

COVID-19 Industry Guidance for Marriages and Cultural Ceremonies

Under the State of California “Blueprint for a Safer Economy” counties are placed in a color coded tier based on several factors. As Sacramento County moves through different color tiers, the number of people allowed inside for ceremonies is adjusted. The following is a summary of the restrictions under each color tier. Sacramento County’s status can be found at <https://www.saccounty.net/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

| | Purple – Tier 1 Widespread | Red – Tier 2 Substantial | Orange – Tier 3 Moderate | Yellow – Tier 4 Minimal |
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| Marriages and Cultural Ceremonies | No indoor ceremonies with guests allowed. Outdoor ceremonies are allowed with restrictions. | Indoor ceremonies are allowed at 25% of building occupancy or 100 people, whichever is fewer. | Indoor ceremonies are allowed at 50% of building occupancy or 200 people, whichever is fewer. | Indoor ceremonies are allowed at 50% of building occupancy. |

Background

COVID-19, also known as the novel coronavirus, is a respiratory illness that is spread through the air via respiratory droplets from an infected person or by touching contaminated surfaces.

Due to the increased risk of transmission and spread of COVID-19 when people from different households and communities mix, Sacramento County Public Health continues to discourage social gatherings.

People who choose to attend gatherings should adhere to the CDPH guidance and limit the size to three households or less as well as take other precautionary measures as outlined in the guidance. <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/CDPH-Guidance-for-the-Prevention-of-COVID-19-Transmission-for-Gatherings-10-09.aspx>

Marriages and Cultural Ceremonies

- Marriages and Cultural Ceremonies may be held indoors with guests. The maximum number of people allowed in the room is determined by the color tier that Sacramento County is listed under. All household groups must maintain 6 ft. of social distancing from other household groups and everyone must wear a face covering.
- If a ceremony will take place outdoors, the number of guests is limited to the number of people that the space may accommodate with 6 ft. distancing between non-household members and no more than 100 people (whichever number is smaller). In the orange tier, no more than 200 people with 6 ft. of social distancing.

Receptions

Receptions are gatherings of people from separate households that generally involves eating, drinking, and socializing. This type of event has been strongly linked to the spread of COVID-19 and is not currently allowed unless it is kept to three households or fewer.

Under the latest [CDPH Guidance for Private Gatherings](#), up to three households may assemble for a private outdoor social gathering. Please refer to the CDPH guidance for further details.

Additional Requirements for Ceremonies

Designate a Host

- The ceremony should designate a host, who is responsible for ensuring compliance with all requirements. This host may be a representative of the organization or church hosting the ceremony.
- The host also should maintain a list with names and contact information of all people at the ceremony. If a participant tests positive for COVID-19, the host is legally required to assist the County Public Health Department in any case investigation and contact tracing associated with the gathering. Public Health will ask for the list of attendees *only* if an attendee tests positive for COVID-19, and information related to attendance at the event will be used only for public health purposes.

Request that Sick People and People in High-Risk Categories do not attend

Request that people do not attend in person if they feel sick or have any COVID-19 symptoms including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell

Given the high-risk of this activity, vulnerable members of the population (over 65 years old, compromised immune system or underlying condition) are strongly encouraged to participate through video streaming or some other form of remote technology

Please refer to the [CDC People at Increased Risk](#) page.

Restrooms

Ensure that an adequate number of restrooms are available to prevent lines from forming. Make a plan to ensure that restrooms are frequently sanitized.

Practice Social Distancing and Handwashing

- Household members must stay at least 6 feet away from people in other households at all times.

- Seating arrangements must provide at least 6 feet of distance (in all directions—front-to-back and side-to-side) between different households. This can be done by spacing chairs apart, or for fixed seating like benches or pews, by marking off rows and indicating seating areas with tape. Seating and surrounding area must be sanitized after each use.
- The host must ensure that handwashing facilities are stocked with soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer.
- Encourage frequently handwashing and/or the use of hand sanitizer.
- Eliminate the use of shared items. People must bring their own picnic blankets, prayer mats, hymnals/religious texts, and similar items. Any item that is normally passed from hand-to-hand, like a donation box, must be put in a stationary place for people to place their donations into one-by-one.

Face Coverings

Everyone must wear a face covering at all times.

Exceptions include children under 2 years old, people for whom face coverings are medically inadvisable, or people who are hearing impaired. Face coverings can also be removed to meet urgent medical needs (for example, to use an asthma inhaler, consume items needed to manage diabetes, or to take medication).

[California Department of Public Health - Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#)

Singing and Music

- Singing is allowed outside only and with a face covering.
- Any shared microphones or podiums should be sanitized after each use. Instrumental music is allowed as long as the musicians maintain at least 6-foot social distancing.

Event Venues

- Event Halls may not host indoor gatherings.
- Outdoor event venues may host marriages and cultural ceremonies, not receptions.
- Attendees may only go indoors to use restroom facilities.
- Receptions are not permitted.

Funerals

Sacramento County [Guidance for Places of Worship](#) can also be used as guidance for funeral ceremonies.

Questions

Thank you for your efforts in keeping Sacramento residents and visitors safe! If you have questions please call EMD at (916) 875-8440.

Summary of Revisions

8/25/20: Initial version

10/7/20: Updated to align with State of CA requirements for color tiers.

10/21/20: Incorporated CDPH guidance regarding social gatherings

10/22/20: Edit to Funeral section adding Worship Guidance and eliminated 10 person limit

PHO: 10/13/2020