

NYS's New Guidance on Catered Weddings & Events

What Operators Need to Know

Presented by NYSRA's Government Affairs Team
February 25, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

Before we get started...



- This is not legal advice. Please consult with your counsel for specific questions related to your business.
- This guidance is accurate as of today, 2/25/21.
- Some questions exist, that will remain unanswered after this presentation. We will work with the State to provide you with those answers.

Overview



- Located in the Phase 3 Foodservice Detailed Guidance
 - Section D – In Person and Catered Events
 - Pages 7-10
- Effective March 15
- Events following this guidance cannot take place from 12:00 – 5:00 a.m.
- Sets social gathering limit at 50 people (as of 2/24/21)
- Guidance applies to non-residential events (outside of house) above 50 people
- Including but not limited to wedding receptions, celebrations, and similar private venue events, such as meetings and conferences
- Which events does this apply to?

Occupancy



- Occupancy limited to the lesser of: 50% for a particular area as set by COO, or 150 people, not including employees and event staff
- Establishments may have more than one event on premise at the same time, as long as each event is separate and distinguishable
 - Must be held in different areas on the premises
 - Cannot share spaces or rooms
 - Cannot use same entrances/exits at same time
 - Attendees from separate events cannot engage in in-person interaction with each other
 - Bathroom capacity must be limited to avoid congregation, face masks must be worn and social distancing observed

Occupancy



- Concurrent events on the same premise that share attendees or a common purpose are prohibited
 - Restaurant dining service that serves patrons in parties not associated with event attendees may continue service within designated area, as long as they are separated from the event space/room
- Occupancy numbers for non-residential events will be less in Cluster Zones for catered events
 - 25 or fewer in Yellow Zones
 - 10 or fewer in Orange Zones
 - No gatherings allowed in Red Zones
 - *As of 2/25/21, there are five yellow zones in NY – see: <https://covidhotspotlookup.health.ny.gov/#/home>*

Local Health Dept. Notice



- As of 2/24, Caterer/Operator must notify their County Health Department if they plan to host in-person and catered events above 50 people
- Must be submitted at least 5 days in advance of event

Local Health Dept. Notice



- Submitted details must include, but are not limited to:
 - Operator contact information
 - Event name or function
 - Event address
 - Event time/date
 - Event duration – including loading & unloading times
 - Expected number of attendees
 - Expected number of event staff
 - Location on premises (ie: indoor/outdoor) indicated by description and/or event floor plan
- Events may be subject to inspection by local health authorities to ensure compliance

Contact Tracing Information



- For events conducted within this guidance (51-150 attendees), each attendee is required to provide the following contact tracing data before or immediately upon arrival of event:
 - Full name
 - Date of birth
 - Address
 - Email
 - Phone number
- If attendee is a minor, an adult from their party/household/family can provide this information

Contact Tracing Information



- Information can be obtained digitally or on paper
- Operator/caterer must maintain a record of data for period of 28 days
- Must make data available to State and local health authorities upon request

Screening Testing



- Operator/Caterer must require and ensure all attendees have received a negative diagnostic test result for COVID-19
 - Must use FDA authorized PCR test, or other nucleic acid amplification test collected within 72 hours of the event start time OR
 - FDA authorized antigen test (rapid test) collected within 6 hours of the event on premise, provided rapid test meets all requirements as set forth by DOH, including timely and complete reporting of results to the Department's Clinical Laboratory Reporting System (ECLRS)

Screening Testing



- Alternatively, attendee may provide proof of having completed the COVID-19 vaccination series at least 14 days prior to event
 - DOH will continue to monitor effectiveness of vaccine in preventing spread of COVID-19
- Any attendee who fails to provide negative diagnostic test or proof of immunization, as described, must be denied entry to event

Screening Testing for Staff



- Employees and event staff must be tested for COVID-19 through diagnostic test prior to events and then must be test biweekly thereafter if they are actively engaged in hosting events and interacting in close contact with attendees
- Employees may alternatively provide proof of having completed COVID-19 vaccine series at least 14 days prior to date of event(s)

Health Screening



- Operator/Caterer must implement mandatory health screening for employees, event staff, and attendees prior to event
- Health screening consists of:
 - Questions regarding current or recent COVID-19 symptoms
 - Close or proximate contact with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases
 - Recent positive COVID-19 results
 - Compliance with State's travel advisory

Distancing



- Operator/Caterer must ensure social distancing by maintaining at least 6 feet from other individuals, except members of the same party/household/family
- Attendees must be assigned to table or area where they must be seated while eating and drinking and remain for duration of event
 - To the extent practicable, attendees should be seated at a table or area with members of immediate family/household
- Where attendees may frequently interact with staff, appropriate physical barriers should be installed
- Appropriate signage must be posted notifying attendees of social distancing requirements

Face Coverings



- Attendees, staff and employees, over the age of two, are required to wear acceptable face coverings at all times, except:
 - While seated at assigned table to eat and drink
 - While presenting or speaking at event, provided that attendee maintains 12 feet of social distance from other attendees or is separated by appropriate physical barrier
- Operator/Caterer must post signage notifying attendees of face covering requirements at event location

Controlled Movements



- Caterers/Operators must ensure that all event attendees are confirmed in advance (guest list) to ensure compliance with occupancy, planned movements of guests, and to prevent unnecessary congregation or congestion in common areas
- Points of ingress/egress must be designated
- System to stagger ingress/egress should be developed (ie: timed entry, designated waiting zones)

Controlled Movements



- Caterers/Operators should consider limiting amenities or event services (ie: coat check, valet) unless protective measures can be adapted
- Where practicable, one-directional paths should be adopted for attendees on floors and stairs

Activities



- Caterers/Operators must ensure that attendees are not congregating, except when seated at their tables
 - Attendees should only be standing when necessary (ie: enter/exit, restroom, use of staffed buffet) or
 - When necessary to event (ie: entrance of bride and groom)
- Standing cocktail receptions are permitted, with strict adherence to social distancing guidelines, but, face coverings can only be removed for eating and drinking when seated
- Masks may not be removed for eating/drinking if other attendees outside of family/household/party are within 6 feet

Activities

- Live music, DJs, entertainment and dancing are allowed within the following parameters:
 - Unmasked performers or entertainers must be separated from attendees by at least twelve feet or by an appropriate barrier
 - Select attendees, designated prior to event, may participate in ceremonial dances with members of immediate party/family/household, if separated by six feet from other attendees

Activities



- Attendee Dancing:
 - Dancing is allowed among attendees amongst members of party/family/household, seated at the same table, within clearly marked areas or zones that are assigned, at least six feet apart from other attendees
 - Must be masked
 - Must not enter other designated dance zones
 - Ideally, each area/zone should be no less than 36 square feet

Activities



- Caterers/Operators should consider staggered intervals for food service at staffed buffets to maintain social distancing
- Caterers/Operators should consider serving any passed food in containers that limit touching of any shared surfaces

Questions?