



COVID-19

CLEAN + SAFE GUIDANCE

For Meetings + Events

FIRST EDITION

October 19, 2020



MEETING GUIDANCE FOR HOTELIERS



Let's start off with the obvious.
It's going to be different for everyone.

PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS OF NORMAL HAVE CHANGED and getting "back" will require planning, enhanced communications, and above all else, adaptability. Just like the myriad of options the hotel and lodging industry offers its guests; hosting meetings or events won't be a one-size fits all. That said, the industry can play an integral part in safely planning and having meetings – in whatever form that takes – by practicing cleanliness and safety.

We're here to help.

PLANNING AHEAD

- ☑ Make sure your employee expectations of a clean and safe work environment are met, if not exceeded. You'll need to prepare for different scenarios for when hotels are allowed to host meetings. Similar to when hotels re-opened for individual travelers, for meetings, this might include a different set of employees who are caring for others, have children at home, and perhaps even have an apprehension to return to the workplace.
- ☑ For meeting and event attendees, this is going to be a brave new world. Expect business to start off slow and for both meeting planners and attendees to not exactly know what being clean and safe means to them.

ENHANCED COMMUNICATIONS

- ☑ Talk to your employees. Outline the steps you're taking to protect them. Whether your property has been closed and you'll need your employees to get back in the groove or if you've remained open with a limited team, more communication is going to be needed.
- ☑ People aren't going to travel unless they feel safe and attending meetings adds another layer of complexity. Remember, any type of gatherings have been limited, at best, so this aspect of service is going to be new to our guests, just like the COVID-19 guidelines for everyday life they are all used to by now. We always need to make our guests and visitors feel safe. This is step #1 as far as our guests are concerned.

ADAPTABILITY

- ☑ Change is hard. Changing behavior is even harder. If there is one thing that is certain in these unique times, it's uncertainty. Be prepared to change and adapt. What works for one meeting may be fine, or it may not work for another meeting. The standards that are put in place may be too much, too little, or just right...and that may change over time as well.

This guide will provide some ideas and concepts for meeting planning and arrival considerations, cleaning protocols, meeting protocols, food service considerations and vendor/contractor

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for the latest information.

considerations, workplace cleaning and safety suggestions, discussion of the possible guest experience, and finally, cleaning guidance. Additional guidance relevant for hotel and lodging operations, including dine-in restaurants, bars, fitness centers, family entertainment centers, hair salons, and retail operations, is available on the State of California's [COVID-19 website](#).

As everyone continues to learn more about operating a lodging facility during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond, it's important to stay updated on the latest information from the [Center for Disease Control](#), the [California Department of Public Health](#), your own [local county health department](#), and, of course, CHLA's web site at www.calodging.com. In this ever-changing environment, it's important to remain current on the latest information.

OVERVIEW

IN ADDITION TO GUESTROOMS, hotel and lodging properties provide meeting rooms, event space, and food & beverage for all types of 'group' customers, such as corporations, associations, religious groups, private entities, charities, and others.

It's important to institute appropriate guidelines in order to re-establish meetings and events in California hotel and lodging properties. As this segment of hotel business requires unique cleaning and safety protocols, the California Hotel & Lodging Association is providing this meeting and event guidance for the safety of the meeting/event attendees and employees, as well as guests and others.

Please note these guidelines are in addition to [CHLA's COVID-19 Clean + Safe Guidelines](#) for individual travel and the California Department of Public Health and [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Industry Guidance: Hotels, Lodging, and Short-Term Rentals](#). Those guidelines include:

- Worksite Specific Plan
- Employee Training
- Individual Control Measures & Screening
- Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols
- Physical Distancing Guidelines
- Considerations for Pools and Aquatic Venues (if applicable)

In addition to these standards, hotel and lodging properties should also consider implementing additional protocols for individual travelers and employees such as [CHLA's Clean + Safe Self-Certification](#), the American Hotel & Lodging Association's [Safe Stay](#) initiative, and/or the Global Biorisk Advisory Council [STAR Accreditation Program](#), among other programs.

BLUEPRINT FOR A SAFER ECONOMY

HOTEL AND LODGING

properties comprise a multitude of operational aspects and service offerings that complement meetings and events and traditional services. Hotels must review the guidance available in [California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) and apply the appropriate cleaning and safety protocols to all aspects of operations, including:

- Food Service & Bars
- Retail Operations
- Live Performances
- Offices
- Shuttles & Transportation
- Maintenance & Custodial

[More Industry Guidance](#)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS



Meeting planning will need to be an even more collaborative process with planners, clients and customers. In the current environment, all parties must approach meetings and events in a completely new way to keep attendees safe, while providing flexibility and creativity our customers have come to expect. No matter the size or format of the meeting or event, health and safety are the primary concerns.

Now more than ever, the decision to hold meeting or put on an event is a major choice for hotel group customers. Once that decision has been made, the myriad of format choices including virtual, hybrid, and in-person will need to be determined to satisfy the meeting goals and finding the right operational solutions for all involved. Pre-meeting planning discussions and virtual site inspections should be encouraged to kick off the planning process, evaluate formats and services, and to build the relationship with the team responsible for the success of the meeting or event.

CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

- ☑ Ensure planners, clients and customers are educated about federal, state, and local health and safety regulations and any hotel

rules that may also apply, in preparation for enforcement.

- ☑ Pre-event communications with attendees to inform and set expectations.
- ☑ Registration:
 - Electronic advance registration.
 - Mobile check-in, where applicable.
 - Larger area/allow more time for on-site registration.
- ☑ Moderating traffic flow by staggering start/break times.
- ☑ Longer break times:
 - For employees to refresh and clean meeting rooms between sessions.
 - Allow time for guests to go to their guest rooms for restroom breaks.
- ☑ Leverage technology for hybrid meetings.
- ☑ Utilization of multiple meeting rooms for a single meeting with technology.
- ☑ Encourage same seating over multiple days.
- ☑ Rotate presenters/speakers to limit attendee movement.
- ☑ Non-contact, contact-light or cashless transactions.

ARRIVAL CONSIDERATIONS



While pre-registration is always recommended, there might also be a need for on-site registration and/or a check-in process. Remember, registration sets the tone for the meeting and this is going to be a different experience than the guest check-in process, so registration should be viewed as another opportunity for a first impression. In the registration setting, the priority should be on social distancing and, as much as possible, a contactless experience.



CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

- ☑ Registration desks, kiosks, or tables are to be one person per six feet.
- ☑ Consider staggered registration hours.
- ☑ Similar to the front desk:
 - Utilize transparent barriers such as plexi-glass dividers.
 - Encourage electronic options when possible using personal smartphones or tablets.
 - Have stanchions, where appropriate and when needed.
 - Floor signs/clings for physical distancing.
 - Over-communicate with signage.
 - Provide hand sanitizer for both employees and attendees as needed.
- ☑ Encourage limited single use materials such as name tags and other registration materials where practical.
- ☑ Consider placement of meeting materials at attendees seats prior to arrival.
- ☑ Encourage a strategy in consultation with planners, clients and customers to capture attendee contact information, for potential contract tracing.

CLEANING PROTOCOLS



An addition to the cleaning and disinfecting protocols required by the California Department of Public Health and Cal/OSHA via California's COVID-19 industry guidance for hotels and lodging properties, meetings and events require specific cleaning protocols modeled after CDC and EPA guidelines.

CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

- ☑ Meeting rooms tables and chairs are to be cleaned and sanitized:
 - Prior to each new set up.
- ☑ Service equipment, common surfaces and high-touch areas are to be sanitized or disinfected during the event and after each use.
- ☑ All food service equipment, for serving hot and cold plates, belts and hot boxes should be washed and sanitized before and after use.
- ☑ Hand sanitizer stations available throughout the meeting space and at meals.
- ☑ Strict adherence to wearing gloves (no bare-hand protocol) when setting up tables and preparing all attendee touch points (e.g. glassware, roll-ups, etc.) and when refreshing event areas and meeting rooms.
- ☑ Increase cleaning schedules for common areas and high-contact touchpoints such as doors, escalator railings and elevators.
- ☑ Soiled linens will be replaced after each use and cleaned per CDC guidelines.
- ☑ To reduce contact, where practical, and not contrary to security procedures, doors will be placed open.
- ☑ For restrooms:
 - Adjust protocols for cleaning and spacing of meeting room restrooms.
 - Guide guest in adhering to physical distancing protocols for restroom capacities.
 - Increase cleaning and sanitation throughout the event and after heavy break use.

MEETING PROTOCOLS



For meetings and events, physical distancing is the primary focus for the attendees, along with reducing contact where possible. From registration to the meeting or event, including breaks and meals, and limited capacity on elevators, physical distancing is a key to successful meetings. Additionally, signage and physical barriers and managing amenities are equally important.

CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

- ☒ Provide directional signage to attendees, adhering to physical distancing protocols.
 - Utilize digital signage for meeting and event space, where possible.
- ☒ Utilize specific and/or branded floor signs or clings.
 - Especially helpful for directional guidance.
 - If possible, designate entrances and exits.
- ☒ Establish transparent barriers where physical distancing is challenging.
- ☒ Provide signage at elevators.
- ☒ Discontinue coat-checks and other amenities that require unnecessarily increasing the risk of contact.
- ☒ To the extent possible, manage attendance to meeting and event areas via technology, visible cues such as wristbands and badges, or physical controls such as secure entry and exit points.
- ☒ For exhibits:
 - If necessary, limit the number of people allowed to enter exhibit areas.
 - Provide hand sanitizer in exhibit areas, including entrances and exits.
 - Utilizing floor signs or clings, designate one-way traffic flow.
 - Frequently touched surfaces are to be cleaned frequently.
 - Consider providing guidance for giveaways, so attendees respect physical distancing.
- ☒ Adjust floor plans by evaluating capacities to allow for physical distancing.
 - Capacities are to be adjusted to meet county guidelines, as they evolve.
 - Floor plans allow for stanchions, effective queuing and proper ingress/egress routes.
- ☒ Outdoor activities:
 - Consider outdoor meetings whenever possible.
 - Outdoor areas can provide additional spacing during breaks.
 - Consider meeting and event set-up or design to allow for areas that can be open to the outside.
 - Establish heat illness prevention plan to protect employees.
- ☒ For speakers and presenters, stage areas are appropriately physically distanced (when speakers are not masked).

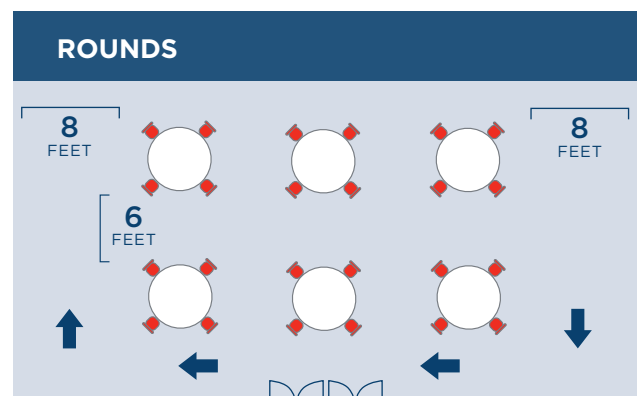
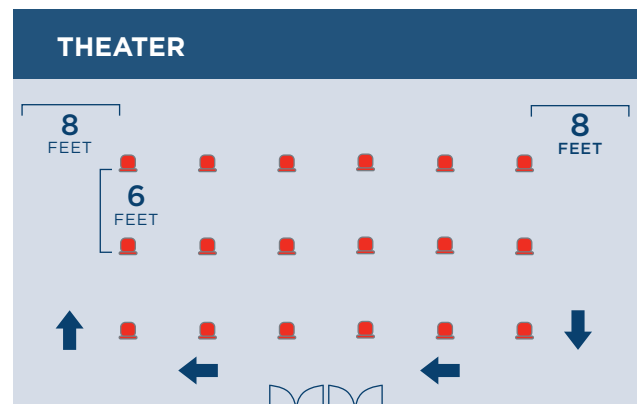
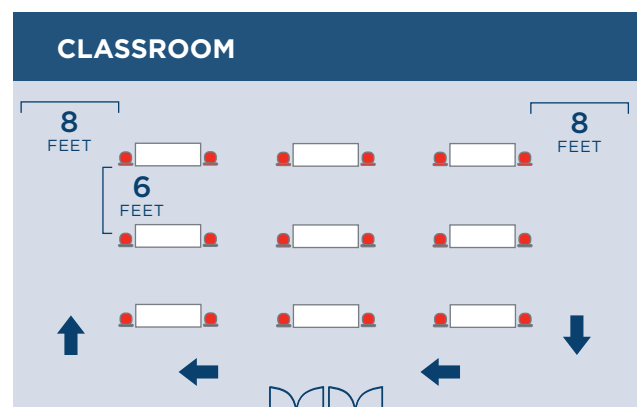


☑ Specific floor plans:

- Classroom:
 - Two people per six foot table.
 - Six feet between the front and back of each chair.
 - Minimum of eight feet circulation areas.
 - Attendees face the same direction.
- Theater:
 - One chair per six feet of seating.
 - Minimum of eight feet circulation areas.
 - Attendees face the same direction.
- Rounds:
 - Six-foot rounds and four chairs per round.
 - Six-foot aisles between chairs.
 - Minimum of eight feet circulation areas.

☑ Meeting room refreshers and amenities:

- Guests are recommended to stay in the same areas during refreshes.
- Attendee seating remains constant/assigned – sitting in the same location for each session.
- For break-out sessions, consider moving speakers/presenters instead of attendees.
- Multi-use items such as notepads, pens and candies are individually wrapped and presented or discontinued.
- Consider individual meeting attendee amenity bags placed at seating.
- Conference room settings can include new or single use items.



FOOD SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS



Hotels can continue providing the same high-quality food and beverage selections and world-class service our attendees have come to expect. New practices and protocols will be implemented to modify and adjust our current offerings to allow for proper physical distancing and reduce overall contact where possible.

CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

- ☑ Attendant served individually plated meals.
 - Discontinue pre-setting food, beverages, or condiments.
 - Plated items remain covered until service.
 - All cutlery will be provided via flatware roll up or sealed individual plasticware.
 - Where flatware roll-up is provided, sealed individual plasticware may be requested.
 - Communal food and beverage, including water pitchers on tables, is prohibited.
 - Beverages are served tableside.
 - Side stations are for clean/fresh items only and protected between servings.
 - Food, waste and napkins will be cleared to the back of house.
 - Plan for longer meal times and consider multiple assigned meal times.
- ☑ Attendant served receptions and/or breaks.
 - Beverage services require an attendant.
 - Food service options include single or double-sided access (served only):
 - Six-foot barriers in front of food displays.
 - One-way traffic flow.
- ☑ Single-use, individually sealed food and beverage items served as practical.
 - Encourage pre-packaged and preset menu options.
 - Set up stanchions or other barriers to ensure physical distancing.
- ☑ Water stations in event and/or exhibit areas (with an attendant), as appropriate.
 - Single use water containers only.
- ☑ Beverage stations (including bars) must have a server.
 - Six-foot barriers at beverage stations.
 - One server per six-foot area.
 - One separate table for completed beverages.
 - Prepared beverages should be placed on a separate surface.
 - Surface to be cleaned frequently.
 - Focus on use of canned/pre-batched cocktails and bottled wines.
 - Focus on bottled juice mixers instead of sliced bar fruit/garnishes.
 - Packaged sustainable straws and stir sticks as needed.

If possible, consider offering non-cash or contact-less transactions, including room charges, to reduce contact levels for any food and beverage service requiring payment.

VENDOR/ CONTRACTOR CONSIDERATIONS



Vendor and contractor partners are to provide a safe and healthful workplace for all employees, guests and business partners. Employees, guests and vendors will follow the below guidelines concerning general hygiene and disinfecting equipment between uses.

CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

- ☑ Hotels are to require any vendors or contractors, such as technology, audio-visual, and business center service providers (and any other contracted service provider) to establish and communicate new protocols.
- ☑ Vendors/contractors are to:
 - Follow all mandated CDC, federal, state and local guidelines and/or restrictions for services including daily health screening requirements.
 - Follow hotel/venue guidelines.
 - Vendors coming into direct contact with guests are required to wear PPE while on property.
 - All equipment is to be sanitized before entering hotel/venue.

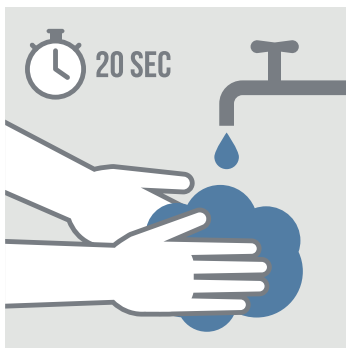
- High-touch equipment such as microphones, clickers/slide advancers, laptop computers and podiums will be disinfected after each speaker and session and on a daily basis.
- All rented furniture or equipment will be properly sanitized after installation and prior to guest use.



COVID-19 PREVENTION TIPS



Instruct employees to stay home if they are sick and consider pre-screening employees for symptoms.



Wash hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitizer (minimum of 60% alcohol).



Maintain social distancing of at least six feet and avoid gatherings of groups of people.



Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) and require employees wear appropriate PPE based on their roles.



Inform guests and provide training to employees on the importance of Covid-19 prevention measures.



Increase the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing in all public spaces with an emphasis on frequent contact surfaces.



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