

OutCold's Guidelines for Executing Safe Events and Experiential Campaigns in 2020

One of the questions we have been getting from our clients and other large organizations who host live events is, "how do we prepare for events in a post Covid-19 world?" Although there is no single answer for this, there are a number of guideposts that event hosts can use to plan to safely reopen events.

Planning:

It is critical that organizations and companies start planning now for post Covid-19 events. There will need to be a large number of changes to how we think about events going forward and having a solid, written plan will make the transition more successful. The initial questions that need to be asked before restarting events are: (1) is it legal to host an event; and (2) is it safe to host an event.

Legal: As to the question of whether it is legal to host events, this may seem straightforward, but can present some tricky issues. On a basic level, it will be necessary to check with the state, city, and/or local rules regarding re-opening and events. However, because there is no single set of guidelines, and local areas may differ in guidelines from more general state guidelines, you must review and reconcile a number of different rules. It is also very likely that additional rules may be promulgated by various organizations, such as local health departments, that will add additional requirements for events. Finally, organizers should anticipate that the rules will continue to change and evolve. This means that you will need to devote significant time to reviewing rules, or you will need to work with an organization who can keep up with all current and changing rules and help you stay in compliance.[1]

Safety:

As to the question of whether it is safe to host events, there are a number of things to consider. First, the issue of safety is closely related to the host's legal duty to "behave reasonably." In basic terms, this means that you have to be acting in a way that makes sense for what you are doing and how you are doing it. This concept may seem simple, but it is deceptively complex. One of the reasons this is complicated, is because there may not be a full set of written instructions telling you what is reasonable. This is especially true for the post Covid-19 world where everyone is still trying to figure out the rules going forward. Much like the legal question, working with an organization that can monitor and advise on the changing environment can help you design an appropriate plan that is reasonable under the current conditions.

What Do You Need To Do?

The following is an outline of things you need to do before launching your next event:

1. Review all [CDC Considerations](#) for Events and Gatherings

2. Develop a written plan for safely hosting your event. *This written plan, if done correctly and if it is comprehensive, can provide evidence that you acted reasonably with respect to your event.*
3. Design a communication plan for your event patrons. You should plan to communicate all rules and procedures in as many ways as possible. For many events, the new procedures will be a change and it is important to communicate early and often with patrons in order to try to make sure everyone understands the procedures.
4. Plan to train your employees and contractors. Along with the overall written plan, you need to make sure all of your staff fully understands the plans and knows how to communicate with patrons.[2]
5. Cleaning and sanitizing. You will need to plan for extra cleaning and sanitization during the event. This will likely require extra staff and equipment.
6. Entrances and Exits. You will need to think about traffic flow at your event. Is it possible to limit foot traffic in order to reduce crowding? Should areas have a one-way traffic flow? You may need to rethink your space in order to make sure you are operating as safely as possible.
7. Keep high-touch and common areas clean and safe. You will need to consider things such as plexiglass barriers for vendors and food service, touchless pay options, and hand sanitizing stations.[3]

Obviously, this is not intended to be a complete plan, but rather a guideline to help organizations think about their future events. If you have questions or would like help designing a plan, please feel free to reach out to us. We are looking forward to the return of safe and fun events.

[1] *Did you know that OutCold's COO is a licensed attorney with more than 18 years of experience working with companies on various legal issues. This allows OutCold to help clients make sure they are anticipating legal and compliance issues.*

[2] *Did you know that OutCold is known for its world-class training programs for event staff? If you need help designing a plan, we are here to help.*

[3] *OutCold has custom hand sanitizing stations available that can be quickly and easily deployed for events.*