



Guidance for

LIVESTOCK SHOWS & COMPETITIONS

The State of Maryland continues to be vigilant in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 as we begin to safely reopen certain businesses and activities across the state. The Maryland Department of Agriculture understands that summer represents peak season for livestock shows and competitions at local fairs and other agricultural events.

For show managers who plan to move forward with their events, the State Veterinarian's office has provided the following guidance to ensure your event is in compliance with state orders and standards set by the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

BEFORE THE EVENT:

- Consider the risks related to COVID-19 in the community where the venue is located. It is not advisable to hold an event in an area with significant community transmission.
- Familiarize yourself with local, state, and federal guidelines to slow the spread of COVID-19. The community where the venue is located may have additional restrictions in place.
- Develop a management plan for the venue that incorporates best practices as provided by MDH and U.S. CDC.
- Communicate closely and share plans with the local health department before the event.
- Speak with the venue manager. Discuss expectations, including any new procedures for the facility and sanitization practices.
- Require pre-registration to eliminate in-person interaction on site, and to allow for entry on specific dates and times in order to control capacity. Maintain a record of registrants for a minimum of two weeks to allow for contact tracing if it is required.
- Develop flexible refund policies. Allow participants to stay home without penalty if they are sick, need to care for someone who is sick, or are at high risk for complications from COVID-19.
- Reduce the size and duration of the show to minimize time spent on site. Consider limiting the number of participants overall and in individual classes.
- If appropriate, consider hosting all or parts of the competition virtually via livestream or through submitted photos or video.
- Determine what you will do if you must postpone or cancel the event. Make clear to participants how they will be notified if last-minute changes occur.

DURING THE EVENT:

- Post signage at entrances and throughout the venue that clearly communicate the event's COVID-19 protocols.
- Use COVID-19 symptom screening measures for all staff, participants and attendees upon entrance. Anyone who does not passing the screening process should not be admitted to the event.

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DURING THE EVENT (CONTINUED):

- Post signage at entrances and throughout the venue that clearly communicate the event's COVID-19 protocols.
- Use COVID-19 symptom screening measures for all staff, participants and attendees upon entrance. Anyone who does not passing the screening process should not be admitted to the event.
- Implement cleaning and disinfection practices according to MDH and U.S. CDC guidelines, with regular sanitization of high-touch surfaces at least every two hours.
- No matter if the event is indoors or outside, U.S. CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in settings where it is difficult to maintain at least six feet of distance between people. Note: children under age two should NOT wear cloth face coverings because of the danger of suffocation. In addition, on very hot days facial coverings increase the risk of heat-related injury and attendees and staff should be advised to be alert for symptoms.
- Do not allow participants to congregate. At least six feet of distance must be maintained between people, including in prep areas, at the gate, and while in the show ring. Additional show staff may be needed in these areas to provide reminders and guidance to participants.
- Event classes with more than one participant in the exhibition area, should require six feet distance between competitors.
 - Consider dividing classes into multiple groups if necessary. Designation of placings can be decided by venue management.
 - Consider use of visual aids to demonstrate six foot distancing
- Exhibitors should only come to the ring when their class is called.
- Parking areas, campgrounds, tie areas, and stalls should be set up and managed to maintain at least six feet of distance between family groups.
- Provide ample access to handwashing or sanitizing stations for staff, participants and attendees throughout the venue.
- Require all attendees—including exhibitors, family members, and spectators—to sign in at arrival.
 - Consider electronic or mobile sign-in options, disinfect shared pens, and maintain at least six feet of distance between those waiting to sign in.
- The number of spectators should be strictly limited if allowed at all. Access to bleachers or group seating areas should be restricted. Consider providing a livestream of the competition in lieu of in-person spectators.
- Children who are not competing should stay home. Children who do attend must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Ensure that children comply with applicable guidelines for appropriate distancing and use of face coverings.
- Participants should leave the event venue as soon as they have finished showing.
- Group meals should be prohibited.
- Concession sales should be in compliance with Governor's orders on foodservice.
- Eliminate self-serve stations including beverage and/or condiment dispensers and restrict access to tables and group eating areas.
- Communicate and enforce new policies with exhibitors and the public.
- Make expectations clear to participants before the event and consider using signs and staff to provide reminders and guidance during the event.

These recommendations do not replace or supersede any requirements applicable to your operations pursuant to law or regulation. These guidelines are intended as a supplement to assist with safe operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and are subject to change.