

Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council Public Health Autumn-Winter 2021 Guidance for Event Organisers

AUTUMN-WINTER 2021 UPDATE

The Government [COVID Response: Autumn Winter Plan 2021](#) outlines a Plan B which would only be enacted by central government if the data suggests further measures are necessary to protect the NHS. Further information on Plan B and mandatory vaccine entry for events is available [here](#).

All Event Organisers are expected to be cognisant of the following and build this into their event planning accordingly.

Mandatory Vaccine-Only COVID-status Certification

Under Plan B, the Government expects to introduce mandatory vaccine certification in a limited number of settings, with specific characteristics. If Plan B is implemented, it could be at short notice in response to concerning data.

Settings

Under Plan B, the Government expects that mandatory vaccine-only certification would be introduced for visitors to the following venues:

- All nightclubs;
- Indoor, crowded settings with 500 or more attendees where those attendees are likely to be in close proximity to people from other households, such as music venues or large receptions;
- Outdoor, crowded settings with 4,000 or more attendees where those attendees are likely to be in close proximity to people from other households, such as outdoor festivals; and
- Any settings with 10,000 or more attendees, such as large sports and music stadia.

There are some settings that will be exempt from requirements to use the NHS COVID Pass, including communal worship, wedding ceremonies, funerals and other commemorative events, protests and mass participation sporting events.

In order to help businesses prepare their own contingency plans, the Government will shortly publish more detail about the proposed certification regime that would be introduced as part of Plan B. The Government would seek to give businesses at least one week's notice before mandatory vaccine certification came into force.

Legally Mandating Face Coverings

Though there is no current legal requirement, the Government recommends that people continue to wear face coverings in crowded and enclosed spaces where you come into contact with people you don't normally meet.

If Plan B is implemented, the Government will bring back the legal requirement to wear face coverings in some settings. The precise settings will be decided at the time.

The following guidance supersedes the requirement to complete a COVID-19 Checklist as part of event applications.

On Monday 12 July 2021, the Prime Minister announced that England would be moving to step 4 of the Government's roadmap from Monday 19 July 2021. Following this announcement national guidance has been produced to support the move to step 4 including the following:

- [Moving to step 4 of the roadmap guidance](#)
- [Covid-19 Response: Summer 2021](#)

Since April, the government has been involved in a series of pilot events as part of the [Events Research Programme](#) which aimed to examine the risk of transmission of COVID-19 from attendance at events and explore ways to enable people to attend a range of events safely. The pilots used enhanced testing approaches and other measures to run events with larger crowd sizes and reduced social distancing to evaluate the outcomes. Based upon the findings from [Phase I of the research](#), the Government has published '[Working Safely during Covid-19](#)' guidance for businesses and event organisers on necessary considerations when planning an event to help prevent and reduce the spread of infection.

We recommended that you read, understand and implement the [Working Safely during Covid-19](#) guidance in full as it outlines *priority actions* to protect yourself, your staff and your customers during coronavirus (COVID-19), as well as additional advice and [key principles for event planning](#). These include, but are not limited to:

- As an employer, complete a risk assessment to include Covid-19 as a workplace hazard, this should identify all relevant risks (including those identified via the Events Research Programme). The risk assessment should also include protocols for managing suspected or confirmed cases amongst attendees and whether your workers need personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Take steps to reduce the risk of transmission at the event, including putting in place [cleaning](#) and [hygiene](#) protocols, and ensuring your venue has adequate [ventilation](#).
- Recommend that customers and visitors to wear face coverings, for example through signage, if your facility or event is likely to include enclosed and crowded spaces. Support your staff if they wish to continue to wear a facemask in the workplace.
- Display an NHS QR code so that visitors can check in using the NHS COVID-19 app.
- Consider the use of the NHS COVID Pass in high risk settings to reduce the risk of infection. This includes event attendees providing a negative PCR or LFT within 48 hours of entry to the venue, proof of being fully vaccinated, or proof of a positive PCR within the last 6 months and not within the last 10 days. If you use the NHS COVID Pass, you should ensure that you comply with all relevant legal obligations and guidance, including on equalities. You can find more information in the [NHS COVID Pass guidance](#).
- Ask employees to get tested regularly, local testing information is available for [Hampshire](#) and [Isle of Wight](#).
- Use of crowd management including and use of stewards, zoning and wristbands to maintain infection control.
- Implement a communications plan to ensure relevant information on COVID-19 measures is communicated to attendees before and during the event.

Whilst it is welcome news that events are able to resume, it is important to recognise that we continue to operate within a global pandemic and, as the event organiser, you are responsible for the safety of staff and visitors at your event under the Health & Safety at Work Act.

The Purple Guide has also recently been updated with a specific chapter on running an event during a pandemic. This supports the government guidance and sets out best practice for event organisers.

On this basis, Public Health strongly recommend that organisers encourage pre-event testing for staff, volunteers and attendees. Local experience with large events has demonstrated the positive impact the above measures can have on infection control. Information on asymptomatic home testing and supervised testing can be found on the Council's websites: [Hampshire](#) and [Isle of Wight](#).

Local authorities can still prohibit or restrict venues or events using the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) \(No. 3\) Regulations 2020, and will continue to apply until the end of 24th March 2022](#). Local authority decisions on events will be made on a case-by-case basis, with consideration given to the [guidance issued by the government](#) and local circumstances in order to understand whether there is a significant threat to public health.

- To support the review of events, documentation should be submitted to the Safety Advisory Group as early as possible to allow sufficient time to review these and provide comment.
- When reviewing these documents, SAG Chairs will take Public Health advice in considering the type of event, the COVID-19 mitigations outlined in the submitted event documentation and what is happening in the local area at the time (for example the number of COVID cases locally (community prevalence), variants of concern and hospital capacity).
- Events that have already submitted an application and supporting documents are advised to review these to make sure that they adhere to the new guidance.
- New event applications that do not detail how they align with the relevant government guidance will be returned for further information.
- The risk remains that restrictions may be reinstated in future and that any events planned are subject to postponement / cancellation even after permission has been granted.

Any queries on the guidance should be directed to the Hampshire County Council and Isle of Wight Council Public Health Team in the first instance.