



Working group proposal

## Principles of the Responsible Event Working Group for Organising Events during the Coronavirus Epidemic

In accordance with its mandate, the working group set up by the Ministry of Education and Culture has drawn up principles for organising responsible events. The principles have been drawn up for a situation caused by a coronavirus, where the normal regulations and instructions related to the organisation of the event alone are not sufficient, but the organisation of the event can be limited and regulated even more precisely by the authority.

The aim of these principles is to promote, in addition to a safe experience of events, the cooperation and predictability of event organisers and authorities, and to provide information to various event organisers on issues to be considered in promoting safety and health. In addition, the principles aim to understand the characteristics of different events and event venues.

The following have been represented in drafting the principles: The Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Regional State Administrative Agency of Southern Finland, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, the Church Council, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the National Police Board, performing arts, Finland Festivals, Helsingin Jalkapalloklubi, Kultury, Tapahtumateollisuus ry, Warner Music Live and YLE's events, live and sports.

In drafting the principles, the working group has utilised the groundwork done by the event industry association Tapahtumateollisuus ry and the good practices already used at the events during 2020. Adherence to the principles is based on the autonomy of the industry and is reviewed at regular intervals with the authorities.

As a concrete reform, the working group will present a Responsible Event Label for event organisers, with which the event organiser can show the public how the event commits to comply with the applicable official guidelines and how the event organiser implements these in practice.

The working group considers that the principles relating to restrictions on assembly must be harmonised throughout the country as soon as possible. To

this end, the working group is now presenting a model based on the Communicable Diseases Act, which is currently being discussed in Parliament. In addition, the working group considers it important in the future to take into account the specific characteristics of different events and event venues as part of the review.

The working group considers that, in accordance with the table below, the following principles should be taken into account in the various phases of the coronavirus epidemic in the event process under the Responsible Event Label.

### BASE LEVEL:

	Indoor event/ seated	Indoor event/ standing	Outdoor event/ seated	Outdoor event/standing
	Arranging the spaces and venues loosely.	Arranging the spaces and venues loosely.	Arranging the spaces and venues loosely.	Arranging the spaces and venues loosely.
	Providing a possibility to clean hands.	Providing a possibility to clean hands.	Providing a possibility to clean hands.	Providing a possibility to clean hands.
	Requiring the use of a face mask.	Requiring the use of a face mask.	Requiring the use of a face mask.	Requiring the use of a face mask.
	Providing guidelines for the customers and visitors.	Providing guidelines for the customers and visitors.	Providing guidelines for the customers and visitors.	Providing guidelines for the customers and visitors.
	Cleaning of the spaces and venues and surfaces.	Cleaning of the spaces and venues and surfaces.	Cleaning of the spaces and venues and surfaces.	Cleaning of the spaces and venues and surfaces.

### ACCELERATION STAGE:

	Indoor event/ seated	Indoor event/ standing	Outdoor event/ seated	Outdoor event/standing
In addition to the stable level measures	The use of the spaces and venues must be organised in such a way that it is effectively possible for customers and other participants to avoid close contact with each other.	The use of the spaces and venues must be organised in such a way that it is effectively possible for customers and other participants to avoid close contact with each other.	The use of the spaces and venues must be organised in such a way that it is effectively possible for customers and other participants to avoid close contact with each other.	The use of the spaces and venues must be organised in such a way that it is effectively possible for customers and other participants to avoid close contact with each other.
	Requiring the use of a face mask.	Requiring the use of a face mask.	Requiring the use of a face mask.	Requiring the use of a face mask.

## SPREADING STAGE:

	<b>Indoor event/ seated</b>	<b>Indoor event/ standing</b>	<b>Outdoor event/ seated</b>	<b>Outdoor event/standing</b>
	Public events are prohibited.	Public events are prohibited.	Public events are prohibited.	Public events are prohibited.

The activities and organisation of events must comply with the decisions issued by municipalities and regional administrative authorities, and follow recommendations and instructions.

The working group considers it important that the fundamental right to freedom of establishment in the event sector is no longer restricted more severely than in other areas.

The working group also proposes to continue its work in January, with the event industry and the authorities working together to create an exit plan for the industry that can be implemented as the epidemic subsides.

In addition, the working group considers that event management under the Responsible Event Label should take into account certain principles, regardless of the level of the coronavirus epidemic. These include:

1. Preparation of an event safety plan
2. General principles related to the organisation of the event
3. Principles for ticketing and data collection
4. Principles related to the use of face masks and safety control
5. Principles relating to accessibility
6. Principles of responsible work
7. General principles for the public

The aim of the common principles is to support event organisers and licensing authorities in planning a responsible event.

It is important to note that the principles do not apply to general leisure activities. The instructions and regulations of the authorities must be followed in all events and leisure activities.

Due to the different nature of the events, different professional groups or organisations may have their own more detailed guidelines in addition to these principles.

# Principles of Event Organisers for Events Subject to the Responsible Event Label

## 1. PREPARATION OF AN EVENT SAFETY PLAN

Public events and general meetings are regulated by the Assembly Act (530/1999). The Communicable Diseases Act (Sections 58 to 58a) provides for the right of municipalities and regional state administrative agencies to restrict public events and general meetings as well as restaurant operations.

The bill on amendments to the Communicable Diseases Act (HE 245/2020 vp) is being discussed in Parliament. The Communicable Diseases Act would lay down the conditions under which various services can be provided to customers and participants safely during a coronavirus epidemic in such a way as to prevent the spread of new infections as effectively as possible. The proposed legislation is intended to enter into force as soon as possible. Some of the changes are intended to be in force in connection with the coronavirus epidemic temporarily until 31 December 2021.

The measures proposed by the government in connection with the events include measures related to the requirement of hygiene practices aimed at preventing the spread of coronavirus disease, cleaning of the venues and surfaces, and maintaining adequate distances. (Section 58 c) The regulation is valid continuously throughout its validity.

If the regional disease situation so requires, as a secondary means of complying with general hygiene requirements, the municipality or regional state administrative agency could take a decision requiring traders and other actors to take measures to prevent close contact at customer premises and other open spaces. (Section 58 d) The section would lay down the principle and a decision valid for a specified period would determine the measures by which health-secure events would be organised in the prevailing situation.

As a last resort, the proposal suggests that a municipality or regional state administrative agency could close a business or other activity facility intended for the use of customers or participants for a period of two weeks. (Section 58 g)

With regard to the organisation of events, at least indirectly, the legislation would provide for corresponding hygiene requirements and, if necessary, a restriction on the number of passengers in passenger transport by decision of the authorities. Regulatory decisions on traffic health security would be made by the Finnish Transport and Communications Agency. (Sections 58 e and 58 f)

Provision would also be made for monitoring the above obligations. (Sections 59 a–59 c)

The Government proposal HE 245/2020 contains proposals for new provisions concerning general hygiene obligations as well as restrictions also on continuous activities and the premises used for them.

The definitions of public events and general meetings are not fully consistent with the Communicable Diseases Act and the Assembly Act, given their different purposes. From the point of view of the Communicable Diseases Act, the purpose is to limit and prevent the risk of infection in situations where a large number of people are in relatively close contact with each other, which increases the risk of infection. The known mode of transmission of the infectious disease in question must also be taken into account.

According to the Assembly Act, a public event means entertainment events, competitions, performances and other similar events open to the public, which are not general meetings or so-called demonstrations. In general, it can be said that in a public event participation in the event does not require an explicit invitation or membership of a particular community and the event is not of a private nature.

Police and rescue authorities require the organiser of a public event to pay systematic attention to security issues. The arranger of a public meeting and a public event shall see to the maintenance of order and security in the event. (Section 17 of the Assembly Act).

*HE 145 / 1998 Public events would include different types of parties, dances and artistic performances such as theatre, ballet, circus and film showings, and concerts and exhibitions. Public events would also include a variety of commercial events such as trade fairs and promotion functions, the exhibition of animals or items for assessment or sale, and aviation and sports shows. Similarly, a range of contests and team competitions as well as amusement parks and travelling funfairs would constitute public events. In addition, processions such as festival and advertising parades arranged for the exercise of the freedom of assembly, would be categorised as public events.*

The public event must be notified in writing to the police department of the venue at least five days before the event if its organisation requires measures to maintain order and security, to prevent harm to bystanders or the environment and/or special traffic arrangements.

The five-day deadline means that the police must have full information about the event at that point at the latest. On the basis of the information, the police assess whether the matter is to be dealt with as a notification or whether the notification will result in the issuance of provisions, in which case a decision will be made.

The working group suggests that the event organiser draw up a written safety plan on how to take into account the authorities' current health safety guidelines and regulations as part of the overall safety of the event, as well as the principles set out by the working group for organising a safe event. It is a good idea to make this plan in cooperation with the municipal or regional authority responsible for controlling communicable diseases. The police will take the plan into account when deciding on the event.

Where the event is a recurring event organised indoors or in other fixed facility, the responsible organiser should draw up a common health security protocol for the events together with the venue (for example, cultural centre, concert hall, ice rink) according to which the event is organised.

## **2. ORGANISING A SAFE EVENT**

Venue arrangements must take into account:

- The maximum number of customers in public meetings as well as other regulations, guidelines and recommendations issued by public authorities;
- The safety of visitors must be arranged in such a way that the nature of the event and the venue, the environment and the size of the event area are taken into account; Operating models can be, for example, admitting visitors into and out of the event area in groups or the division of the visitors into blocks in advance, but always in accordance with official instructions and regulations;
- Different customer paths and the movement of visitor flows during the event, during breaks, and when entering and leaving the event according to blocks; Customer paths can be separated by, for example, colour codes;
- Prevention of congestion;
- Face mask recommendations;
- Enhanced hand hygiene and cleaning;
- Loosely arranged spaces and enabling safety distances during the acceleration phase of the epidemic; Clear, multi-channel and continuous communication of safety instructions;
- Human resources and skills.

### **Venue**

Event safety planning should take into account whether the event is held indoors or outdoors, the size of the public areas, and the various structures that promote or potentially impede the loose arrangement in the space or venue.

Structures can be temporary or fixed (for example, pallets, auditoriums, stalls/counters, doorways, staircases). In addition, visitor flow routes and break areas should be considered. The implementation of ticket and security checks should be planned as contactless as possible and using protective equipment.

The visitor flows' arrival, departure, breaks and time spent in the event can be staggered by scheduling. To ensure a spaciouly arranged event, the visitor flows of the event can be divided, if necessary, by segmenting the visitor areas, as well as directing and guiding the flows to different routes. For larger events, consideration should be given to implementing services by visitor blocks, separated, for example, by colour coding. Possible breaks in the event should, where possible, be staggered, both in terms of schedule and available facilities and service points, in order to avoid congestion. Event organisers should actively guide the public to follow safe distances.

At the same time, the design of the visitor areas should take into account security at the exits and ensure that structures designed to promote health security do not pose other safety or security risks.

Structurally narrow routes pose a risk of congestion, which can be minimised by effectively guiding visitor flows to different routes. This can be done, for example, by marking different directions and lanes on the routes.

Events should have more abundant and loosely placed toilet facilities and breakrooms to prevent congestion. Their use should be staggered, for example, by dividing breaks and arrivals at different times. In addition to toilet facilities, a sufficient number of hand washing points must be available at temporary venues.

The hygiene of the venue should be ensured by enhanced cleaning, where all surfaces (tables, counters, railings, handles, circuit breakers, switches, payment terminals, cash registers) are regularly disinfected. Whenever possible, it is a good idea to plan as many contact-free functions as possible (for example, sensor taps, soap dispensers, light switches, handles). Several hand washing points and/or hand sanitiser points should be available to the public and visitors.

Indoors, enhanced ventilation should be provided. Extra trash collection points should be provided for used face masks, and they should be emptied often enough and in accordance with special hygiene practices.

It is recommended to follow the [cleaning instructions of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health](#).

## **Guidance and communication**

With the Responsible Event Label, the event organiser communicates that it is committed to the instructions and regulations issued by the authorities, as well as to these principles of a safe event. This will also make it easier for different venues and the public to understand the common principles of a safe event. The Responsible Event Label can be displayed either digitally or physically.

Commitment of audiences or participants to adherence to safety policies requires multi-channel communication before the event, at the venue, and after the event.

It is worthwhile to embed safety policies, adhere to them and communicate them as the core operations of all event staff. Although safety is primarily the responsibility of the event safety and security organisation, safety is at its best when there are sufficient staff throughout the event, and they have been instructed and trained in the relevant safety practices. In this way, they are able to guide the public and visitors to the right kind of actions, to take action if necessary and report any incidents they find to the safety and security staff.

When communicating about safety, it is advisable to use all digital and physical channels used by the event, as well as communicate actively by the event staff. A repetitive, cohesive message is better remembered and engaging its recipients. Safety communication should start already in the pre-marketing of the event, in the ticketing and registration systems and upon arrival at the event.

Venue safety signs must be clear, distinctive, large enough and placed in places where they stand out even during the event, when the public is present at the event. In addition to fixed signs, the organiser should take advantage of displays and information boards, announcements, event staff as well as presenters and performers.

## **Food and drinks**

The regulations and restrictions on restaurant operations are complied with in the event's on-licensed premises and areas. If the event is entirely an on-licensed area, restaurant restrictions will apply at the same time as the event restrictions. Under the Communicable Diseases Act, the provisions on restaurant operations apply to the dispensing of alcohol and other catering activities, meaning the sale of food and drinks for consumption on the premises.

[Guidelines of the regional state administrative agencies related to restaurant operations.](#)



### 3. TICKETING, COLLECTING AND PROCESSING VISITOR DATA

The working group suggests that, as part of the Responsible Event practice, the event organiser would urge those coming to the event to buy an event ticket in advance, and tickets would not be sold on site. For example, a registered free ticket could be introduced for free events. This enables the organiser to anticipate the number of visitors and make the necessary safety arrangements, including monitoring the number of visitors.

It would be possible, under certain conditions, to collect information on event visitors or ticket purchasers in order to facilitate possible traceability, while taking into account the relevant legislation in force.

According to the EU General Data Protection Regulation, there must always be a basis for the processing of personal data. This may apply to, for example, the consent of the data subject, in which case the customer must have a genuine opportunity to decide for themselves whether they wish to provide their information to the event organiser for tracing coronavirus exposure.

The authority's recommendation for collecting personal data is not sufficient to justify the collection of such data. Consent must be voluntary, specific, informed and unambiguous. The customer must be clearly informed of the purpose for which the information is collected. The customer also has the right to refuse to provide their information, and the provision of information cannot be considered a condition for participation in the event. The customer may also withdraw their consent to the processing of the data and the data must be deleted if the customer so requests.

[For more information, see the Data Protection Ombudsman's website.](#)

Upon registration or ticket purchase, it should be stated that the visitor data of the event will be kept for 14 days after the event due to possible cases of infections. At the request of the authority, the information may be disclosed to the authorities responsible for health security/control of communicable diseases for the purpose of tracing those exposed. Visitor data will be destroyed 14-days after the event.

Data collected from registration and ticketing systems (customer name and contact information) is often the easiest way to collect visitor information. In addition, they are a means (also in free events) to manage the number of visitors and, if necessary, take safety and security measures.

Registration or admission tickets can be used to guide the visitors' placement in the event, for example, by marking visitor and spectator blocks and/or seats on the tickets. Registered admission and free tickets would allow organising a safe event flexibly. The information obtained from the tickets would enable the event organiser to control access using various applications and equipment,

and would make it easier to direct visitor safely to the right spaces in the venue, visitor blocks or even directly to their seats. It is possible to promote the safe organisation of the event by utilising modern technology and digital solutions.

## **4. USE OF FACE MASKS AND SAFETY CONTROL**

### **Face mask**

The working group suggests that the event organiser requires the use of a face mask at the event, if the authorities generally recommend their use. In this case, a visitor who refuses to use the mask can be denied access to the event or removed from the event, excluding special groups (see also “Accessibility”). The face mask is not suitable for children. The mask can be used according to the instructions from the age of 15.

If food and drink are served at the event, the use of the mask in connection with these should be instructed particularly well. Visitors should also have the opportunity to change the mask during meals or at longer-lasting events.

Extra trash collection points should be provided for used face masks, and they should be emptied often enough and in accordance with special hygiene practices.

### **Safety monitoring and non-compliance**

The event organiser and the staff responsible for the safety and security of the event have a duty to monitor the implementation of the safety instructions and regulations, to divide the visitor and spectator areas if necessary, and to address the detected non-compliance in advance and without delay. Persons who violate the safety instructions and regulations must be removed from the event.

The event organiser must be able to suspend the event temporarily or permanently if the instructions and regulations are not followed or (health security) safety is otherwise critically endangered. When making a decision to suspend an event, the possible safety and security risks arising from the suspension must be assessed. The event organiser should consult with any authorities present at the event to support their decisions.

The best level of safety is achieved when all staff, regardless of their position and role, take on the day-to-day task of implementing and monitoring safety and addressing non-compliance.

If a person present at the event is diagnosed with symptoms consistent with the coronavirus and can be suspected of being caused by a coronavirus infection, they should be directed immediately to a separate facility to wait for an exit from the event. A symptomatic person should be instructed to apply for a coronavirus test immediately.

When the event organiser becomes aware of a possible exposure at the event, the event organiser should immediately contact the infectious disease physician or health care staff at the venue to receive instructions on further action.

Health care professionals are responsible for tracing potential exposures and quarantining.

## **5. ACCESSIBILITY**

The event organiser must ensure that the measures taken to ensure health security do not conflict with the implementation of accessibility for the public, participants and staff.

It is good to note that:

- Assistants to people with disabilities participating in the event have been included in the total number of visitors. Also, the identities of the assistants may not be known at the time of ticket purchase.
- The structures needed to implement potential sections of the public should not impair the entry, movement and departure of persons with disabilities during the event.
- Accessibility should also be taken into account in the implementation and placement of health safety signs.
- Hand sanitisers should be accessible to all.
- Hand sanitisers, signs, fences and other structures should also be visually perceptible for the visually impaired.
- Event staff should be aware that it may be difficult or impossible for hearing impaired people to understand staff speech when they use face masks. In such situations, it may be necessary to remove the face mask momentarily.
- Event staff should note that the use of a face mask cannot be required of persons who are unable to use it for health reasons. However, this cannot be a reason to deny entry to the event.

## **6. RESPONSIBLE WORK**

The practices of responsible work must be known to all parties involved in the events - therefore, potential performers, subcontractors, temporary employees and volunteers must also be taken into account when introducing and disseminating the instructions.

The event organiser and/or event supervisors must ensure that the contact details of all employees, performers and athletes (including subcontractors and volunteers) present at the event are also available 14 days after the event for possible tracking needs, taking into account applicable legislation. Staff attending the event must be informed in advance.

### **Only come to work when healthy**

Do not come to work if you feel sick or have any symptoms of the disease. If you feel symptomatic, apply for a coronavirus test as soon as possible. Also make sure that the required quarantines are observed regarding a coronavirus test or a trip abroad.

### **Avoid unnecessary contacts - minimise the risks of production interruption**

Do not shake hands or hug co-workers or customers and visitors. Just stay in your own work team and minimise the number of necessary close contacts even during breaks. Prefer remote meetings or divide the production team into smaller groups where possible to minimise the number of exposures within the team in the event of a possible infection.

If employees use joint transport when they arrive at work, it is advisable to place them in the same shifts and workstations, when possible.

### **Protect yourself when working close to others**

The use of a face mask/visor should be preferred whenever it is not possible to implement safe distances, for example, when working close to others. It is a good idea to install plexiglass cashier shields between employees and customers at customer service points. Rubber gloves and/or hand sanitiser may be used at the security checks and other customer contact points. Security checks should be performed behind the person being inspected, avoiding direct face contact.

## **Follow enhanced hygiene practices**

Wash and disinfect your hands repeatedly. Provide enhanced cleaning and disinfection of tools and facilities as well as surfaces. Request/adjust ventilation effectively.

## **Report safety deviances immediately**

Everyone who works and performs at the event should adopt the instructions as part of a permanent, everyday activity. Safety deviations must be reported immediately to the workplace or event security staff, your own supervisor and/or event organiser, and immediate action must be taken to correct them.

## **Provide comprehensive training and orientation - also for subcontractors**

The event organiser and supervisors should ensure that each person working and performing at the event receives adequate training and familiarisation with the guidelines and practices. The use of written and visualised material enhances the adoption of guidelines. Always make sure that you are adequately instructed.

Also ensure that all subcontractors and service providers are familiar in a timely manner and adequately. Responsibility training and orientation can be required as a condition for working at the event.

## **7. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE PREVENTION OF CORONAVIRUS INFECTIONS IN EVENTS**

The most important thing in preventing coronavirus infections is to avoid close contact between people. The coronavirus is transmitted primarily as a droplet infection when an infected person coughs or sneezes. In close contact, coronavirus can also be transmitted through contact if, for example, the infected person has coughed their hands and has since touched another person. The most effective way to avoid infections is to maintain safe distances in every situation between people who are not in close contact in their daily lives.

The coronavirus can also be transmitted through the air, which means that when you cough and sneeze, small droplets are formed that can remain in the air for a while in aerosol form. Proper use of a face mask can reduce the risk of both droplet and aerosol infections. In outdoor events, the risks are clearly lower than in indoor events.

Everyone must take action to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, serious illness in other people and the tightening of restrictions on society. Infections

can be prevented by taking care of hand hygiene and avoiding close contact with other people. It is paramount that you come to the events and other encounters only when you are healthy and asymptomatic.

**Main instructions for the general public to prevent the spread of the coronavirus:**

- Keep to your own party and keep a safe distance in all situations from all the people you are not in close contact with on a daily basis.
- Wearing a face mask at events is always recommended.
- Take care of enhanced hand hygiene - wash your hands often with soap and water. If these are not available, disinfect your hands. Avoid contact with surfaces and your face.
- Download the Koronaviilkku app to your phone.
- Stay home if you have any symptoms of the disease or feel otherwise sick. If necessary, apply for a coronavirus test.