

COVID Management Plan Assessment Framework

August 2021

About the COVID Management Plan Assessment Framework

A COVID Management Plan is a unique and comprehensive plan that must be specific to your venue or activity. The plan sets out how a high-risk activity will be managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 between patrons/attendees and staff.

COVID Management Plans must be approved by SA Health before you can conduct the above activities.

This framework has been developed to provide guidance for event organisers to design lower risk events with an equitable and transparent basis for the assessment of COVID Management Plans during this time. The framework identifies levels of risk and corresponding measures that relate to that level of risk.

This framework is only a guide to the risk tolerance of SA Health's COVID Management Committee who are responsible for assessing Plans. All plans are different and will be assessed on their own merits and subject to their own conditions.

The application process for a COVID Management Plan will remain the same. All plans must be submitted and reviewed by SA Health's COVID Management Committee.

The Framework is intended to help applicants:

- assess whether their event is too risky to proceed under the current situation and determine whether to cancel or postpone it
- design or modify their event to closer match the elements identified in the Framework
- confirm that their event is suitable to proceed and await approval (noting that meeting the Framework elements does not necessarily guarantee approval).

The Framework will be reviewed at least every two months and updated if necessary to ensure it reflects the current risk level, restrictions and vaccination levels of the state.

Keeping South Australia COVID safe

In the months ahead, there are a number of major events proposed that involve large numbers of patrons and have free-flowing settings (i.e. are not subject to fixed seating). These events are in addition to a range of other seasonal events such as sports finals and local Christmas pageants involving smaller, but still significant, numbers of attendees.

There remains a high risk of the Delta variant spreading into South Australia from interstate. The recent Modbury outbreak demonstrates the risk involved with holding major events where extensive transmission could occur. Major events could also increase the difficulty of identifying and tracing contacts, and lead to a prolonged outbreak in South Australia.

Levels of COVID-19 vaccination in South Australia are not currently high enough to reduce the risk of rapid and extensive spread.

Due to the risk of spread of COVID-19 into South Australia and current level of vaccination in the community, major events with free-flowing settings are considered to be too great a risk to the South Australian community.

Understanding the Framework

The following terms are used in the Framework:

Risk levels

The risk levels in the Framework have been provided as an indication of the source of risks and how these will determine the risk tolerance applied to the assessment of COVID Management Plans.

It is difficult to be definitive about risk levels as these can change frequently with the nature of the pandemic.

At present, the risk to South Australia is primarily from interstate. This means that some activities that require a COVID Management Plan will still be allowed to continue, but significantly limited to smaller events or those undertaken in a structured environment (seated and with controlled entry). Local cases of COVID-19 may result in all COVID Management Plans being suspended through changes to the Emergency Management Activities Directions.

Border restrictions

Unfortunately, border restrictions will have significant impacts on the ability to hold events that are reliant on interstate performers or technical staff. It is important for event organisers to consider this challenge over the coming months.

The capacity to grant an exemption will be limited by the circumstances in the state or territory the person is travelling from. There are also many other considerations including how essential they are to the activity, how they intend to travel, the duration of their involvement in the activity and the capacity to quarantine or undertake extensive COVID safe measures to reduce the risk to the South Australian community.

Indoor / outdoor

Outdoor activities pose a lower COVID-19 transmission risk than indoor events. This is why there are differing levels of crowd numbers allowed for indoor and outdoor activities or why indoor events may not be approved at higher risk levels.

Controlled access

At this time, events taking place at a particular venue should have controlled access to ensure that numbers of patrons can be effectively managed and critical activities such as COVID SAfe Check-In can be monitored.

Proposed activities occurring in a location without controlled access (e.g. on a street) will need to provide additional details on how COVID safety will be established in the absence of the ability to directly manage crowd numbers. This may include increasing the publicly accessible area (footprint) of your event to enable patrons to spread out more.

Indicative maximum capacity

The numbers provided give an indication of what crowd sizes are likely to be acceptable in differing settings (indoor/outdoor and seated/non-seated).

Structured events (i.e. ones that are largely seated) reduce risk as they lower the number of possible interactions between patrons. They also increase the ability to track and trace possible contacts if someone who attends the event tests positive to COVID-19. This is why greater numbers of attendees are allowed at these events.

Unstructured events (i.e. ones that allow patrons to move freely across a site) increase the risk of multiple interactions between different patrons and cause significant challenges with contact tracing. This is why lower numbers of attendees are necessary at these events.

There are also other considerations when assessing proposed crowd numbers including the nature of the activity, the composition of the crowd and the ability of the venue or event managers to effectively manage COVID safe behaviours of the attendees.

Zoning

Zoning breaks larger groups into smaller ones by establishing a zone that patrons are mostly limited to. This may occur by enforcing empty rows of seating, crowd control barriers or some other way of separating the zones. A critical element of zoning is providing sufficient distance between zones to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

As risk increases, the number of patrons within a zone will need to be decreased to reduce the number of possible contacts if someone in a particular zone tests positive to COVID-19. Separation between zones is essential.

COVID risk behaviours

Some COVID risk behaviours (such as singing, dancing and standing consumption of food and beverages) may be restricted by the provisions of the General Activities Direction. These restrictions will be reflected in COVID Management Plans.

The inclusion of activities that are not restricted by the General Activities Direction but increase COVID-19 transmission risk (e.g. consumption of alcohol) may require the increase of other COVID safe measures (e.g. a reduction in numbers of attendees permitted).

Masks

The wearing of masks in certain settings may be required by the provisions of the General Activities Direction. These requirements will be reflected in COVID Management Plans.

In other settings where mask wearing is not mandated by the General Activities Direction, mask wearing may be included as a condition of the COVID Management Plan to reduce COVID-19 transmission risk. Attendee numbers or possible areas of congestion within the event are some of the factors that will be taken into consideration.

Certain outdoor events may have mask wearing included as a condition of the COVID Management Plan due to the size of the event.

Major stadiums

Certain aspects of the Assessment Framework may be applied differently to extremely large event venues, such as major stadiums with a capacity of over 25,000. The Committee will work directly with these venues to consider appropriate maximum capacities and zoning requirements.

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Risk level	Border restrictions	Indoor/ outdoor	Controlled access *	Indicative maximum capacity [~]	Zoning [^]	COVID risk behaviours	Masks
Low risk of COVID-19 transmission nationally	Local and national staff	Indoor and outdoor	Non-controlled access	Seated: 20,000+ Non-seated: 10,000+	Not required	Permitted	Not required
High risk from interstate**	Local and national staff (under an exemption where required)	Differing capacities for indoor and outdoor	Controlled access only	Outdoors: Seated: 15,000 Non-seated: 3,000 Indoors: Seated: 5,000 Non-seated: 1,500	Required: Maximum 200 people per zone for seated events	No singing or dancing	Required indoors
COVID-19 cases in South Australia (not an outbreak)	Local staff and artists only	Outdoor only	Controlled access only	Seated: 5,000 Non-seated: 1,000	Required: Maximum 50 people per zone for seated events	No singing or dancing Seated consumption	Required when social distancing is not possible

**This includes no known COVID-19 cases in the South Australian community or unexpected wastewater detections.

* Controlled access is gated/ticketed events where entry is limited to ticket holders or people accessing a venue through a controlled entry point and the site is fenced. Non-controlled access are events held in open sites such as a street, oval or park.

~ Indicative maximum capacity is subject to the density requirement. Indicative maximum capacity is for venues whose size may indicate that they have a capacity to exceed the maximum capacity while meeting the density requirement.

^ Zoning is breaking down a large area into sections that accommodate the required maximum number of seated people. Access to the zones should be limited to those people within that zone so that numbers can be monitored and cross over between zones is limited. Health, safety and accessibility should be considered when designing zones.

Next Steps

If you're ready to begin the COVID Management Plan application process, please visit <https://www.covid-19.sa.gov.au/business-and-events/create-a-covid-management-plan>

Ensure your Plan and all attachments are submitted at least 4 weeks before your event or your event's critical date. Once complete, submit your plan via email to Health.COVIDManagementPlan@sa.gov.au.

Once your plan is received by SA Health it will undergo an extensive review process. Ensure that you are available to make any updates or additional to your plan as required.

If you have any queries about your submission, contact Health.COVIDManagementPlan@sa.gov.au.

Any changes required to an approved plan must be submitted to SA Health via the [COVID Management Plan amendment form](#).