

Covid-19 Event Safety Planning Guide

1 December 2021



Purpose of Document

This Covid-19 Safety Planning Guide outlines what will be considered as part of planning and delivery of events at Auckland Unlimited to mitigate transmission of Covid-19 and build guest confidence at events held at its various venues and events.



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Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to establish standards and guidelines that enable Auckland Unlimited and our customers to operate in a safe and secure environment.

This plan has been developed considering current Government Covid-19 guidance. Controls listed in this guide relate to operational requirements and provide suggestions for consideration when planning which align with official guidance. It has been developed considering official Ministry of Health, www.Covid-19.govt.nz, industry, venue and event layout guidance, as well as WorkSafe guidance, client feedback and patron research.

The plan will be updated frequently as new Covid-19 Government directives and information are provided. In the meantime it establishes the foundations of ideas and recommendations for safe delivery of events.

Sources of Information

Several helpful sources of information are listed below:

RESOURCE	DETAIL
Event Sector Voluntary Code - MBIE	The Event Sector Voluntary Code has been revised recognising that events present a higher degree of transmission risk.
Unite against COVID-19	Information regarding booking your vaccination; checking locations of interest; when to wear a mask; use of My Vaccine Pass, downloadable posters; finding support.
https://covid19.govt.nz/business-and-money/businesses/record-keeping-and-contact-tracing/	Information and advice on mandatory record keeping.
Worksafe – advice on employing volunteers during COVID environment	The steps you take to ensure your volunteers' health and safety at work during the Covid-19 pandemic.
WorkSafe - COVID-19 advice and guidance	WorkSafe has enforcement responsibilities under the Covid-19 Public Health Response Act 2020 (Covid-19 legislation) and its orders. WorkSafe continues to support and encourage businesses and services to meet requirements under the relevant Covid-19 legislation and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA).
Auckland Council. COVID-19	Information about Auckland Council services and facilities, i.e., alcohol licensing, building consents, etc.
Ministry of Health. gatherings	Information for organisers and attendees of gatherings.
Ministry of Health. general cleaning advice for businesses	Outlines ongoing cleaning expectations for businesses and education centres.
Ministry of Health. cleaning following confirmed or probable COVID case	Guidance on cleaning a room that has been used by a confirmed or probable Covid-19 case, including cleaning products and the personal protective equipment that may be required.
Unstoppable Summer Messaging	<i>Unstoppable Summer Campaign</i> . to remind all New Zealanders about the steps we all need to take to keep each other safe during the upcoming summer period. Documents / templates retrievable in Google Drive.
Ministry of Health - COVID-19 latest updates, information and advice	Provides the latest updates, information, and advice on Covid-19, i.e., number of cases, locations of interest, testing locations, etc.
Ministry of Transport - COVID-19 information	For information about permitted travel for personal, business or work.
Privacy.org mandatory record keeping	Guidance on mandatory record keeping for contact tracing.
https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/contact-tracing	Rules around all businesses and workplaces displaying the official NZ Covid Tracer QR codes and alternative ways for people to check in.
https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/covid-19-protection-framework/events/	Sector guidance for events under the Covid-19 Protection Framework

Patron/Visitor Communications

Given the change in event operations, considering patron/visitor expectations will be critical for both a positive venue and event experience, and to ensure transmission controls are properly adhered to. Relevant components of this guide, in addition to general event information, will be communicated to patrons/visitors via the below pre-event channels where appropriate:

- Specific venue/event websites.
- Social media channels.
- Ticketing agent purchase page.
- Ticketing agent venue pages.
- Ticket headers and logos – where possible.
- Patron/visitor emails.
- SMS – where appropriate.

The following specific patron/visitor communications (mainly signage) will be implemented in relation to Covid-19 controls, where relevant:

- Promoting cough etiquette and respiratory hygiene – general protocol.
- Handwashing – in bathrooms.
- Animated video messaging relating to Covid-19 controls on venue digital screens.
- Record keeping QR Code – entry and in-venue
- Vaccination requirements for the event/venue.
- Bathroom capacity limits (if relevant) – bathrooms.
- Encourage the use of hand sanitisers – general protocol.
- Physical distancing requirements (if relevant) – general protocol and entry.
- Venue and event cleaning processes – general protocol.
- Stay home if unwell – entry.
- Avoid high contact surfaces while in venue – entry and general protocol.
- In-venue PA announcements re-enforcing key protocols.

Event Ticket Build Considerations

When developing a ticket build, the following will be considered and implemented where relevant:

- Use of digital ticketing is to be encouraged, however for each event, patron demographic is to be considered and alternative ticket delivery methods to be made available.
- Client-lead subscription services or memberships to be part of ticket build and ticket delivery process.
- Listing of specific event entry requirements on tickets to avoid high congregation of patrons at single event entry locations.
- Listing of specific arrival times for patrons, if relevant, to manage ingress system capacity.
- Access to seats in a venue or event must ensure any current physical distancing requirements are met, particularly around section seat access.
- Ticket headers and logos will be used where possible to reinforce key health messages.
- Communication of event expectations on purchase pages relating to any relevant Covid-19 controls and any current mandated Government rules.
- Where possible integrate My Vaccine Pass verification into the ticketing provider's access control system.
- Food and beverage upsell, if any, will align to food and beverage service strategy for each event and to Government rules around food and beverage service.

Mandatory Record Keeping

The implementation of patron/visitor mandatory recording will align with current Government guidelines including what information must be gathered as part of any registrations. When implementing a system, the impact on the ingress system will be carefully considered. When determining ingress system through-put capacity, the transactional time required to complete record keeping will be measured and may be documented as part of the individual event plan.

Vaccination Policy

Auckland Unlimited's policy requires staff, patrons, clients and performers to be vaccinated at any event being held at one of its venues or events.

Ingress System

When designing entry systems into events, the queuing system, ticket & My Vaccine Pass verification, and security screening process will consider the below guidelines. These cover the overarching principles of encouraging patrons/visitors and staff to maintain physical distancing, avoiding any physical contact, and messaging outlining how the process is to be followed. Once the measures have been determined for each event's ingress system, the through-put capacity is to be calculated and documented. This will align with the proposed ticket build, in particular any door or gate loadings, and staggered patron arrival times.

Queuing

- When designing the entry queuing system, the potential maximum load of the queuing system may need to be calculated and documented in relevant event plans.
- Staggered arrival times of patrons will be considered through the ticketing build to avoid overloading the entry system immediately prior to the event start.
- Clear and frequent signage is to be displayed to provide patrons with details on expectations in relation to the entry process.
- Any Auckland Unlimited Covid-19 specific conditions of entry to be visibly displayed at entry.
- All queuing systems are to use physical control measures such as crowd control barriers or similar, while distancing within the queuing system must be aligned to current physical distancing requirements.
- Response actions are to be considered and documented in individual event plans in regards to how the Duty Operations Manager, Venue Manager or equivalent will address unanticipated high levels of congestion at entry points.

Ticket and My Vaccine Pass Validation

- Patrons are to remain in possession of their ticket/My Vaccine Pass or a personal device holding a digital copy of both.
- Ensure clear distance is created between ticket and My Vaccine Pass scanning staff and the patrons. This can be achieved by the installation of trestle tables, floor decals or similar.
- If a device being used to validate My Vaccine Passes fails, visual validation of passes can occur to ensure ongoing movement of the entry process.
- In the event there is a ticket scan failure, Front of House or ticketing staff will be engaged to assist the patron in a designated area beyond the scanning point, away from other patrons moving through the entry system. The set-up of this area will ensure physical distancing can be maintained between staff and patrons, and will include placement of signage, floor decals and tables to assist where relevant.

Security Screening

- Physical patron pat-downs will not be conducted, patrons will be asked to empty pockets if required.
- Security staff will not handle bags. Patrons will be requested to open their own bag and present the contents for inspection.
- Consideration should be given to only allow bags smaller than A4 size into events. If relevant, this condition of entry will be communicated to patrons prior to arrival and at security screening points. Patrons arriving with bags larger than A4 size may not be permitted to bring them into the venues.
- If an event is deemed high risk from the perspective of prohibited items entering, hand wands may be deployed to assist in the detection of any such items, however current Government guidelines for workers operating in close contact situations are to be adhered to, including the implementation of appropriate PPE.
- Security screening adjustments need to consider the overall venue and event security plan, including when relevant, consultation with the Auckland Unlimited security team.
- Security will be integrated in the escalation process in relation to compliance with Covid-19 protocols.

General Considerations

- Hand sanitisers will be made available at the conclusion of the entry process, with one hand sanitiser station provided for each entry lane in operation. Signage will be installed to instruct all patrons to use the hand sanitiser stations.
- The entry process must be designed to accommodate patrons with accessibility requirements.
- Consider installation of ground markers, arrows, or floor decals to provide an additional layer of instructions to patrons.
- All staff involved in the entry process to wash their hands or sanitise every 10-minutes.
- Cleaning staff to clean any entry tables at 15-minute intervals during the ingress period.
- Depending on the location of the event, the entry system may need to be altered from the standard to enable the creation of an appropriately sized system.
- The demographic of the audience will be considered when designing the system.
- Avoid communicating the event start time: rather, adjust communication to reflect the staggered event entry time for each group of patrons.
- Where possible, venue doors and bathroom doors to remain open to avoid patron contact with doors.

Congregation Areas and General Circulation

Dense congregation of patrons in circulation areas needs to be avoided. The Government requires the use of physical distancing, and this must be considered when planning an event. As such, the following will be considered as part of the event planning:

- Install signage in anticipated congregation areas outlining any current physical distancing expectations.

- Multiple hand sanitiser stations to be made available in congregation areas.
- Entry into these areas may be regulated to ensure overcrowding does not occur. This will be via pulsing the ingress system and using internal event staff to report to staff of any need to temporarily close the entry system.
- CAD mapping should be considered for each event, identifying the maximum allowable patrons in congregation areas to ensure physical distancing requirements are met.
- Splitting ingress systems to avoid loading too many patrons into congregation areas.
- Removal of any furniture to discourage patrons remaining in specific areas will be considered, however the need for older patrons to use seating in congregation areas should be considered.
- Consider opening the performance area at the same time as the main entry if there is normally separation between the two areas.
- Consider limiting commercial promotions in congregation areas.

Event Egress

When considering the design of the egress system, the overarching principles of ensuring patrons and staff maintain distance, and patrons avoiding any physical contact with each staff or others, should guide planning decisions. Once the measures have been determined for each specific event egress, egress capacity is to be calculated and documented. Capacity must align with specific exit door/gate flow capacity.

Food and Beverage Service

Indoor Event

The following general principles will be considered as part of any event-specific food or beverage operation.

- Depending on the Covid-19 Protection Framework setting patrons may need to be seated to consume food and beverages follow purchase.
- Encourage patrons to use cashless payment options.
- Consideration will be given to only using single-use disposable drink containers.
- Consider limiting the food and beverage range to optimize fast patron decision-making.
- Ensure clear signage is provided to enable quick decision-making to increase through-put of the service area.
- Implementation of any available beverage pre-ordering system.
- Consider pre-packaged individual serves for patrons/customers.

Outdoor Events

The following general principles will be considered as part of any event-specific food or beverage operation.

- When designing the entry queuing system to the concession the potential maximum load of the queuing system may need to be calculated and documented in relevant event floor plans.
- Encourage patrons to use cashless payment options to speed up service.
- Consideration will be given to only using single-use disposable drink containers.
- Consider limiting food and beverage range to speed patron decision-making.
- Ensure clear signage is provided to enable quick decision-making to increase throughput of the service area.
- Consider pre-packaged individual serves for patrons.
- All 'grab and go food' takeaway items available to purchase from cafes, kiosks and pop-ups will be available for selection in sealed containers or packaging.

Bathrooms

- Assessment of bathroom capacity will occur as part of the event overlay, and this is to be documented, noting the capacity will likely relate to the need to maintain Government mandated physical distancing requirements rather than toilet numbers.
- Depending on the location of each bathroom area, staff may need to be deployed to manage the number of people in bathrooms at any one time and consider re-direction of patrons at peak times to other bathrooms.
- Subject to the assessment of capacity in bathrooms, additional temporary toilets may need to be installed.
- The demographic of patrons attending will also be considered when determining if additional toilets may be needed, primarily age.
- The length of the performance, beverage service style and anticipated retail spend per head will all be considered when determining possible pressure on bathrooms.

Merchandise

- Patrons may not be permitted to try on merchandise such as t-shirts at the Red setting of the Covid-19 Protection Framework.
- Queuing systems around merchandise locations must be considered, following the relevant principle listed in the ingress system section.
- Staff selling merchandise must be provided with a physical barrier between themselves and patrons, such as a trestle table.
- Merchandise range to be kept to a minimum to reduce the likelihood of a queue forming.
- Implementation of multiple merchandise locations to be considered.

Cleaning

The risk of Covid-19 transmission can be minimised through a good standard of general cleaning. It is imperative that cleaning practices are not only compliant and adhere to all regulations, but exceed public expectations - a key measure in building patron confidence. Expectations relating to areas to be cleaned including frequency are to be documented as part of specific area briefing sheets and form part of event briefings.

General Building

- The following general building high touch areas to be cleaned every 15 minutes:
 - Door handles, handrails, push plates.
 - Crowd control barriers or other barricades the public may touch.
 - Handrails for stairs and ramps.
 - Elevator buttons – inside and out.
 - Reception desks and ticket counters.
 - Point of sale PIN keypads.
 - Hard services of tables and chairs.
 - Bin touch points (if any).

Bathrooms

- The following bathroom high touch areas to be cleaned every 15 minutes:
 - Door handles and push plates.
 - Sink taps and counters, and toilet handles.
 - Lids of containers for disposal of women's sanitary products.
 - Soap dispensers and towel dispenser handles.
 - Baby changing stations.
 - Bin touch points (if any).

Food and Beverage Areas

- The following high touch areas in event food and beverage areas are to be cleaned at a minimum every 15 minutes once the event is open to the public:
 - Bottle openers.
 - Ice buckets.
 - Ice scoops.
 - Tabletops.
 - Point of sale PIN pads.
 - Table talker signage.
 - Tap beer systems.
 - Knives.

Back of House Offices, Dressing Areas, Green Rooms, Production Areas

- The following high touch areas to be cleaned prior to arrival and departure of BOH crew / artist as part of post-event cleaning:
 - Individual office and other room furniture hard services.
 - Door handles, push plates, doorways, railings.
 - Light switches and thermostats.
 - Cabinet handles.
 - Telephones, computers, other keypads, mouse.
 - Microphones.
 - Backstage and technical equipment.
 - Bin touch points (if any).

Event Staff and Security

The below general guidelines are to be considered when developing a staffing plan for events.

- All event staff including contractors will be vaccinated or have an approved Auckland Unlimited exemption.
- Communication with and rostering of staff working events must align with centralised communications relating to at-risk staff.
- Each staff member will be provided with a small portable hand sanitiser.
- Staff manning any access control points to stand behind physical barriers such as bollards to enable any necessary physical distancing from patrons to occur.
- Staff to be provided with specific information on what Auckland Unlimited's expectations are in relation to their role and Covid-19 controls.
- Staff will wear a face covering in public-facing areas, in accordance with the relevant Covid-19 guidelines.
- Staff will stay one metre apart from each other.

Face Coverings

- Performers do not need to wear a face covering when on stage but are encouraged to wear one backstage.
- Attendees may need to wear face covering depending on the Covid-19 Protection Framework setting unless they are exempt from doing so. Face coverings can be removed to eat and drink.
- Staff are to wear face coverings in public-facing areas and when moving from back of house to front of house.

Ventilation

In enclosed spaces, such as indoor settings or indoor areas of outdoor venues, good ventilation can help to reduce the risk of transmission, however it must be considered a secondary control to primary controls such as distancing and mask use.

- Ensure doors and windows are open, where possible, to improved airflow.
- Ensure regular maintenance of air conditioning systems is done.
- Consider operating the HVAC system beyond normal operating times to increase building air circulation.

Covid Compliance Ambassador

The role of Covid Compliance Ambassador has been created, to be filled by a member of the Operations or Events team. The focus will be on ensuring listed Covid-19 controls are implemented prior to doors/gates open, including completion of a Covid-19 Pre-Event Checklist.

- Ensure placement of signage is completed and clear for patrons.
- Ensure My Vaccine Pass validation is occurring correctly.
- Ensure Covid-19 during event controls are adhered to, for example patron hand washing upon arrival.
- Read and understand the hirers Health and Safety plan and minor implementation of their controls relating to Covid-19.

- Close liaison with cleaning staff to ensure high touch surface cleaning is occurring as required.
- Implement any corrective actions during an event as required or escalate to the Duty Operations Manager or relevant venue representative any areas of concern which cannot be addressed.

The need to deploy the Covid Compliance Ambassador role will be determined based on the type and size of each event, and responsibilities outlined as part of this role may be allocated to an existing event operations staff as opposed to an additional person.

Accessibility

Auckland Unlimited recognises the importance of ensuring that its events and venues are accessible for people with accessibility requirements and works to ensure all Covid-19 transmission control measures do not exclude anyone from attending events.

Auckland Unlimited's approach is unchanged by the current Covid-19 restrictions. In addition, Auckland Unlimited encourages all employees, customers, and visitors to consider the needs of people with accessibility needs whilst on site at Auckland Unlimited venues.

Production

The following actions will be considered when planning and delivering the technical production element of an event.

- The technical plan and stage layout will consider any Government physical distancing requirements and reduce the need for multi-touch items.
- During pack-in and pack-out, crews are to wash / sanitise their hands frequently.
- Sanitising wipes may be provided for equipment with multiple touchpoints.
- Alternative solutions will be considered for any Q&A sessions to eliminate shared microphones.
- Stage location should be more than one metre from the nearest patron's seat.
- All production items including audio desks, lecterns and lighting desks are sanitised after each event day.

Post-Event Evaluation

Following each event, the event planning and delivery teams will evaluate measures implemented for the specific event, identify areas of improvement, and where relevant, provide recommendations for improvement to management.

Emergency Response

The development of the event plan, event-specific layouts and processes must ensure they align and are complementary to the event or venue-specific Emergency Response Plan. In the event a venue or event requires an emergency response, the primary consideration will be patron and staff welfare, and the preservation of life. As such, any physical distancing measures and other Covid-19 controls will be secondary considerations.