

AUSTIN



CONVENTION CENTER

D E P A R T M E N T

**CLIENT RESOURCE  
AND SAFETY  
ACTION PLAN**





AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER



**THIS PLAN WAS COMMISSIONED TO SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR CLIENTS, THEIR EVENTS, OUR TEAM MEMBERS AND OUR LOCAL AUSTIN COMMUNITY. ”**

Trisha Tatro  
Interim Director, ACCD



## CLIENTS, PARTNERS AND THE COMMUNITY OF AUSTIN

Our mission is to provide you with world class facilities to host exceptional events. We stand in unbounded support of preserving, restoring, and reviving the events which make Austin the best destination to convene.

We are eager and enthusiastic to get back to the business of serving you! As passionate as we are at the prospect of hosting your events again, we're even more passionate in the quest to provide you with a safe environment to do so successfully. To that end, this plan was thoughtfully developed in partnership with and under the guidance of our local Austin Public Health officials, the Center for Disease Control guidelines, current federal and state guidelines and our Austin Convention Center Department executive team. This plan was commissioned to safeguard the health and well-being of our clients, their events, our team members and our local Austin community.

As the COVID-19 situation evolves and changes, this document too will evolve and change in step with the current environment while adhering to all direction and guidance from our Austin Public Health officials and local government leaders. We are committed to staying on the pulse of COVID-19 and maintaining transparency with our clients and community.

It is in times like these we are reminded more than ever of the immense power of people coming together, of the resilience and dedication of our clients and those who support and attend their events, and of the incredible pleasure it is to play a role in bringing your events to life here in Austin!

### **Trisha Tatro**

Interim Director

Austin Convention Center Department

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# PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

We're inviting our clients to partner with us toward ensuring that physical and social distancing measures are achieved, which would provide for no less than six feet of distance between individuals at all times. Ways to successfully accomplish physical and social distancing:



- The Department will have enhanced visible signage throughout event space and foyers as a reminder to maintain six feet of distance
- Queue lines should be planned for in advance and when appropriate; adequate staffing and signage will be required in an effort to encourage keeping six feet of distance at all times
- Advanced planning collaboratively with client to consolidate down to designated separate entrance and exit doors in and out of event space
- Hallways should be divided with visible signage (floor clings, stanchions, wall signage) designating single-direction lanes
- Spaces with exhibits (trade shows, consumer shows, etc.) are required to have single-direction lanes navigating through the show floor
- Your Event Coordinator will collaborate with you and your general service contractor toward creating floor plans which ensure equipment is set with appropriate six-foot social distancing achieved with reduced available seating for theater, round tables and classroom sets
- We will require enhanced staffing at all entry and exit points to balance entering and exiting in and out of event spaces, restrooms, etc.
- External and internal doors must be propped open, or staffed and held open when possible, to reduce recurrence of cross-touching
- Conferences and keynote sessions must pre-arrange for an orchestrated exit by row or section to reduce the volume of people exiting into lobby spaces at once
- Furniture will not be allowed in pre-function areas during this time.

# ENHANCED CLEANING AND SANITIZATION

The Austin Convention Center Department uses products and measures which meet or exceed the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines. All disinfectants used:

- Are listed on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) list
- Meet criteria to be used against SARS-CoV-2
- Are efficient in protecting against all viruses, bacteria, airborne and bloodborne pathogens.

## ACCD ENHANCED CLEANING AND SANITIZATION MEASURES:

You and your attendees will see an enhanced and very visible cleaning presence throughout the building, both front and back of house. Team members will disinfect high-touch areas on a routine basis, including but not limited to elevator buttons, hand railings, door railings, tables, door handles, vending machines, and restrooms multiple times throughout the day while maintaining six feet of distance from individuals. Once rooms are set, all equipment will be sanitized prior to the start of each event, between sessions and at the end of each day.

## REQUIREMENT OF CLIENT:

All clients will need to plan in advance for extended break times between sessions in support of enhanced cleaning and sanitation measures. Clients will need to plan in advance for staggered session ending times in support of social distancing while attendees exit sessions. We ask our clients to utilize all communication tools available to their event (website, event app, social media, etc.) to push out attendees' code of conduct and expectations prior to attendee arrival.

## HAND WASHING STATIONS:

A proportionate number of sinks and hand washing stations will be readily available throughout the building.

## HAND SANITIZER:

Hand sanitizing stations will be visible and in excess throughout the building and in session rooms.

## FACE COVERINGS:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or face coverings are required by all individuals at all times while inside ACCD buildings.

## HVAC:

We ensure our HVAC systems are compliant with all requirements as outlined by the CDC.

## SIGNAGE AND COMMUNICATION:

The ACCD team will provide permanent and ample signage throughout the venue reminding individuals to practice social distancing, to properly wear their face coverings, to practice frequent hand washing, to cover coughs/sneezes and to avoid touching their face. We encourage our clients to also provide ample event specific/branded signage throughout the event space. Examples of enhanced venue signage and messaging include but are not limited to:

- Window clings
- Floor clings, which are excellent for demonstrating correct direction to walk or appropriate distance to keep from others
- Mirror clings with hand washing and social distancing reminders
- Digital signs throughout venue with helpful hygiene and distancing reminders
- Signs reinforcing attendees' expectations regarding entry to parking, buildings and event itself, stating, ***“By entering this building you agree to comply with all appropriate social distancing and hygiene requirements and that within the past 14 days you have had no symptoms or to your best knowledge come in contact with anyone who is currently infected with COVID-19.”***



(Continued.)

**Cleaning and Disinfection Accreditation:** Both the Austin Convention Center and Palmer Events Center are pursuing GBAC™ STAR Facility Accreditation. This will help us reach cleaning and disinfection accreditation levels for outbreak prevention, response, and recovery protocols. This process is to ensure that our facilities operate at a level of cleanliness, expected by our clients, attendees, and staff.

**New Sanitization Equipment:** To further combat COVID-19, the Austin Convention Center Department has purchased additional sanitization equipment, including:

Stearns® ONE PACKS Mark E II Disinfectant/Deodorizer and multi-purpose, neutral pH, hospital grade quaternary. A one-step germicide, detergent, deodorizer, fungicide, virucide.

Four Sentry 4 UV standalone disinfection machines. These units emit full spectrum UV light to eliminate up to 99.9% of the bacteria, fungi, and viruses in the space, and limit the growth of fungi.

Handheld electrostatic sprayers. Victory Sprayers' patented technology provides an electrical charge to solutions, allowing them to wrap conductive surfaces with an effective and even coverage. These machines reduce cross-contamination due to their touchless application.

*\*Equipment will be sanitized before the start of each event, between sessions and at the end of each day.*



# RESPONSIBILITY OF VENUE EMPLOYEES

We understand that in order to successfully reduce the risk of COVID-19 and provide clients with a safe space to host events, the compliance of our staff and team members is key.

## OWNERSHIP OF AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER DEPARTMENT:

All team members will undergo a non-invasive wellness check prior to being granted entry into the building that will include temperature checks and screening questions. If a team member does not pass the wellness check, they will be asked to immediately leave and seek medical attention/guidance. Employees who pass the wellness check will be provided with a wristband which will be worn at all times.

## OWNERSHIP OF EMPLOYEES:

Team members are required to immediately self-report to management if they are experiencing illness or any potential symptoms of COVID-19 while onsite. The team member will be immediately sent home and required to stay home and seek all appropriate diagnosis, testing and/or treatment prior to demonstrating their ability to return to work.

## HYGIENE:

Team members are required to practice frequent hand washing and/or hand sanitization as a front line of defense to reduce the spread of the virus every hour for 20 seconds minimum, or after using the restroom, coughing, sneezing, touching face, eating, smoking, cleaning as part of their job function and before starting their shift or after ending a break.



## CLEANLINESS:

All back of house restrooms, corridors, freight elevators, break rooms, and frequent touch points will be sanitized frequently throughout the day.

## FACE COVERINGS:

Face coverings are required of every employee at all times while on property.

## TRAINING:

All team members will be adequately trained on topics including but not limited to proper usage of personal protective equipment, elevated hygiene efforts, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures, and COVID-19 specific protocols and safety.

## SIGNAGE:

Signage will be displayed throughout back of house and break room areas as helpful social distancing, hygiene, cleanliness, and face covering reminders.

## PRE-SHIFT MEETINGS:

These meetings will be conducted virtually or in areas where adequate social distancing is observed. Arrival of team members and scheduled lunches and breaks will be staggered to reduce back of house traffic volume.

# REQUIREMENTS OF ALL EVENTS

THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE PER THE GUIDANCE AND DIRECTION OF AUSTIN PUBLIC HEALTH

## PARAMEDIC:

A paramedic may be required for events greater than 500 people in a single space at a single time. An Austin Convention Center Department Security Coordinator will review and assign the need for the paramedic in collaboration with an Austin Convention Center Safety Coordinator along with any mandates or direction from Austin Public Health.

## ISOLATION ROOM:

The Austin Convention Center Department will have one designated isolation room for use by a paramedic or self-reporting individual. This room will be back of house when possible, have no soft surfaces, be able to be disinfected and sanitized with ease and located near a low contact, easy exit point should an ambulance be needed to transport an individual safely.

## CASE NOTIFICATION:

The Austin Convention Center Department will comply with all case notification requirements as assigned by Austin Public Health.

## SAFETY COORDINATOR:

A Safety Coordinator may be required at an event of greater than 500 people in a single space at a single time. This individual will be an ACCD team member who is highly trained in COVID-19 safety protocols and will be able to ensure all the aforementioned requirements in this plan are successfully executed and upheld during the event while onsite.

## ELEVATORS:

At no point should more than four people use an elevator at the same time. Appropriate signage will be displayed outside and within elevators to properly relay this expectation to attendees, clients, and staff.

# RESPONSIBILITY OF GENERAL SERVICE, AUDIO VISUAL AND DÉCOR PROVIDERS

ALL PARTNERS PROVIDING ANY SERVICE, DELIVERY OR FUNCTION TO AN EVENT MUST COMPLY WITH ALL THE REQUIREMENTS LISTED ABOVE FOR VENUE EMPLOYEES, ALONGSIDE THESE ADDED REQUIREMENTS

- All equipment, décor, cables, crates, etc. must be cleaned and sanitized prior to entering the building
- Technician workspaces must be no less than six feet apart, side to side and front to back
- All shared equipment or physical elements on stage must be cleaned and sanitized before and between each use
- All contractors must provide their own disinfecting and sanitation supplies and face coverings.



# FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICE

Our culinary team is transforming and reimagining how to best serve you during this time. Though the food and beverage experience may be slightly different, the level of service and cuisine remain unparalleled and authentic to our spirit of Austin hospitality and culture.

## COMPLIANCE:

Austin Convention Center Catering along with any contractors (i.e. food trucks) are following all recommendations of the CDC, OSHA, FDA, and WHO to ensure food service is a safe practice at all events.

## STAFFING:

All team members have completed training sessions on new OSHA regulations and guidance regarding COVID-19 prior to returning to work.

All food and beverage team members will be pre-screened, including temperature checks prior to each shift.

All team members will wear face coverings, gloves (when appropriate) and practice frequent hand washing for the duration of their shift.

Operations will be conducted with appropriate social distancing among team members.

## SANITIZATION:

Equipment will be cleaned and sanitized before, between and after uses.

Cleaning agents and practices will be used specifically to combat COVID-19.

Hand sanitizer will be available to guests and staffing in all areas of operation and service.

Routine sanitization will be coordinated between the food and beverage departments and all other facility departments to maintain thorough and frequent coverage.

## CATERING:

Buffets will now be served by a food and beverage team member.

Individually wrapped disposable/compostable utensils will be provided at all events.

Condiments will be individually packaged and provided to guests by a team member.

Physical barriers will be utilized to maintain no less than six feet of distance between guests and any exposed food/beverage.

Designated “pick-up” areas will be created for guests to receive their food/beverage, allowing for the best speed of service while maintaining social distancing.

Menu signage will be placed strategically to inform guests of their options and how to easily receive their selections.



## CONCESSIONS:

Touchless payment options will be available, and if terminals are used with guest contact, terminals will be sanitized between users.

Physical barriers and floor signage will be utilized to create designated entrance and exit areas, maintaining six feet of distancing between guests.

Food/beverage offerings will be handled exclusively by team members.

Offerings will be individually wrapped or sealed, including condiments.

Self-serve offerings are suspended and all food/beverage kept at a minimum distance of six feet from the general public.



*\*Food and Beverage service protocols and practices will be revisited, modified and adjusted as directed by state guidelines.*

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **CAN I GET A COPY OF YOUR CLEANING SCHEDULE?**

Yes! We would be happy to share our specific cleaning schedule, which we'll create and customize for each event prior to your arrival.

## **HAVE SET DIAGRAMS BEEN CREATED WHICH TAKE INTO ACCOUNT SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR EACH SPACE WITHIN THE CENTER?**

No. We do not have set diagrams as this is still a very fluid situation and direction from Austin Public Health is ever-evolving as far as potential capacity limitations for future events. At this time, we're partnering with our clients to create custom diagrams specifically for your event, taking into account the aforementioned requirements in this document and any future guidance Austin Public Health may provide prior to your arrival.

## **DO I NEED TO PROVIDE MY OWN EVENT SPECIFIC SAFETY PLAN?**

An event specific safety plan is not currently a requirement; however, it is highly recommended. Not only does it help us better understand your safety goals and what measures you'll be taking at the event, but it also helps us demonstrate to City health officials that your goals and expectations for your event are in line with ours and are an added complement to the City's goals and expectations.

## **WILL YOU BE REQUIRING TEMPERATURE CHECKS OF MY STAFF, EXHIBITORS AND ATTENDEES?**

No. Not at this time, unless we receive direction from City health officials which would require us to conduct temperature and wellness checks.

## **SHOULD WE ALSO BE BRINGING IN HAND SANITIZER?**

It is not required, but highly encouraged. We will have ample, visible hand sanitizer available throughout the center, but we would appreciate your partnership in helping us cover any areas that may not have immediate access to hand sanitizer (i.e. show offices).

## **WHAT NEW INVESTMENTS HAS ACCD MADE TOWARDS ENSURING ENHANCING SANITIZATION IS ACHIEVED?**

We have secured four Sentry 4 UV stand alone disinfecting machines which emit a full spectrum UV light to eliminate up to 99.9% of the bacteria, fungi and viruses in the space. We've also obtained the Victory hand-held and backpack electrostatic sprayers, which provides an electrical charge to solutions which allows them to wrap conductive surfaces with an effective and even coverage.

## **ARE YOU PURSUING OUTBREAK PREVENTION CERTIFICATION?**

Both the Austin Convention Center and Palmer Events Center are pursuing GBAC™ STAR Facility Accreditation. This will help us reach cleaning and disinfection accreditation levels for outbreak prevention, response, and recovery protocols. This process is to ensure that our facilities operate at a level of cleanliness, expected by our clients, attendees, and staff.

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