

In-Person and Catered Events in Suffolk County FAQ

Effective March 15, 2021, event venue and facility owners and/or operators, and event organizers (i.e., planners and producers), must comply with additional requirements for non-residential events (i.e., gatherings held outside of a household) that involve the gathering of attendees – above the State’s social gathering limit – for an event, which may feature the preparation and service of food and/or beverage for parties, including but not limited to wedding receptions, celebrations, and similar private venue events, such as meetings and conferences.

Detailed guidance is available in the guidance document [INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR FOOD SERVICES DURING THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY](#).

Note: The additional guidance for in-person and catered events in excess of the NY state social gathering limit is effective as of March 15, 2021, and is subject to change.

What are the occupancy restrictions for catered events?

Effective March 15, 2021, the additional requirements apply to all in-person and catered events with **51 or more** attendees up to the lesser of: 50% for a particular area as set by the certificate of occupancy, or 150 people, exclusive of employees and event staff. Effective March 22, 2021, the additional requirements apply to all in-person and catered events with **101 or more** attendees up to the lesser of: 50% for a particular area as set by the certificate of occupancy, or 150 people, exclusive of employees and event staff.

What about outdoor events?

Effective March 22, 2021, the maximum non-residential outdoor event size is 200 persons. If a temporary structure, such as a tent, is used, a minimum of two sides must be open for ventilation.

Does the guidance apply to catered events in a home?

No, the additional guidance applies only to non-residential settings. The maximum social gathering size in residential settings is 10 people, however, effective March 22, 2021, the maximum outdoor social gathering size in residential settings is 25 people. Indoor events continue to be limited to 10 people.

What do I need to submit to Suffolk County?

For EACH event above the current social gathering size limit, event details must be submitted to the Suffolk County Department of Health Services at least five days in advance of the event using an [online form](#). Event name, location, responsible party contact information, event date, time(s) and duration, expected event size, expected number of staff and location on the premises must be provided in advance. The total number of expected attendees does NOT include employees or other event staff.

What information do I need to collect and maintain?

Event attendees must sign-in at or immediately before an event. Each attendee must provide their full name, date of birth, address, email and phone number for use in contact tracing if it becomes necessary. Proof that each attendee was verified to have passed a health screening conducted at the beginning of the event, and proof of either a negative COVID test or vaccination must also be maintained. A roster of employees and other on-site vendors (photographer, entertainment, etc.) with contact information that are present at each event must also be collected. This information must be kept for 28 days following each event.

What about testing?

Attendees:

For all events to which the guidance applies, attendees must present proof that they have received a negative diagnostic test for COVID-19 using either an approved PCR test within 72 hours of the start of the event, or an antigen (rapid) test within 6 hours of the start of the event. Any attendee that does not present such proof may not be admitted to the event.

Alternatively, attendees may present proof of having completed the COVID-19 vaccination series at least 14 days prior to the event.

Employees:

All employees, staff and on-site vendors must also be tested for COVID-19 prior to an event, then biweekly (every two weeks) afterwards as long as they are engaged in hosting events. Employees may also present proof of having completed the COVID-19 vaccination series at least 14 days prior to the event in lieu of testing.

Can multiple events run concurrently in the same venue?

Yes, provided that each event meets the requirement for maximum occupancy and no shared spaces or rooms are used. Restrooms that are shared between events must be capacity-limited to avoid congregation of attendees, who must wear face coverings and maintain social distance within and while waiting to enter. Sufficient staff must be employed as required to control appropriate access and egress to restrooms.

Are there restrictions for religious ceremonies within the venue?

Religious ceremonies are not included in the Food Services guidance, but are addressed in a separate [Religious Services guidance document](#).

What activities are permitted?

Live entertainment may be provided and musicians or DJs must be separated from attendees by either 12 feet or an appropriate physical barrier. Attendees may dance with only members of their same immediate party/household/family who are seated at their table in designated and clearly marked zones assigned to them and spaced at least six feet apart from other dancing areas or zones. Ideally each dancing area should not be less than 36 square feet. Face coverings must be worn while dancing, and attendees may not visit or enter other dancing zones.

Does the additional guidance apply in an event room to which attendees bring their own food?

Yes. If the event features the preparation and service of food and/or beverage for parties, including but not limited to wedding receptions, celebrations, and similar private venue events, such as meetings and conferences, the additional guidance applies whether food is provided by the guest or the venue operator.