

# COVID-19 Graduation Ceremony Guidance

For the health and safety of community members during the COVID-19 pandemic, gatherings and activities must be limited to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. The guidance below provides alternatives to traditional graduation ceremonies.

## VIRTUAL GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Staff films speeches, dedications and other festivities; students submit videos to be included; stream from Facebook Live or YouTube.



## LIMITED ATTENDANCE CEREMONIES

Small groups held at outdoor locations with graduate ceremonies, but families watch from their cars; listening via local radio; event must comply with state and local public health orders.

## CAR PARADES

Coordinate in small communities with planning support from the local health department and law enforcement.



# Sacramento County COVID-19 Graduation Ceremony Guidance

The health and safety of community members continues to be a top priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance is intended to provide recommendations to help schools, students, and families celebrate graduation while also preventing the spread of COVID-19.

All gatherings pose a higher risk of transmission and spread of COVID-19 when people mix from different households and communities. The likelihood of transmission and spread increases with laughing, singing, loud talking and difficulty maintaining physical distance. All commencement ceremonies must adhere to the guidance defined within the current CDPH Outdoor Seated Live Events and Performances Guidance (<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-live-performances--en.pdf>) and Guidance for the Prevention of COVID-19 Transmission for Commencement/Graduation Ceremonies (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/COVID19-Graduation-Guidance.aspx>). Outdoor, in-person ceremonies are permissible, consistent with these guidance. The Commencement/Graduation guidance also provides alternatives to traditional graduation ceremonies.

For outdoor, in-person ceremonies, the following measures must be implemented:

- Individuals who are sick or in isolation or quarantine must remain at home. Those who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) should be discouraged from attending.
- Implement an occupancy capacity limit, which includes all attendees (school staff, performers, students, families, etc.).
  - Limit attendee groups to a household unit.
  - Attendees must sign up in advance of the graduation.
  - Attendees must abide by travel limitations as indicated within the current CDPH Travel Advisory (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Travel-Advisory.aspx>).
- All attendees must wear masks and maintain distance of at least 6 feet from other attendees at all times, other than with household members such as when they are in their own vehicles.
  - Speakers may remove masks during their remarks but must be 6 feet away from other attendees.
- Implement social distancing measures, including: Signage or pavement/ground markings (tape, chalk, etc.); staff to assist with directing students, attendees, and school personnel.
  - Mark 6-foot sections between attendees.
- If possible, send students diplomas and caps and gowns in advance through the mail or delivery so they can arrive dressed and with their diplomas in hand.
- If multiple ceremonies are planned for a single day, allow for at least two hours between ceremonies to prevent mixing across attendees.
- Encourage the orderly arrival and exiting of attendees in a manner that encourages social distancing.
- Fix or mark audience seating with readily identifiable signs to indicate by section, row, and seat. Marked seats should clearly define space for individuals with appropriate space per person.
- Clean and disinfect venue prior to and after the event, particularly high touch surfaces. Clean and disinfect shared equipment (microphones, podiums, etc.).

<https://emd.saccounty.net/EMD-COVID-19-Information/Documents/Graduation%20Flyer.pdf>

Alternatives to Commencement Ceremonies and Celebrations:

- Virtual graduation ceremonies, in which the staff films the speeches, dedications and other festivities. Students can submit videos to be included. May be streamed from Facebook Live or YouTube.
- "Car parades" in small communities with planning support from the local health department and police.
- Ceremonies with limited attendance and small groups may be held at football fields or other outdoor locations. Outdoor ceremonies with graduates marching, but families watching in their cars and listening to the event via local radio. All events must comply with state and local public health orders.