

COVID-19 Safe Events and Activities in Tasmania Framework (Events Framework)

Overview

Tasmania is synonymous with unique and vibrant events and it is important that as we respond to changing COVID-19 circumstances, we can continue to enjoy events in a COVID-19 safe way.

Last year, the Tasmanian Government released the *Safe Events and Activities in Tasmania Framework* (Events Framework) to provide a way forward for events to run safely in Tasmania.

It was developed to assist event organisers to plan for and host events in a COVID-19 safe manner.

The Tasmanian Government is supporting event organisers while prioritising the safety of the community. This Framework was developed by the Tasmanian Government in consultation with the sport, arts and events and tourism sectors.

As public health measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Tasmania continue to change, the Events Framework has been reviewed and updated as of 1 November 2021. This has led to a more streamlined assessment process however, it is important that our plans continue to reduce the risk of possible COVID-19 transmission in the community.

Purpose

The purpose of the Events Framework is to help event organisers to identify and manage the risk of COVID-19 for a range of event and activity types in a diverse range of settings. It sets out the process for working with government to deliver a COVID-19 safe event under the current Public Health Directions.

To ensure successful compliance with the safety measures, event organisers may need to develop innovative ways of delivering COVID-19 safe events. This means that events may be delivered in a different way than they were prior to the impacts of COVID-19.

Events are assessed under the Events Framework according to their size, type, complexity and associated risk factors. Public health oversight is applied to events according to a three-tiered system.

Objectives

The key objectives of the Events Framework are to:

- Outline the public health considerations and requirements to plan and implement COVID-19 safety at events;
- Support event organisers to plan and hold COVID-19 safe events;
- Enable the community to engage in COVID-19 safe events as safely as is possible in a changing COVID-19 risk environment; and
- Support the social and economic recovery of the community by supporting Tasmania's vibrant and unique events.

Events and the COVID-19 environment

As a community, we are all learning how to live with COVID-19 for the foreseeable future. This means that while we have been able to return to doing some things as normal, there are behaviours and some restrictions that we will need to maintain over the medium to long term.

It is important to remember that public gatherings and events are a high-risk activity and therefore need to be very carefully planned.

COVID-19 spreads mainly between people who are in close contact with each other.

Events, by their very nature, present potential consequences if a person with COVID-19 is in attendance. The large numbers of people in attendance, crowding and queuing, proximity of people, mixing of diverse groups, and activities such as dancing and singing, also contribute to the risk profile of events.

Event organisers have a duty of care to manage these risks by helping to prevent COVID-19 from entering or spreading at an event.

Public Health Directions are restrictions currently in place under Tasmania's *Public Health Act 1997* to help manage COVID-19. These may change at any time to respond to changing COVID-19 circumstances, not only in Tasmania but in other Australian jurisdictions and other countries. Event organisers should prepare for the possibility that changes to the Directions in the lead up to the event may mean that you need to restrict, modify, postpone, or cancel the event. It is therefore important that organisers regularly refer to the coronavirus.tas.gov.au website for the latest information.

If details of an already approved event need to change, the event organiser must contact the Events Framework Project Team as soon as possible to submit an amended Event COVID-19 Safety Plan for assessment.

Event organisers are still required to engage with and obtain any necessary approvals from other federal, state and local government bodies.

Tasmania is progressing towards a time when cases of COVID-19 will occur in our substantially vaccinated population. Careful management of all events (especially large events) will be important to mitigate the risk that these gatherings accelerate the spread of COVID-19 into the Tasmanian community.

Key elements of the Events Framework

Under the Framework, events will be classified as tier one, two or three. Different capacity limits and controls apply to each tier.

Event types and requirements

Tier	Description	Requirements
Tier 3	Any indoor or outdoor seated events with 5,001 to 10,000 people	Event COVID-19 Safety Plan Event registration through Business Tasmania website Approval from the Director of Public Health required before the event can go ahead Check In Tas QR code required
Tier 2	Any indoor or outdoor event with 2,001 to 5,000 people	Event COVID-19 Safety Plan Event registration through Business Tasmania website Approval from the Director of Public Health delegate required before the event can go ahead Check In Tas QR code required
Tier 1	Indoor events with 251 – 2 000 people Outdoors events with 501 – 2 000 people	Event COVID-19 Safety Checklist Submit a checklist via the Business Tasmania website, approval not required Check In Tas QR code required
Small gatherings (outside the Events Framework)	Indoors up to 250 people Outdoors up to 500 people	Not applicable – no application or approval required under the Events Framework, refer to Safe Workplaces Framework For gatherings at a private property, refer to coronavirus.tas.gov.au and search for Household visitors

Public health principles

Below are the key public health considerations that guide COVID-19 safety at events. These must be addressed in your event application and COVID-19 Safety Plan or Checklist to ensure events at any Tier can occur safely in Tasmania:

- **Physical distancing:** the more space between people, the harder it is for the COVID-19 virus to spread. Physical distancing at 1.5 metres reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Maintaining a distance of 1.5 metres applies where practicable - it is acknowledged that this will not be possible in all settings.
- **Health:** COVID-19 is mainly spread from people who have symptoms or just before symptoms develop. All patrons and staff at an event should be advised before and during the event not to attend if unwell or if they have been advised to quarantine or self-isolate. Patrons and staff should also be observed for unwell individuals displaying cold or flu like symptoms and an appropriate process be in place to help them leave the site if required.
- **Hygiene:** The best defence against most viruses is for people to wash or sanitise their hands regularly. All attendees should be encouraged to perform hand and mouth hygiene and be provided with easy access to hand washing facilities and/or hand sanitation.

Risk factors

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) is the key decision making committee for public health emergency management and disease control in Australia. The AHPPC has defined a range of high risk social environments and behaviours for COVID-19 transmission that are applied and considered in a Tasmanian context when assessing an event application.

Risk factors include:

- Service of alcohol, particularly over a long period (4 hours plus)
- Dancing, moshing with a focal point such as a stage
- Singing, cheering, loud volume speech
- Indoor venues
- Multi-day festivals
- Multiple venues operating at the same time that allow people to mix
- Crowding, congestion and queuing
- People in attendance from interstate
- Multiple, high-touch surfaces.

Event organisers must identify how these risk factors may apply to their event and consider ways to reduce risk. This can include making the event alcohol free, no or restricted dancing, non interactive events, outdoor events, seated events, venues with good airflow indoors and the use of face masks.

Zoning to control the mixing of people also supports the public health response such as contact tracing, testing and quarantine if a person with COVID-19 is in attendance.

Summary of elements

Criteria	Revised Events Framework
Tier thresholds	Tier 3 – 5,001 to 10,000 seated Tier 2 – 2,001 to 5,000 Tier 1 – 250 to 2,000 indoors or 500 to 2,000 outdoors
Free-mixing /roaming events	Free-mixing / roaming events are capped to 5,000 at Tier 2.
Event workers	The total number of attendees to determine a Tier does not include event staff, volunteers or contractors.
Density limit	Density limit of 1 person per 2 square metres applies to all events. The density limit must be calculated based on the area that is publicly accessible to attendees i.e. not the entire useable area of the venue/setting, only the area that attendees can access.
Seated venue capacity	100% of a venue’s seated capacity applies to entertainment venues, places of worship, funeral homes, stadiums and arenas plus 1 person per 2 square metres in unseated parts of an otherwise seated venue. All other venues and events are as per the density limit of 1 person per 2 square metres (capacity limit applies).
Zoning	The separation of attendees into zones particularly at high risk events helps to manage the mixing of people.
Face masks	Depending on the risk environment, a requirement to wear face masks may be applied to an event at short notice to reduce risk.
Venue hygiene	A cleaning and sanitising program must be in place and implemented.
Contact tracing	The use of the Check In Tas QR code/s and app is required at all events, more information is available on the Check In Tas website.
COVID-19 Marshals	COVID-19 Marshals have a direct responsibility for engaging with patrons about COVID safe behaviours. COVID-19 Marshals should be visible, easily identifiable and appropriately trained.
Dancing	Dancing is a high risk activity because of the potential to reduce physical distancing behaviour, up to 100 people indoors or 250 outdoors are permitted to dance at any one time.
Alcohol	Alcohol consumption is a high risk activity because of the potential to reduce distancing behaviour, up to 100 people indoors or 250 people outdoors are permitted to stand and drink alcohol at any one time.
Camping	Very careful consideration will be given to how COVID-19 safe practices and behaviours will be managed for events that include camping.

COVID-19 safety planning documents

All events under the Framework must complete and submit one of the following two planning documents, depending on the event Tier level. A self-guided questionnaire is available to assist event organisers determine which tier their event falls under. This is available via the Events Framework page on the Business Tasmania website.

These planning documents help event organisers to identify exactly what controls will be taken to reduce COVID-19 risk.

Event COVID-19 Safety Plan

An Event COVID-19 Safety Plan must be completed and submitted for assessment for all events with 2,001 up to 10,000 patrons.

A streamlined template is available for event organisers to document and step out the measures they are taking to keep staff and volunteers, performers and players, event patrons and the Tasmanian community safe. The template is flexible, and can be adapted to each specific activity and venue. Event organisers must provide as much detail as possible when completing the template.

Information required in the Event COVID-19 Safety Plan template includes:

- Event details
- Contact information
- Venue details
- Site map
- Patron management such as density, counting patron numbers and physical distancing
- COVID-19 safe messaging to all attendees
- High risk activities such as dancing, singing and consumption of alcohol
- Movement of people and access
- Cleaning and hygiene schedules
- Training for relevant event staff/contractors and volunteers as required.

The completed Event COVID-19 Safety Plan must be submitted via the Business Tasmania website at www.business.tas.gov.au/eventsframework for assessment, endorsement or approval, depending on the Tier.

Event COVID-19 Safety Checklist

The Event COVID-19 Safety Checklist is for Tier 1 events – events that are less complex and lower risk, with indoor events from 251 up to 2,000 people and outdoor events from 501 up to 2,000 people.

Tier 1 events do not require approval, however event organisers need to register their event and confirm that they will address certain public health measures, for example:

- Event and venue details
- Patron management such as density, counting patron numbers and physical distancing
- Check In Tas QR code requirements
- Cleaning and hygiene
- High risk behaviours such as dancing, singing and consumption of alcohol.

The Event COVID-19 Safety Checklist must be submitted via the Business Tasmania website at www.business.tas.gov.au/eventsframework.

Other related COVID-19 planning documents

COVID-19 Safe Workplaces Framework

The Tasmanian Government's COVID-19 Safe Workplaces Framework supports workplaces as they manage their business activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, while ensuring the health and safety of all Tasmanians. The Framework encompasses Safe Workplaces Guidelines, templates and checklists, information sheets, videos and information about how to comply.

For more information, visit the WorkSafe Tasmania website at worksafe.tas.gov.au.

Return to Play Plans

The COVID-19 Return to Play Plan outlines how sporting organisations will safely manage activities in a COVID-19 environment. Sports and clubs that plan to conduct events outside of usual match day arrangements covered by their Return to Play Plan, that will have more than 2,001 people in attendance, are required to prepare an Event COVID-19 Safety Plan template for each different event.

Out of scope – what's not covered

The Events Framework does not apply to smaller events of less than 250 people indoors and less than 500 people outdoors. This includes community sporting events of this size.

Application and assessment

A registration, application and review process has been established to ensure public health directions and advice are considered and delivered by event organisers to reduce COVID-19 risk.

Events of more than 250 people indoors and 500 people outdoors must operate under the requirements of the Events Framework. The level of public health oversight applied to public events is according to a three-tiered system.

Application requirements by event tier

Tier 3 events

- Require an Event COVID-19 Safety Plan to be completed and submitted via the portal on the Business Tasmania website.
- Will be assessed by the Department of Health.
- Must receive approval from the Director of Public Health before the event can proceed.

Tier 2 events

- Require an Event COVID-19 Safety Plan to be completed and submitted via the portal on the Business Tasmania website.
- Will be assessed by the Department of Health.
- Must receive approval on behalf of the Director of Public Health or delegate before the event can proceed.
- If the event has a number of higher risk factors associated with it, the event may have additional conditions applied.

Tier 1 events

- Require an Event COVID-19 Safety Checklist to be completed and submitted via the portal on the Business Tasmania website.
- No further action or approval is required.
- If the event has a number of higher risk factors associated with it, the event may have additional conditions applied such as the completion of an Event COVID-19 Safety Plan to improve the assessment of risk.

Series of similar type of events at one venue

Where an event organiser is holding a series of events with similar characteristics, for example a season of theatre shows or ongoing use of a stadium for sporting events, one Event COVID-19 Safety Plan may be submitted to seek approval for the series of events.

Event organisers must include details on the number of separate events to be held during the series / season in the Event COVID-19 Safety Plan. The plans will need to be detailed enough to cover all the events that happen within the venue. However, a new plan will need to be submitted if your venue is operating a different type or substantially changed event to what has been approved, or a one-off event.

For example, if you are a racing club and you have an approved plan for your venue but are hosting a one-off music event, you would need to submit a new Event COVID-19 Safety Plan for that event.

Either the venue owner or the event organiser may submit the Event COVID-19 Safety Plan, but it must be approved before you host your event. It is best to work together to develop a plan. If you are an event organiser, please check with your venue to see if they already have an agreed plan in place before you start.

Assessment criteria

In addition to the public health principles of physical distancing, health and hygiene, the following considerations will be relevant to plan, manage and deliver a COVID-19 safe event and must be addressed when completing your COVID-19 Safety planning:

Density limits

- These are used to control the crowding of people in a space and is in addition to the principle of maintaining a physical distance of 1.5 metres.
- Understand, manage and anticipate your crowd size – noting that staff, volunteers and contractors are not included in the overall crowd size.
- For free moving events, maximum capacity including density limits will need to be managed for the duration of the event.

Nature and duration of event

- The longer individuals are in contact, and the closer the contact is, the greater the risk of COVID-19 transmission. For example seated events are lower risk than free moving events, because these events involve less mixing of people.

Event venue

- Outdoor venues are lower risk for transmission of COVID-19 than indoor venues, provided physical distancing and hygiene measures are observed.

Venue hygiene

- Coronaviruses can survive on surfaces, but appropriate cleaning and disinfecting will remove them.
- A regular and thorough cleaning schedule must be implemented before, during and after the event with high traffic areas such as toilets and frequently touched objects such as door handles, counters, railings and rubbish bin lids disinfected regularly.

Check in Tas

- The Check In Tas QR code/s and app must be used at events, including staff, performers, contractors, volunteers, spectators and patrons.
- If zones are being used at your event, a separate QR code for each zone is required.
- Consider the placement of the QR code at your venue including size, colour and lighting if it is dark as well as how you will manage patrons checking in, including patrons who are unable to use the app.
- The free Check in Tas App is the only system for providing and collecting contact tracing information in Tasmania.
- For more information, visit the Check in Tas [guide for businesses](#) and [how to check people in](#) at coronavirus.tas.gov.au.

Workers

- All event workers, vendors, contractors and subcontractors should have a thorough understanding of how the COVID-19 safe event is to be delivered and must be trained in the appropriate COVID-19 protocols and procedures.
- This includes knowing how to deal with patrons that are unwell or not cooperating with COVID-19 safe measures in place for the event.

COVID-19 Marshals

- The role of a COVID-19 Marshal is to support event organisers ensure all measures in a COVID-19 Event Safety Plan are followed, particularly for high risk events.
- A volunteer can be a COVID-19 Marshal. They should also be over the age of 18 years and wear clothing to make the role clearly recognisable to staff and attendees.
- Depending on the risk potential for an event, one COVID-19 Marshal for every 100 to 300 persons should be designated.
- The types of things a COVID-19 Marshal can help with include monitoring for unwell persons, the availability and use of hand sanitiser or soap, cleaning logs, physical distancing and overcrowding, high risk activities and to remind or help attendees to use the Check in TAS QR code/s.

Managing non-compliance

- Event organisers should have a plan about what to do if an individual or a group of persons are not cooperating.
- Compliance officers from the Department of Health attend some events to assess compliance.
- Escalation procedures may include talking to the person about the right behaviour and offering a way to resolve the issue, warning the person that the behaviour places other people at risk and cannot continue, referring poor behaviour to a supervisor or security or contact Tasmania Police on 131 444.

Other considerations

- This may include management and access to alcohol and the health and age of patrons attending the event.

The decision by event organisers to proceed with, restrict, modify, postpone, or cancel an event should be based on compliance with current COVID-19 related Directions under the *Public Health Act 1997* and the outcome of a detailed risk assessment.

Application submission

Once you have completed the relevant COVID-19 Safety planning document for your event tier, refer to the Business Tasmania website at business.tas.gov.au/eventsframework.

Click on the submission link, fill out the event registration and upload the Event COVID-19 Safety Plan or Checklist, event site map, and any other relevant documents to your application.

Timeframes for assessment

An Event COVID-19 Safety Plan for Tier 2 and Tier 3 events must be completed and submitted at least a minimum of **30 business days** before the key decision date for the event as required by the event organiser.

The timeframe is from the submission of the relevant documentation to the approval of the event. Event organisers must allow sufficient time for their event preparation and Event COVID-19 Safety Plan implementation.

The same timeframe of **30 business days** applies to an Event COVID-19 Safety Checklist for Tier 1 events. This is in case there is any clarification needed or if any additional conditions need to be applied to the event.

Early engagement between event organisers and the Events Framework Project Team will help support adequate and appropriate COVID-19 safe planning.

As much detail as possible must be provided at the time of submitting the plan for assessment.

If an application is deemed incomplete, a 'stop the clock' is put in place by the assessor until further information has been sought from and submitted by the applicant.

COVID-19 in Tasmania – planning for an outbreak

In the event of a case or an outbreak of COVID-19 in Tasmania, events may need to be modified, postponed or cancelled, depending on the increased risk.

The Director of Public Health may amend or withdraw any assessment, endorsement or approval at any time without notice.

Where changes are required to approved events, event organisers will be notified by the Events Framework Project Team.

Glossary of terms

COVID-19 Marshal – this is a staff member or volunteer over the age of 18 years responsible for helping to ensure COVID-19 safety measures detailed in an approved Event COVID-19 Safety Plan are followed. Any title can be used to describe the role, the title of a Marshal is more commonly known by the general public.

Event - an event is a gathering of people greater than 250 indoors and 500 people outdoors.

Events Framework – is also known as the *Safe Events and Activities in Tasmania Framework*. It is the guidance policy to assist events organisers to deliver COVID-19 safe events.

Public Health Directions – the Director of Public Health can issue Public Health Directions in accordance with the *Public Health Act 1997* to assist in containing, or responding to, the spread of COVID-19. The Events Framework operates under the management of the Public Health Directions.

Contact

You can connect with us via Business Tasmania online: business.tas.gov.au/eventsframework or by calling 1800 440 026.

If you have an existing application submitted with us, please contact the team directly via email at eventsframework@stategrowth.tas.gov.au or by calling 03 6165 6650.