can last for weeks or even months after recovery from acute illness. Even people who are not hospitalized and who have mild illness can experience persistent or late symptoms.

Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact or in a poorly ventilated area with an infected person. Transmission can occur when the infected person has symptoms, is without symptoms, or has not yet developed symptoms. Virus particles can travel more than six feet in indoor spaces and remain suspended in air even after an infected person has left the room. Indoor settings pose a much higher risk of transmission than outdoor settings. When an infected person does certain activities, such as singing or chanting, loud talking, or heavy breathing, for example with exercise, it can further increase risk compared to normal breathing and talking.

Therefore, it is essential that all possible steps be taken to ensure the safety of workers and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- ✓ physical distancing to the maximum extent possible,
- ✓ use of face coverings by workers (where respiratory protection is not already required) and customers/clients,
- ✓ for indoor locations, ensuring adequate ventilation in all spaces,
- ✓ frequent handwashing and regular cleaning and disinfection,
- ✓ training workers on these and other elements of the COVID-19 prevention program.

On November 30, 2020, the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) implemented mandatory [emergency temporary standards](#) (ETS) to prevent worker exposures to COVID-19 in most workplaces where workers are not covered by Cal/OSHA's [Aerosol Transmissible Diseases standard](#). Under the ETS, employers have obligations including to develop and implement policies and procedures to prevent disease transmission in the workplace; to identify new disease cases if they occur; and, when they are identified, to intervene quickly and work with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus. The ETS covers topics that are also addressed by this guidance. The guidance has been updated to clarify any instances where public health guidance imposes additional *requirements* beyond those mandated by the ETS and to highlight additional recommended practices for public health purposes beyond those mandated by the ETS.

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# Purpose

COVID-19 continues to pose a severe risk to communities and requires all people in California to follow recommended precautions. This guidance provides direction on community sporting events to support a safe environment for these activities. The guidance applies to all **organized** community endurance and running/walking events. These events are identified as: runs, walks, marathons and triathlons, endurance events, etc. This guidance does not apply to outdoor and indoor youth and recreational sports. Additionally, this guidance does not apply to collegiate or professional sports. Community sporting events will resume in California beginning May 1, 2021 following these guidelines.

***The status of community sporting events will be reassessed on an ongoing basis and is subject to change at any time given the level of COVID-19 transmission and vaccinations in California.***

Event coordinators must identify and monitor the County Risk Level for the county the business is operating in and make required adjustments to their operations. For the most updated information on county status, visit [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#). Please note that local health departments can have more restrictive criteria and different closures. Find [your county's local information](#).

## Events Risk Profiles

In general, people are at higher risk of spreading COVID-19 to others outside of their home, when they closely interact with others, especially when they have greater physical exertion and are in close contact for extended periods of time.

Community sporting events include varied activities that have different levels of risk for transmission of COVID-19. Outdoor activities present significantly lower risk of transmission relative to comparative indoor activities, based on current scientific evidence. Mass gathering also increases mixing across groups and outside of communities, which also contributes to the potential for spread of COVID-19 disease.

For community sporting events:

- Risk increases when face coverings are not worn, and physical distancing is not maintained.
- Risk increases with increasing levels of contact between participants; closer contact (particularly face-to-face contact), and the frequency and total duration of close contact, increases the risk that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.
- Risk increases with greater exertion levels; greater exertion increases the rate of breathing and the quantity of air that is inhaled and exhaled with every breath.
- Risk increases with mixing of cohorts and groups, particularly when from different households and communities; mixing with more people increases the risk that an infectious person will be present.

## Across all Tiers:

The following general guidance requirements must be always adhered to:

- All participants, staff and volunteers must be pre-registered, no registration on the day of the event.
- Collect and monitor participant and staffing contacts to ensure contact tracing.
- Face coverings to be worn by participants and spectators in compliance with the CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings.
- All workers must be provided and properly wear face coverings & physically distance at least 6 feet from all other persons and workers
- as required by the [emergency temporary standards](#) (ETS).
- Limit mixing between households:
  - Mixing with other households prior to and post any event must strictly adhere to current [gatherings](#) guidance.
  - Implement measures to ensure physical distancing and reduce gathering at aid stations.
- In-state participants only. Teams and participants must adhere to current [CDPH Travel Advisory](#) recommendations when determining travel for competition. Out-of-state participants are permitted in accordance with the [Addendum to Blueprint Activity & Business Tiers Chart – Tested and Fully Vaccinated Individuals and Sections](#), if fully vaccinated.– Tested and Fully Vaccinated Individuals and Sections, if fully vaccinated.
- No sharing of drink bottles and other personal items and equipment.
- Indoor expos should not be held prior to the event.
- Indoor retail sales and marketing are NOT allowed during the event.
- Food vending for the public and post-event nutrition for participants is permitted so long as attendees and participants maintain physical distancing within a designated eating area.
- No festival area or entertainment (e.g., concerts, live performances, in-person viewing parties, etc.). This draws crowds and intermingling of households. An announcer during the event is permitted.
- Alcohol is NOT permitted to be sold or provided during the event.
- Spectators and observers are limited to current gatherings guidance limitations by tiers. Award ceremonies shall adhere to attendance limitations and requirements as defined within the current [CDPH Outdoor Seated Live Events and Performances Guidance](#).
- Participants must be screened using standard screening questions before coming to the event to ensure they are healthy (e.g., symptoms, negative test, vaccination, etc.).
- In accordance with [CDC Guidance for Organizing Large Events and Gathering](#), conduct daily health checks (for example, temperature screening and [symptom](#)

[checking](#) of staff and attendees safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Event administrators may consider using examples of screening methods in [CDC's General Business FAQs](#) as a guide.

- To reduce crowding, consider staggering arrivals or multiple entry points for race entrance.
- Minimize staff for support (e.g., cheering, distributing water, volunteers, etc.).
- Consider live streaming of events so that they can be watched from home.
- Unless otherwise required for the capacity bonus, vaccination or testing of all participants is strongly encouraged. Testing of participants should be conducted within 72 hours before event start time, if using PCR. Antigen tests are acceptable and should be conducted within 24 hours of start of the event. Results of the test must be available prior to start of the event. Verification of vaccine must be submitted at the point of registration for the event.

For Community Sporting Events refer to the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy to determine the county's current tier](#). The following attendance & capacity limits shall apply:

- **Purple – Widespread – Tier 1:**

- Closed.

- **Red – Substantial – Tier 2:**

- Events are limited to 100 participants per hour and 200 total participants.
- If all participants are tested or fully vaccinated, events may have a maximum of 500 participants.

- **Orange – Moderate – Tier 3:**

- Events are limited to 200 participants per hour and 500 total participants.
- If all participants are tested or fully vaccinated, events may have a maximum of 1,500 participants.

- **Yellow – Minimal – Tier 4:**

- Events are limited to 500 participants per hour and 1,500 total participants.
- If all participants are tested or fully vaccinated, events may have a maximum of 3,000 participants.

Please note that local health departments can have more restrictive criteria and different closures. Find [your local health department information](#).

The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any worker rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any or newly established safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA, including new [Emergency Temporary Standards](#) that went into effect on November 30, 2020.<sup>1</sup> Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues. Cal/OSHA has more safety and health guidance on their [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Guidance](#) and Resources webpage.



## Required Use of Face Coverings

Consult the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\) Guidance on the Use of Face Coverings](#). Complete details, including all requirements and exemptions to these rules, can be found in the guidance, which should be checked periodically for updates. Additionally, CDPH provides [advice](#) on effective practices regarding face covering.



## Workplace COVID-19 Prevention Program

As required by the Cal/OSHA [COVID-19 prevention standards](#), employers must establish, implement and maintain a written COVID-19 Prevention Program that is available to employees and their authorized representatives (i.e., union). Complete details, including all requirements and exemptions to these rules, templates for model COVID-19 Prevention Programs, and Frequently Asked Questions can be found at the following [link](#). All references and guidance should be checked periodically for updates.



## Outbreak and Testing

Employers are also required to comply with Cal/OSHA's regulations for [outbreaks](#) and [major outbreaks](#), including any [relevant testing requirements for employees and reporting requirements](#). They should review [FAQs on Outbreaks](#) for more considerations and explanation of the regulations.

Consult [CDPH's Responding to COVID-19 at the Workplace](#) for specific definitions on what constitutes an outbreak and all required reporting requirements.



## Individual Control Measures and Screening

The Cal/OSHA ETS requires employers to develop and implement a process for screening employees for and responding to employees with COVID-19 symptoms, as well as to address several other individual control measures through implementation of the required components of the COVID-19 Prevention Program. See the linked materials for details on those requirements.

In addition to the requirements under the ETS, employers must:

- Take reasonable measures, including public address announcements, posting signage in strategic and highly-visible locations, and in reservation confirmations, to remind the public and workers that they must use face coverings as described in the CDPH Face Coverings Guidance (unless exempted per the ETS), practice physical distancing, not touch their face, frequently wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer.



- CDPH recommends the following additional measures to further mitigate risk of transmission or other health risks:
  - Participants who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home.
  - Provide resources to promote personal hygiene. This will include tissues, no-touch trash cans, hand soap, adequate time for handwashing, alcohol-based hand sanitizers, and disposable towels.
  - Consider where disposable gloves may be a helpful supplement to handwashing or use of hand sanitizer, such as when handling commonly touched items.



## Ventilation

- All businesses permitted to operate indoors must follow the CDPH and Cal/OSHA interim [guidance for ventilation, filtration, and air quality](#) to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in indoor settings. This guidance also addresses ventilation requirements contained in the Cal/OSHA COVID-19 ETS.
- Additional detailed guidance on ventilation is also available from the [CDC](#).
- Ventilation in indoor venues should be increased to the maximum extent possible and is subject to relevant gym and fitness center or retail capacity by tier.



## Cleaning, and Disinfecting Protocols

- Employers must implement cleaning and disinfecting procedures, as defined within the Cal/OSHA [COVID-19 ETS](#). Cleaning and disinfecting must be done in a manner that does not create a hazard to workers.
- CDPH guidance does not impose any additional requirements beyond those under the ETS.
- CDPH recommends the following additional measures to further mitigate risk of transmission or other health risks:
  - To minimize the risk of [Legionnaires' disease](#) and other diseases associated with water, take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (e.g., drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.
  - Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Assign cleaning assignments during working hours as part of the employee's job duties. Procure options for third-party cleaning companies to assist with the increased cleaning demand, as needed.
  - Install hands-free devices, if possible, including motion sensor lights, contactless payment systems, automatic soap and paper towel dispensers, and timecard systems.

- Encourage the use of debit or credit cards by customers, for example, through signage.
- When choosing disinfecting chemicals, use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and follow product instructions. Choose disinfectants that are less likely to trigger asthma by using products on EPA's "N" list that contain hydrogen peroxide (no stronger than 3%) or ethanol (ethyl alcohol) and that do not contain peroxyacetic acid or peracetic acid. Avoid disinfectant products on the "N" list that contain asthmagens, such as bleach (sodium hypochlorite) or quaternary ammonium compounds (e.g., benzalkonium chloride). Follow the [asthma-safer cleaning methods](#) recommended by the California Department of Public Health and ensure proper ventilation.
- When equipment is shared during an activity, participants perform hand hygiene (wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) before, during breaks, at half time, and after the conclusion of the activity.
- Restrooms and/or porta potties units will have a 4:1 ratio of restrooms to hand wash stations of either/or, soap and water or hand sanitizer. Number of restrooms and/or porta potties will be decided at the local level and dependent upon event type and size.
- Sanitation stations will be made available throughout the footprint in high traffic areas including but not limited to: check-in, restrooms, parking lots, start and finish lines, etc.



## Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Physical distancing alone is insufficient to prevent transmission of COVID-19.
- Employers must implement protocols and procedures regarding physical distancing of at least six feet between workers and other persons, as defined within the Cal/OSHA [COVID-19 Prevention ETS](#). More details and examples can be found in [Cal/OSHA's FAQs](#).
- In addition to any physical distancing requirements in this guidance, CDPH recommends the following additional measures to further mitigate risk of transmission or other health risks:
  - Avoid in-person meetings and, if they are necessary, adjust them to ensure physical distancing and use smaller individual meetings at facilities to maintain physical distancing guidelines.
  - Provide a single, clearly designated entrance and separate exit to help maintain physical distancing where possible.
  - Install transfer-aiding materials, such as shelving and bulletin boards, to reduce person-to-person hand-offs where possible. Wherever possible, use contactless signatures for deliveries.

- Where possible, create outdoor break areas with shade coverings and seating arrangements that ensures physical distancing.
- Maintain at least 6 feet of distance and facilitate physical distancing between participants to the maximum extent possible (e.g., staggered starts instead of mass starts for races, ensure distancing at start and finish areas).
- Awards should have option to be mailed or picked up individually from a station.
- Finish times (for timed events) to be sent via email and/or text message and available via QR codes posted around venue.

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<sup>1</sup>Additional requirements must be considered for vulnerable populations. Employers must comply with all [Cal/OSHA](#) standards and be prepared to adhere to its guidance as well as guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#). Additionally, employers must be prepared to alter their operations as those guidelines change.

