

JAY INSLEE  
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
Office of the Governor

**TO:** Interested Stakeholders

**FROM:** Governor Jay Inslee

**DATE:** September 16, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Wedding Ceremonies, Wedding Receptions, and Funerals – Proclamations 20-25, *et seq.*

This memorandum revises all previous requirements concerning the above-listed activities and is effective September 16, 2020. After further consultation with stakeholders, we have developed new **Phase 2 and Phase 3 Wedding Ceremonies, Wedding Receptions, and Funerals – COVID-19 Requirements**. These requirements remain in force as long as Gubernatorial Proclamations 20-25, *et seq.*, or any further extension thereof, is in effect or if adopted as rules by a federal, state or local regulatory agency.

This memorandum applies to all wedding ceremonies, wedding receptions, and funerals, both religious and non-religious, and whether held indoors or outdoors. Furthermore, this memorandum stands in the place of any omission from and supersedes any conflicting provision in Proclamations 20-25, *et seq.*, and the Governor's July 28, 2020, memorandum on gatherings, live entertainment, and Safe Start amendments.

**The activities described herein may resume immediately if:**

- a) **The businesses can meet and maintain all requirements, including providing materials, schedules and equipment needed to comply; and**
- b) **The businesses conduct only those activities that are allowed under their county's phase status.**

**General questions about how to comply with safety practices** can be submitted to the state's Business Response Center [here](#).

**All other violations related to Proclamation 20-25** can be submitted [here](#).

# Phase 2 and Phase 3 Wedding Ceremonies, Wedding Receptions and Funerals COVID-19 Requirements

The following requirements apply to all wedding ceremonies, wedding receptions and funerals (religious or nonreligious) wherever they are held indoors or outdoors, including but not limited to, those held at all privately owned property, business establishments, nonprofit establishments, establishments owned by religious or faith based organizations and publicly owned property (such as parks, beaches, or venues).

Wedding services are defined as the wedding ceremony and reception that are co-located or adjacent to the ceremony. Weddings do not include engagement parties, bridal/groom/couples' showers, bachelorette/bachelor parties, or rehearsal dinners. One-hour wedding ceremony rehearsals are permitted in advance of the wedding day to practice the ceremony as well as to practice and review the COVID-19 safety plans of the venue and other vendors. Rehearsals shall be limited to the couple and their wedding party, the couple's parents, the officiant, and any necessary vendors. Face coverings are required at all times during the rehearsal. Rehearsal dinners are prohibited.

Funerals are defined as the ceremony honoring a deceased person, including a wake, burial, cremation, or memorial service, located indoors or outdoors.

Wedding services and funerals may resume immediately provided that:

- The host(s) ensure that the wedding service or funeral meets the requirements set forth in this document;
- Venues meet and maintain all generally applicable requirements set forth in this document as well as the provisions that apply to the services provided by the venue;
- All other vendors working at the wedding services or funerals meet and maintain all generally applicable requirements set forth in this document as well as the provisions that apply to the services that the vendor provides; and
- All vendors conduct only those activities that are allowed under their county's phase status.

## **Phase 2-3**

Indoor and outdoor occupancy is limited to 30 guests or 25% of maximum building capacity whichever is less, excluding vendors and their staff working at the wedding service or funeral. The wedding reception is limited to no more than 3 hours. Alcohol service, delivery, and consumption, including beer, wine, and spirits, must end at 10:00 p.m.

The host of the wedding service or funeral is strongly encouraged to keep a log of attendees, and to retain that log for at least two weeks. If an outbreak occurs, this information may be critical for contact tracing to help save lives.

## **Safety and Health Requirements**

All organizations (including any vendors and venues involved in wedding services and funerals) have a general obligation to provide a safe and healthy work environment in accordance with state and federal law, and comply with the following COVID-19 organization-specific safety practices, as outlined in Governor

Jay Inslee's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" Proclamation 20-25, and in accordance with the Washington State

Department of Labor & Industries [General Requirements and Prevention Ideas for Workplaces](#) and the Washington State Department of Health Workplace and Employer Resources & Recommendations at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Coronavirus/workplace>.

All vendors who are a part of wedding services or funerals must specifically ensure that the main L&I COVID-19 requirements are followed to protect their employees:

- Educate their employees in the language in which they are most proficient about coronavirus, how to prevent transmission, and the vendor's and venue's COVID-19 policies.
- Screen employees for signs/symptoms of COVID-19 at the start of every shift. Make sure sick employees stay home or immediately go home if they feel or appear sick. Cordon off any areas where an employee with probable or confirmed COVID-19 illness worked, touched surfaces, etc., until the area and equipment is cleaned and disinfected. Follow the cleaning guidelines set by the CDC to deep clean and sanitize.
- Maintain minimum six-foot separation between their employees, and attendees in all interactions and at all times. When strict physical distancing is not feasible for a specific task, other prevention measures are required, such as use of barriers.
- Provide (at no cost to employees) and require the wearing of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, goggles, face shields and face covering masks as appropriate or required for the work activity being performed. Cloth face coverings must be worn by every employee not working alone at the location unless their exposure dictates a higher level of protection under Department of Labor & Industries safety and health rules and guidance. The facial covering requirement does apply to the individual(s) leading the service.
  - Exceptions to this requirement for cloth face coverings include when working alone in an office, vehicle, or at a job site; if the individual is deaf or hard of hearing and is communicating with someone who relies on language cues such as facial markers and expression and mouth movements as a part of communication; if the individual has a medical condition or disability that makes wearing a facial covering inappropriate; or when the job has no in-person interaction.
- Refer to Coronavirus Facial Covering and Mask Requirements for additional details. A cloth facial covering is described in the Department of Health guidance, Department of Health guidance.
- Ensure frequent and adequate hand washing with adequate maintenance of supplies. Use disposable gloves, where safe and applicable, to prevent virus transmission on items that are touched frequently or shared and discard after a single use.

- Establish a housekeeping schedule for their place of business that includes frequent cleaning and sanitizing with a particular emphasis on commonly touched services.
- Post a sign at the entrance to their place of business that says face coverings are required.

A location-specific COVID-19 Supervisor shall be designated by each vendor including the venue to monitor the health of their employees and enforce each vendor and the venue's COVID-19 safety plan. At least one COVID-19 Supervisor from each vendor and the venue is required to be onsite throughout the wedding service or funeral. If a vendor or the venue owner is working alone onsite or has only one staff person onsite then the vendor themselves or the staff person may serve as the COVID-19 supervisor.

An employee may refuse to perform unsafe work, including hazards created by COVID-19. And, it is unlawful for the employer to take adverse action against an employee who has engaged in safety-protected activities under the law if their work refusal meets certain requirements.

Employees who choose to remove themselves from a worksite because they do not believe it is safe to work due to the risk of COVID-19 exposure may have access to certain leave or unemployment benefits. Employers must provide high-risk individuals covered by Proclamation 20-46 with their choice of access to available employer-granted accrued leave or unemployment benefits if an alternative work arrangement is not feasible. Other employees may have access to expanded family and medical leave included in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, access to use unemployment benefits, or access to other paid time off depending on the circumstances. Additional information is available at Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (COVID-19) Resources and Paid Leave under the Washington Family Care Act and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

**All vendors, the venue and the host are required to comply (as specifically set out below) with the following COVID-19 wedding service and funeral-specific safety practices:**

1. Prior to beginning operations as described in this document, all vendors working at a wedding service or funeral are required to develop a comprehensive COVID-19 exposure control, mitigation, and recovery plan. The plan must include policies regarding the following control measures: PPE utilization; on-location physical distancing; hygiene; sanitation; symptom monitoring; incident reporting; location disinfection procedures; COVID-19 safety training; exposure response procedures and a post-exposure incident project-wide recovery plan. A copy of the plan must be available for inspection by state and local authorities, but state and local authorities are not required to preapprove the plan. Failure to meet planning requirements may result in sanctions including the vendor's business or the venue being shut down.
2. The host, the venue and any vendor hired to provide restroom services, if any, may provide access to restrooms, provided that access is controlled and limited to no more than 2 people at a time. Individuals waiting to use the restroom must maintain at least 6 feet of distance between each person.
3. The host and the venue shall provide soap and running water for frequent handwashing. All vendors, the host and the venue should encourage their employees to leave their workstations to wash their hands regularly and require them to do so before and after

going to the bathroom, before and after eating and after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol should also be provided and used but are not a replacement for the water requirement.

4. All vendors, the host and the venue must make disinfectants available to their employees. The host and the venue must make them available throughout the location (indoor and outdoor) and ensure cleaning supplies are frequently replenished.
5. All vendors and the venue shall clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces after each use—including personal workstations, mirrors, chairs, headrests and armrests, doorknobs, handrails, restrooms, and breakrooms—using soapy water, followed by the appropriate disinfectants. If these areas cannot be cleaned and disinfected frequently, the vendors' business or the venue shall be shut down until such measures can be achieved and maintained.
6. All vendors and the venue must adhere to physical distancing requirements and have six feet of space between workstations or have physical barriers between them.
7. The host and the venue should increase ventilation rates where feasible. Evaluate ventilation and utilize U.V. filters with a higher MERV rating.
8. The host and the venue should ensure that tissues and trash cans are placed throughout the location (indoor and outdoor).
9. All vendors, the host and the venue must inform employees and the host must inform all guests that they must self-screen for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 before arriving at the location. The host of the wedding service or funeral is strongly encouraged to send a written note to their guests in which they:
  - Request them to take their temperature before attending a wedding service or funeral. Any individual with a temperature of 100.4°F will not be permitted to attend the service or attend work at the organization; and
  - Inform them that any individual with a household member who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or with symptoms of COVID-19 (including a fever above 100.4°F) may not attend the service or attend work at the organization; and
  - Inform the guests that the Host asks that they wear face coverings, maintain 6 feet of physical distance and wash their hands frequently while at the wedding or funeral.

#### Arrival at the Wedding Services or Funeral

10. Hand sanitizer should be available at entry for all staff and attendees (assuming supply availability).
11. The venue and the host must have implemented a plan to ensure proper physical distancing in lobby/waiting areas.

#### The Wedding Ceremony or Funeral Service

12. **Face Coverings and Exemptions** - All vendors, employees and persons in attendance shall wear face coverings before, during, and after the wedding service or funeral (whether indoor or outdoor). The face covering requirement **does** apply to individual(s) leading the

service and others who speak during any live service. There are exemptions to wearing face covering, so please refer to the Department of Health's Order on Face Coverings. If the speaker needs an accommodation due to a medical exemption, then a Plexiglas 3-sided barrier may be used during the wedding service or funeral. The barrier must be disinfected after every use. For services that are recorded or filmed without a live audience, then face coverings are not required for individuals while they are speaking. The wedding couple is exempted from the face covering and six feet physical distancing requirement from each other during the ceremony so long as they maintain six feet of physical distance from all other persons.

13. There may be no direct physical contact between servers and attendees. Anything to be consumed may not be presented to the attendees in a communal container or plate.
14. **Music for the wedding ceremony or funeral service** – No choir shall perform during the wedding ceremony or funeral service. Singing by the guests or by a performer is permitted, but individuals must not remove their face coverings to sing. Soloists and duets (whether accompanied or unaccompanied), as well as other small groups of musicians such as string quartets are permitted so long as the performers wear a face covering. In the event a performer is playing a woodwind or brass instrument, the performer may remove their face covering only during the performance.
15. **Emcee of Events/prerecorded music/audiovisual equipment** - A vendor, the venue or the host is permitted to provide pre-recorded music for the ceremony and reception as background music, to provide AV assistance to amplify voices during the ceremony and reception, for toasts and other aspects of the wedding and reception, and to perform the role of emcee.
16. The venue and the host must arrange the ceremony seats to adhere to physical distancing requirements and have six feet of space between the seats, pews, and benches or have physical barriers between them. Members of the same household may be seated together as a single unit. The venue and host must have signage informing attendees that the six feet of physical distance rules apply for the ceremony.

#### The Wedding Reception or Funeral Service

17. Any person, vendor or host providing the service of food or beverages at a wedding reception or funeral must either offer table service or must have protocols in place to ensure adequate social distancing at food and/or drink pick-up stations.
18. Buffets and salad bars are permitted and must follow Department of Health guidance.
19. All parties and tables must be limited to five guests or less (whether indoor or outdoor).
20. Indoor dining is limited to members of the same household. Outdoor seating does not have this same limitation.
21. For outdoor seating, a temporary structure may be used. Outdoor structures (temporary or permanent) should have no more than two walls to provide appropriate ventilation. The limitation on walls applies to both rigid and flexible walls.
22. Any condiments typically left on the table (ketchup, soy sauce, etc.) must be single-use or sanitized after each use, if applicable.

23. The venue and/or host must place tables far enough apart when measured from occupied chair to occupied chair, to ensure guests seated at a table are a minimum of 6 feet away from guests at adjacent table, or there must be a physical barrier or wall separating booths or tables.
24. Vending, game areas, billiards, darts, and video games, and games that require guests to leave their seats to participate are prohibited until Phase 4. Games that may be done while seated are permitted.
25. No bar area seating is permitted. This is the area with a bar table/counter where patrons sit or stand side-by-side. If an establishment has bar area seating it must be closed off to prohibit use. Counterstyle seating is permitted in other areas of the establishment (indoors or outdoors). Six feet of distance is required between parties and other tables.
26. Guests must wear a cloth face covering anytime they are not seated (while being seated or leaving, or while going to the restroom) and while they are talking at tables and not eating.
27. The host and/or the caterer must minimize the number of staff serving any given table, if table service is provided. It is strongly recommended that one staff person provide all such table service including bringing all beverages/food/utensils and clearing away garbage for that table.
28. Standing to mingle is prohibited; however, the wedding couple and/or the host is permitted to stand to greet guests so long as they strictly comply with the six feet physical distance and face covering requirements.
29. Emcee of Events/prerecorded music/audiovisual equipment. A vendor, the host or the venue is permitted to provide pre-recorded music for the reception or funeral as background music, to provide AV assistance to amplify voices during the reception or funeral, for toasts and other aspects of the reception, and to perform the role of emcee.
30. Dancing is prohibited with the following exceptions: the couple's first dance and parent dances. For these specifically allowed dances, only one pair may dance at a time, both must be wearing masks (unless they are part of the same household) and must remain six feet away from other persons.

All issues regarding worker safety and health are subject to enforcement action under L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH).

- Employers can request COVID-19 prevention advice and help from DOSH.
- Employee workplace safety and health complaints may be submitted to the DOSH Call Center: (1800-423-7233) or via e-mail to [adag235@lni.wa.gov](mailto:adag235@lni.wa.gov).
- General questions about how to comply with the agreement practices can be submitted to the state's Business Response Center [here](#).
- All other violations related to Proclamation 20-25, *et seq.*, can be submitted [here](#).