

*\*Guidelines are updated frequently to align with modifications from the CDC and executive orders.\**

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**\*Executive Order 2020-63:** SC Commerce, in close consultation with DHEC, is managing an [exception process](#) specific to events/large mass gatherings where more than 250 guests are expected, as outlined in the [recent executive order](#). These events will be required to satisfactorily demonstrate an ability to comply with federal and state COVID-19 procedures and protocols.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The recommendations set forth in the following pages are specific to the reopening of community festivals and special events in South Carolina and are intended for use by event planners, local officials, participating vendors, entertainers and other personnel working with the planning and execution of these events. Attendees of community festivals and other special events should follow the personal health and safety guidelines issued by the CDC and SCDHEC as well as local health authorities and specific guidelines provided by the event they attend. These recommendations are not intended for private gatherings like weddings, conventions, conferences, reunions, or athletic tournaments.

Festivals and special events, for the purposes of these recommendations, are defined as planned, public gatherings with in primarily outdoor temporary or permanent venues. Festivals are generally subject to the Governor's Executive Order that established the [event exception process](#) run by the Department of Commerce for > 250 attendee events. While some recommendations here may be beneficial, indoor event venues are encouraged to reference the AccelerateSC [Guidelines & Resources for Reopening & Operating Attractions](#).

These recommendations have been kept deliberately broad because of the varied size, footprint, and scope of community festivals and special events in SC intended to be represented. Federal, state and local guidelines and regulations are changing and evolving frequently. Anyone planning a public event should consult the current CDC guideline, state guidelines, as well as their local current guidelines (city, county, town, municipality) from the local health department, fire marshal, police, councils, etc.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

If more than 250 people are expected, an [event exception](#) must be obtained from the Department of Commerce. Above any and all other recommendations stated in the following pages, consideration of your event's ability to adequately adjust to changing social distancing guidance as well as attendee, volunteer, and staff safety should remain the priority. If, because of size, scope, location, community infection rates, historical attendance or any other planning influence, you are not able to adhere to the most basic, current social distancing and personal safety guidance, event postponement or cancellation is recommended.

If recommendations included herein may cause disruption to an event's standard operational

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or financial plans, it may be advisable to postpone the event until such precautions are not necessary.

### **ATTENDEE SAFETY**

Community festivals and events, like all other industries returning to work, should monitor and adjust to the “phased-in” approach many communities are implementing. Crowd capacity and the ability to control the number of attendees within your festival or event site has a direct impact on the immediate safety of attendees.

Careful consideration of current [CDC social distancing recommendations](#) of 6 feet should also guide operational adjustments for your event.

- **ATTENDEE EXPECTATIONS**

A reasonable assumption for anyone attending or working at a community festival or event is that they will be in proximity of large crowds and will be exposed to a large amount of touch points that could expose them to COVID-19 or any other viral disease. Events should create their own set of attendee expectations and clearly communicate these pre-event as well as repeating these expectations often to possible attendees. These questions should be considered when developing your unique set of attendee expectations:

- o Is there a local ordinance requiring the use of face coverings?
- o Do you expect your attendees to wear face coverings?
- o Are face coverings required while within festival grounds or just for entry?
- o Do you expect attendees to adhere to current social distancing and remain 6’ apart while in the festival or event site?
- o Do you expect front of house vendors to follow your guidelines when interacting and serving attendees?
- o Can you enforce expectations?
- o Can you adequately communicate these expectations?
- o Can your event adapt quickly to new guidance from health authorizes?

### **VOLUNTEER, STAFF & CONTRACTOR SAFETY**

Guidance from the [Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide](#), issued 5/11/20, which includes measures for social distancing, “work teams”, hand washing and sanitation, face coverings and other PPE, temperature screenings, and etiquette, can be a primary guide to develop event specific safety plans. Additional considerations may include:

- Policies for sick or symptomatic staff, volunteers, or contracted vendors that discourage them from coming to work if they have symptoms or are a close contact
- Liability waivers and compliance agreements
- Providing safety “work kits” that could include disposable mask, individual hand

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- sanitizer, and disposable gloves (training on proper use of PPE may be needed)
  - Clearly communicated expectations of safety protocols (example: it is recommended hand washing occur at a minimum of every hour. It is expected all staff, is to wear a mask while on the event site)

### **INGRESS & EGRESS**

Controlled ingress and egress are critical during initial reopening of community festivals and events. Ingress/egress points will vary greatly dependent upon unique footprints, but several standard considerations will apply to many events.

- Strong considerations to gated entry are highly encouraged. Many community events are free and open to the public, however, this greatly limits an event's ability to control crowd capacities, and enforce any new safety guidelines.
  - Events should assess and determine their appropriate capacities with assistance from local fire marshals based on current CDC guidelines on physical distancing. Outdoors 1212 people per acre and indoors 113 square feet per person or 50% occupancy as defined by the fire marshal, whichever is lower.
  - Events that cannot adequately control crowd capacities should consider postponing or cancelling.
- Gated points of entry should consider all possible touch points, including, but not limited to: temporary barricades, tickets, wristbands, hand stamps, ID checks, bag searches, check-in tables, metal detectors, etc.
  - Consider ways to move all admission procedures to online, virtual or touchless procedures
  - Consider how you record admission to control capacity
  - Consider the speed at which attendees can be safely granted entry and how to maintain proper social distancing while waiting in lines
  - Prioritize advanced, cashless, admission sales possibly offering significant savings
  - Consider implementing a no bag or clear bag policy to eliminate bag checks
  - Create one-way ingress/egress points
  - Create "pedestrian flow" within event sites

### **FRONT OF HOUSE VENDORS**

Events should either solicit from Point of Sale (POS) vendors, food & beverage and merchandise, a thorough safety plan or develop and require a compliance agreement to include individual protocols for sanitation and safety prior to arrival on-site, detailing how vendor operations and staff will adhere to your policies, as well as CDC and local health guidance.

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Event specific protocols should be developed and communicated with all vendors in advance and include clear expectations. Contactless POS procedures should be the highly encouraged option if not required. The use of Google Pay, Apple Pay, Venmo, Paypal and other cashless options will require use hotspots, wifi, or broadband.

- **FOOD & BEVERAGE**

1. It is always recommended to know and follow [SCDHEC regulations](#) for providing any food and beverage at festivals and special events, including [COVID-19 specific guidance](#). [Link to SC Restaurant and Lodging Association's Restaurant Guidelines here.](#)
2. It is recommended to minimize touch points where and when possible
3. Use of canned or plastic bottle beverages, alcohol and non-alcoholic, is recommended over draft/fountain served beverages
4. Designate a money handler separate who would not handle food or beverage product
5. Space vendors throughout your site to eliminate food and beverage gathering points
6. Eliminate food and beverage seating unless your footprint allows for proper table and seating spacing and you provide sanitation and cleaning attendants of tables and chairs
7. Condiments should be served with food orders or only at attendees' request, in disposable single-use packages. Open condiment service buffets should not be used.
8. Utensils should be disposable in nature and provided to attendees individually. Straws, stirrers, napkins and cutlery dispensers should not be used.
9. Follow ingress/egress protocols and have clearly designated entry and exit points.
10. Food and beverage samplings are discouraged at this time.
11. **ARTS, CRAFTS & MERCHANDISE**

- It is recommended to minimize touch points where and when possible.
- Determine event standards for touch/non-touch policies on merchandise.
- Any point of sale should offer cashless/touchless options; hand sanitizer should be provided if there are no touchless options.
- Develop and communicate all expectations to POS vendors for protocols when interacting with attendees.
- Properly space POS vendors and have displayed "maximum occupancy" signage for designated space.
- Follow ingress/egress protocols and have clearly designated entry and exit points. Plan for egress in the event of bad weather or other threat that requires a rapid exit.



## **Guidelines for Re-opening Festivals & Special Events**

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### **DISCLAIMER**

The information provided in this document is for general informational purposes and to help you make informed decisions. Notwithstanding any and all Federal and State requirements, re-opening and resuming activities are at your own discretion.

Although all information in this document is provided in good faith, we make no representation or warranty of any kind, express or implied, regarding the adequacy or completeness of these guidelines.

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