



Whatcom County  
**HEALTH**  
Department



# Dance & Event Planning Guide for Schools



Updated March 31, 2022

# PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this guide is to provide school leaders with health and safety guidance for planning and executing social events such as proms and homecoming dances, while complying with Washington State requirements and using mitigation measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

These guidelines are intended to keep both students and the broader community safe from COVID-19 while keeping our schools open. The requirements outlined in this document are consistent with Washington State Department of Health's K-12 Schools Requirements. All schools are required to follow the Washington State Department of Health's K-12 Schools Requirements for events hosted by or associated with a K-12 School. Additional recommendations are provided to help minimize risk associated with these events.

## VENUES

There are no capacity limits at this time. Schools are encouraged to:

- Utilize spaces large enough to allow for physical distancing and spacing.
- Utilize outdoor venues when possible. If indoor venues are necessary, consider large, well-ventilated spaces and maximize air flow.
- Minimize crowding by marking traffic flow and designating entrances and exits to minimize face to face contact. Consider placing tape, spots, cones, paint or other markers to signal distance in areas where attendees may be waiting in line.
- Consider limiting the number of people who occupy the restroom at one time to allow for physical distancing

## OUTDOOR EVENTS

As of March 10, 2022, masks are not required at outdoor events, but are recommended at any large gathering due to the likelihood that crowding will occur.

## INDOOR EVENTS

Masks are recommended for all attendees, volunteers, and staff at indoor events.

Attendees should only remove masks in the following circumstances:

- While eating or drinking
- For a short period, while taking professional pictures (outdoor pictures are highly recommended)

# MASKING

Ensure a supply of extra masks is available for attendees.

# TESTING AND SCREENING

## Testing

Whatcom County Health Department recommends that schools require testing for all attendees (including staff and volunteers). Students can submit testing consent forms or have consent forms on file, prior to purchasing tickets. The following testing options are acceptable:

- Negative rapid test the day of the event.
- Negative PCR test 2-3 days prior to event (must submit proof prior to attending).

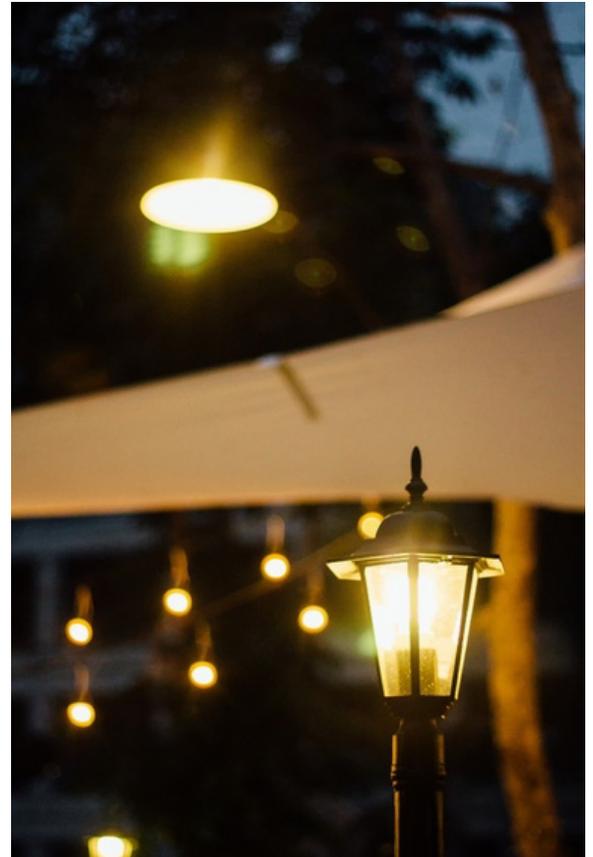
Students who are fully vaccinated or who have tested positive for COVID-19 between 11 and 90 days prior to the event can be excluded from testing. Schools should verify vaccination status or positive test results prior to the event.

## Screening for Exposure and/or Symptoms

Schools should develop a plan for screening attendees for COVID-19 exposure or symptoms. Options can include an attestation at the time of ticket purchase, screening at the door, posting signage, etc.

Do not allow anyone to attend who has been exposed to COVID-19 and is within their quarantine period, or who is experiencing any COVID-like symptoms, including:

- **Fever or chills**
- **Cough**
- **Sore throat**
- **Headache**
- **Muscle/body aches**
- **Fatigue**
- **Congestion**
- **Runny nose**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Nausea or vomiting**
- **Loss of taste or smell**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**



# PHOTOGRAPHY

Professional photography is allowed. Outdoor photography is recommended if possible.

## Indoors

Photographers should wear masks at all times. Attendees can remove masks while being photographed.

## Outdoors

Masks are not required for photographers, but are recommended due to the likelihood that crowding will occur. Distancing to the extent possible when not actively being photographed is recommended.



# DJS, BANDS, OR OTHER PERFORMERS/PRESENTERS

Encourage guests to avoid singing or shouting, especially indoors. If possible, keep music levels down so people don't have to shout or speak loudly to be heard

## Indoor Venues

Performers and presenters can remove masks while actively speaking or performing, but should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from attendees.

## Outdoor Venues

Performers and presenters are not required to wear masks, but maintaining at least 6 feet of distance from attendees is recommended.

# ADDITIONAL MITIGATION MEASURES

## Contact Tracing

It is recommended that schools keep a list of all event attendees. If a COVID-19 outbreak occurs as a result of the event, the school must notify the Whatcom County Health Department of positive cases and identified close contacts immediately. Schools will also need to notify close contacts and have them quarantine appropriately. Schools should provide appropriate staffing and/or volunteers to ensure compliance with COVID-19 safety measures.

## Cleaning and disinfecting

Frequently clean and disinfect all high-touch surfaces. Ensure adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene, including soap, water, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol, a way to dry hands (e.g., paper towels, hand dryer), tissues, disinfectant wipes, masks, and no-touch trash cans. Provide ample hand sanitizer stations, including at venue entry.

