

Health & Safety Guideline

CONFERENCES AND BUSINESS EVENTS



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This health protection and health safety manual is a universal recommendation that covers not only recommended protective measures against COVID-19 (in its annex), but proactively also prepares service providers and clients for protection against other possible airborne viruses in the future. Tailoring these measures to the person or event and implementing them helps event organisers optimise the safety of event environments. It must be stressed that the manual does not override the official decrees of the Government of Hungary on public health, hygiene, and other issues.

As members of the working group established by Budapest Convention Bureau the following contributed to the creation of this manual:

- Association of Hungarian Event Organisers and Service Providers
- Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association
- Hungarian Inbound Professionals' Association
- Association of Hungarian Travel Agencies
- Hungarian Tourism Agency
- Budapest Brand Non-profit Ltd.
- Budapest Airport
- HUNGEXPO Budapest Convention and Exhibition Centre
- Bo Live Branding Agency
- Special Effects International Ltd.
- Budapest Convention Bureau



The applicability of the manual





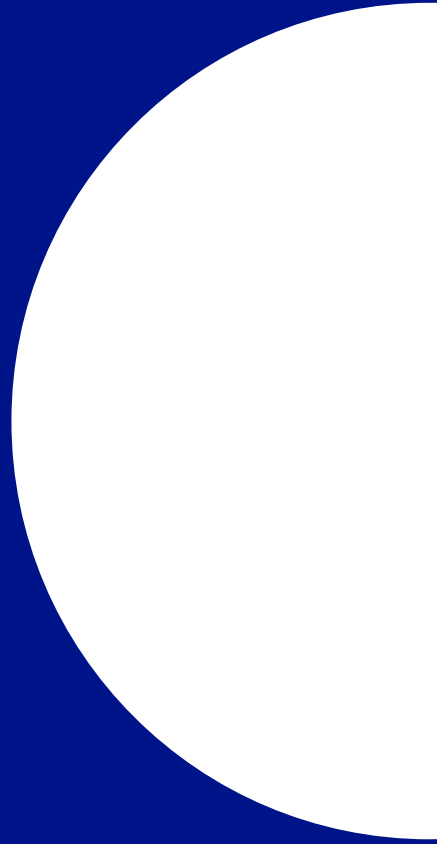
In 2020, in response to the situation resulting from the coronavirus epidemic and to assist economic recovery it became necessary to create a complex study containing good practices and efficient measures for the clients and employees of the meeting industry, in the form of an operational manual/guide that reports the risks of the impacts of the virus and their mitigation in connection with activities performed in this industry or related to those.

By compiling this study, the aim of Budapest Convention Bureau (hereinafter: BUD CB) was to create an operational guiding principle that contains application methods which help prevent coronavirus infection and reduce risks. Although the creation of this operational manual was spurred by the coronavirus epidemic, some of its recommendations should also be applied in the meeting industry after the coronavirus epidemic has been overcome. This document discusses information on good practices in six main chapters:

- 1. Framework**
- 2. Personal and staff safety**
- 3. Health and safety measures**
- 4. Event planning taking health recommendations into account**
- 5. Communication- and crisis management**
- 6. Summary: the importance of compliance with measures**

This document was created with the goal of collecting and presenting the recommendations whose implementation establishes the maximum level of protection of the safety of clients, visitors and service providers. Careful consideration of the measures detailed in the document, their customisation to persons and events and implementation help create the safest possible event environment. The document does not prevail nor take precedence over the public health, hygiene and other official decrees and regulations in force, which are regularly reviewed by the authorities and the Hungarian government. The aspects and recommendations in this document do not constitute official requirements and their application does not provide exemption from the obligation to comply with public health- and other legislation in force. BUD CB also wishes to note that the following recommendations may be supplemented with the specific requirements of service providers, venues and accommodation facilities operating in the Hungarian meeting industry, which both clients and actual consumers must be familiar with and observe. In the current period fraught with health risks and restrictions the protection of concerned parties of the meeting industry is particularly important; therefore, beyond generally applicable information this practical guide also contains information specific to the MICE market.

Framework



FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL SOLUTIONS

The coronavirus epidemic has radically changed tourism. Safety and hygiene measures have become extremely important and will remain so in the future as well. This is also evident from the publication of an increasing number of guidelines, manuals and qualification systems in international practice, which BUD CB took into account when creating its recommendations for the Hungarian MICE industry.

It is important to provide continuous information and updates on the application of these recommendations to partners and all parties concerned, as they, too, play an active part in the protection against infections. Not only the meeting, incentive, convention, and exhibition market has shown initiative in the rapidly expanding creation of health safety measures and framework systems – from extremely simple resources to elaborately detailed materials – but also other sectors connected to the meeting industry.

From catering through freight shipping to equipment installation, both companies and associations contribute to disseminating a new type of knowledge on wellbeing and presenting approaches. Constant communication between partners, which provides opportunities for cooperation and preventing unnecessary efforts is, therefore, of paramount importance.

Before the coronavirus epidemic, typically local authorities exercised the greatest power of control over venues and events. In the pandemic situation that has developed, however, in many countries temporarily this role has been taken over by the national government.

In Hungary, national service providers and industry associations are doing a great deal to achieve the speediest possible recovery of the business event market, in close cooperation with the Hungarian government. Recent changes have also affected those working in the MICE industry. Their feedback and involvement can provide valuable help for the further improvement of processes (among others, they might be able to provide answers to questions such as what works and what does not, and what could be improved).

In light of the above fact situation, the experts of BUD CB believe that instead of checklists, audits should be introduced and efficient evaluation methods set up.

The implementation of this practice, which is already used in many areas, together with suitable communication and questioning techniques can motivate staff to cooperate. For example, by asking “Are we acting correctly?” instead of having to follow a checklist they take a far more creative approach to thinking about risk analysis.

Lastly, armed with this new knowledge they will be examining processes and ensuring their constant validity with a critical eye when reviewing previously used standards.

Personal and staff safety

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DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The manual aims to be applicable during any communicable disease; therefore recommendations relating to the current communicable disease and rules for its prevention are presented in its Annex. During an epidemic, protecting all persons concerned and maintaining a controlled environment are priorities. For many governmental health authorities around the world the main point of reference is the risk assessment guideline of the WHO, whose toolset and background information they integrated into their own concept. Keeping the situation in Hungary in mind, when drawing up the general recommendations for personal and staff safety set out in this manual BUD CB, too, relied on the recommendations of international organisations (WHO, AIPC, UFI, ICCA) and national authorities, and considered three important aspects:

- 1. Preparing for the worst-case scenario.**
- 2. Staying flexible.**
- 3. Ensuring that measures can be easily and comfortably adapted to those involved in the MICE industry.**



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROTECTING PERSONAL SAFETY

Everyone in Hungary must observe the following general recommendations aimed at protecting health and preventing the spread of the epidemic:

- Frequent and thorough hand washing for at least 20-30 seconds with soap and running water or, if this is not possible, hand sanitisation with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser (with bactericidal and virucidal effect).
- Hand sanitisation is particularly important before eating and after sneezing, coughing, blowing one's nose, or using the restroom.
- Do not touch your eyes, mouth, or face until you have washed your hands.
- It is recommended to cough and sneeze into a paper tissue, which should be thrown into a closed waste container immediately after use. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze / cough into the crook of your elbow.
- Large, uncontrolled crowds and crowded spaces should be avoided.
- It is recommended to observe the officially set social distancing and avoid physical contact (e.g. handshake). These are fundamental health measures during an epidemic.
- Depending on the pandemic situation, inside enclosed spaces it is recommended to wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose, in accordance with the rules in force, if the officially set social distancing cannot be maintained. It is the responsibility of the individual to clean and replace their face mask with appropriate frequency.
- During a virus situation, staff who come in direct contact with guests must wear a face mask regardless of the intensity of the pandemic.
- It is recommended to wear gloves, which, however, does not replace sanitisation. Gloves must be changed frequently.
- If you notice symptoms of any communicable disease, avoid close physical contact with others, including travel and use of public spaces.



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROTECTING THE SAFETY OF STAFF

Employers operating in the meeting industry and in related sectors are advised to develop their own action plan, which pays particular attention to the health protection of staff and supplements the following general rules with specific recommendations:

- It is recommended to hold training for staff on hygiene measures. Staff must be familiar with all recommendations published by the NNK (National Public Health Centre) and must follow them strictly. Thorough training that covers every detail and precise definition of work processes are crucial.
- Anyone who feels ill or notices symptoms of a communicable disease and/or has been in close contact recently with a person known to be infected, should stay at home and follow the protocol prescribed by the competent authority, the NNK.
- It is the duty of every employer to specially monitor the health of employees according to the symptoms associated with the current pandemic, as published by the competent authorities (WHO, NNK), take measures in the event of suspected illness, and protect employees from excessive workloads and overexertion. Monitoring must follow the protocol published by the competent authorities. If possible, employers should develop a home office solution and allow employees to work from home, so that contact can be reduced during a pandemic.
- It is recommended to keep employees updated about the current situation and measures and to post information on the various prevention measures (hand washing, sanitisation, social distancing).
- In order to ensure the constant cleanliness of the working environment it is necessary and recommended to provide virucidal hand sanitisers for staff. If possible (both employers and employees can be encouraged to this end) we recommend using dedicated tools and setting up dedicated workstations.
- If possible, it is recommended to reorganise the work tasks of employees who belong in the endangered category (suffering from chronic illness/elderly) in order to reduce their infection risk arising from direct encounters/contact.



- Employees should be encouraged to choose transport options which eliminate contact for commuting: instead of using public transport, walking, cycling, or use of an own vehicle is recommended, provided that it does not place an extra burden on employees. If public transport is the only available option, employees must be encouraged to strictly follow the health rules relating to the use of public transport. If possible, "staggered" shifts that fall outside peak travel periods should be offered to employees, which help them avoid crowds.
- In the case of shift work, shifts should be divided into segments and organised in such way that unnecessary encounters between and sharing of the same place by employees can be avoided.
- It is recommended to advise employees that they should wash hands according to the hand washing and/or sanitisation recommendations as soon as they arrive at work / home.
- If possible, every employee should undergo a quick health check at the start of each working day, paying particular attention to symptoms of the communicable disease.
- Employees should be encouraged to follow a healthy diet, exercise regularly, relax, and get sufficient sleep and supported so that they can cope with the stress caused by the epidemic by talking to close friends, a helpline, etc.
- During an epidemic the stress level of employees also depends on the security of their position; therefore we advise a conversation between the employer and the employee to reassure them in this regard.
- Employees should be encouraged to monitor themselves continuously. If an employee is taken unwell/produces symptoms at the workplace, they must be isolated immediately (from other employees, guests, the vicinity of food). Areas that were used by said employee must be disinfected thoroughly as soon as possible, or sealed off for an extended period. Such areas should not be used until they have been completely disinfected. It is recommended to have employees who had been in contact with the patient tested.
- Any person entering the operational area for the first time on any given day must undergo a quick general health assessment, which may take the form of a questionnaire, interview, or other method considered efficient by the employer.



- Health & Safety Officer appointed by the event organiser, who is/are available at the event venue 24 hours a day, armed with full knowledge of the procedural rules in force at the event venue and set out in legislation in force so that they can provide information and assistance to all parties concerned. The information available to the H&SO must be developed specifically for each event.
- The H&SO must be fully familiar with the event-, venue- and health protection protocols and must perform the following tasks: enforcing health regulations and protocols, appointing and continuously liaising with subordinate supervisors, continuously monitoring events, answering participants' questions on infectious diseases and their prevention, giving a brief presentation at the start of the event on health regulations, cooperating and constantly communicating with the various competent authorities, overseeing the process of temperature checks, and immediately notifying public health authorities if a guest becomes ill.

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This document aims to serve as an operative manual that provides comprehensive information on all areas of the meetings industry, that is, from the arrival of a business traveller to Hungary/any domestic destination through their stay to their departure. To this effect, it is important that operators of the industry help and provide information to participants, before, during, and after the event, as well, so that guests can feel safe and comfortable at all times.

PRE-EVENT AND RELATED TRAVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

AIR TRAVEL

BEFORE THE JOURNEY:

reducing contact during baggage handling and check-in

- Passengers who wish to reach their destination by air should pack as practically as possible, taking only the most essential items. If possible, they should travel with cabin baggage only.
- When purchasing flight tickets, passengers should be able to pre-order meals, hold luggage, and other services, adding them online, and should be encouraged to choose contactless forms of payment.
- Online check-in is recommended before the journey.
- If a passenger is unwell, it is recommended that they cancel or rebook their journey. More and more airlines offer flexible travel packages or a repatriation guarantee.



**AIRPORT USE:
Ensuring social distancing**

- In order to maintain trust in air travel during a virus situation it is recommended to introduce innovations that can provide an extensive, real sense of safety to passengers. Such innovations can include developments aimed at increasing the use of contactless technologies, more self-service kiosks and safety barriers, and contactless screening procedures.
- It is recommended to provide a resealable bag to passengers free of charge / at a discount, which can be used to carry liquids permitted in hand baggage, a face mask, disposable gloves, 100 ml hand sanitiser and an informational pamphlet, which contains telephone numbers and all health protection measures and services of the airport.
- In order to facilitate adapting to the continuously evolving situation it is also important to train ground staff and flight crews properly regarding the new situation, switch to digital technologies, and integrate the epidemiological protocol to be used into daily routine.
- It is recommended to use floor stickers at the airport, which help passengers keep the appropriate distance from one another.
- Passenger terminals and buses must be disinfected frequently.
- It is recommended to operate airport buses with reduced capacity.
- It is recommended to install plastic partitions at customer service points (check-in desks, gate areas, etc.) and provide hand sanitiser. Ground staff and flight crews must wear surgical masks.



ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT - RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to minimise physical contact, boarding should start from the rear of the aircraft / with the rows furthest from the doors, filling rows continuously towards the doors.
- During a pandemic mask use should be mandatory.
- As long as there are sufficient vacant seats onboard, it is recommended to leave one seat empty next to each passenger. If this cannot be ensured for all passengers, families and groups should be seated together, leaving a seat empty next to passengers travelling alone.
- Flight attendants are advised to warn passengers to minimise their movements aboard the aircraft, which can also reduce unnecessary contact. This does not apply to passengers who need to move due to medical reasons, following the instructions of a physician.
- Regular and adequate disinfection and ventilation are recommended on board. Surfaces which are touched more frequently by passengers (seatbelt buckles, armrests, folding trays, etc. should be cleaned with greater intensity. Every evening, it is recommended to disinfect the cabin more thoroughly; at the end of each shift it is recommended to disinfect the entire cabin, including ceilings, walls, and other surfaces.
- Use of disposable menu cards is recommended. Each product should be served packaged separately and payment by bank card should be available and encouraged.
- If meals are served / sold during the flight, a pre-packaged sanitising wipe must be provided to passengers before the meal, thus reducing the movements of passengers before the meal, e.g. to wash hands.



RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO PASSENGER TRANSPORT AT THE DESTINATION

- Passenger transport companies are advised to consider measures such as limiting capacities and installing safety barriers/glass between the driver and passengers and between passengers.
- Adequate ventilation must be ensured and vehicles must be disinfected regularly - if possible, the entire vehicle should be disinfected every 24 hours. Hand sanitiser gel should also be available on board.
- If a bus transports two separate groups the same day, it is recommended to disinfect the bus completely with ozone between them, if possible.
- It can be useful to provide hand sanitisers in front of or on each door through which passengers may board the bus, so that they can sanitise their hands before boarding.
- It is advisable to have extra masks available on buses.
- Before and after each journey all handles of the vehicle must be wiped down with sanitising wipes.
- Buses may not be boarded via the front door and the first two rows of seats behind the driver must be left unoccupied.
- Drivers are also strongly advised to wear a mask.
- Attendants/guides are also advised to wear a mask when using the microphone.
- Having a protocol in place for passengers becoming unwell or showing symptoms of the disease.
- Contactless opening/closing of the doors/windows of the vehicle.
- As for all sectors concerned, passenger transport staff must also undergo training on the new hygiene measures.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

GENERAL

- The management of the establishment must demonstrate a responsible attitude in order to keep the epidemic under control. It is their task to prepare an action plan together with professional and health organisations and authorities on operational, cleaning, and disinfection methods that help prevent the epidemic and on tasks connected with infection occurring at the accommodation.
- Compliance with the action plan must be monitored continuously, for which it is recommended to set up a working group composed of department heads.
- The communication of appropriate information to staff is indispensable for preventing further spread of the virus and creating a safe environment. Training must be organised for staff, who must be kept informed of measures aimed at preventing the spread of the epidemic and of the symptoms of the disease.
- Particular attention must be paid to hygiene at the establishment: virucidal hand sanitiser, surface disinfectant and cleaning agents must be available in suitable quantities.
- Public washrooms / restrooms and their fixtures, light switches, taps should be disinfected especially thoroughly.
- Virucidal hand sanitiser must be provided in guest areas, as well. Sanitiser should be provided where needed: at entrances, in washrooms, at tables, near the buffet table, in the wellness area, etc.
- Adequate social distancing is extremely important for preventing the further spread of the virus. The overfilling of premises should be reduced in line with their size and characteristics.
- All premises should be ventilated regularly.
- All employees are advised to wear a mask at the hotel.



FRONT OFFICE

- The front desk and furnishings in the lobby (tables, armrests) must be disinfected with a virucidal product at least three times a day.
- Installing a plexiglass breath shield.
- Enabling contactless check-in: avoiding unnecessary administration – if possible, the registration form should be filled in online, or registration forms pre-printed with the details of guests should be used.
- Disinfecting pens continuously or providing disposable pens.
- Providing virucidal hand sanitiser on or near the front desk, on its staff and guest sides alike.
- In front of the front desk the officially set social distancing must be marked so that guests waiting in line can keep the appropriate distance from each other.
- Providing a mask to guests who request one.
- Recommendations must be drawn up for the safe conduct of guests in terms of health, which should be attached to the proposal/confirmation before their arrival.



GUEST ROOMS

- Suspension of optional cleaning offered upon request. Daily cleaning of rooms. All hard-to-clean objects in guest rooms (e.g. notepads) must be replaced after each guest.
- Frequently touched surfaces in rooms must be disinfected daily with a virucidal product: doorknobs/-handles, telephone, light switch, wardrobe and dresser drawer knobs, TV remote and its keys, table, nightstand, washbasin and faucet, shower faucet, soap dispenser, toilet flush handle.
- Staff must clean their hands with alcohol-based sanitiser before entering each room.
- Rooms should be aired during cleaning.
- Items in rooms (glasses, cutlery) should be washed in a dishwasher: items that do not appear to have been used should also be washed, as guests may have touched them.
- If items are washed by hand: disinfection, washing, drying. Instead of cloths it is recommended to use disposable paper towels.



RESTAURANTS

- The operation of the restaurant and its activities must comply with the up-to-date guideline of the National Food Chain Safety Office.
- If possible, in show kitchens a plexiglass wall should be installed in front of the kitchen counter in the guest area. In self-service restaurants, cafeterias, and other units with counter service, servers and dishes should be behind a plexiglass wall, at a safe distance from patrons.
- At catering establishments, the table and chair armrest must be disinfected with a virucidal product after the departure of the guest(s) or the tablecloth must be replaced.
- We recommend that kitchen staff also wear a mask and gloves when preparing food. At the start of work the temperature of staff must be measured and particular attention must be paid to frequent hand washing. If possible, we recommend regularly testing staff.
- Sugar- and condiment containers and items which are typically shared should be disinfected after the departure of each guest. In addition, guests should be able to request small packs of individually packaged and sterilised condiments/sweetener, similarly to airplanes.
- If capacity allows it, we recommend that a server/cook serve dishes to guests from the buffet.
- We recommend placing smaller amounts of food in chafing dishes and refilling them more often.
- For buffets we recommend setting up a one-way queue, with no walking around (cold dishes, salads, warm dishes, desserts).
- The officially recommended social distancing should be observed while queuing at the buffet. It is recommended to mark the appropriate distance on the floor in order to avoid congestion.
- During a pandemic guests may only approach buffet tables wearing a mask.
- If possible, cold dishes, salads, and desserts should be served in individual portions which guests can take.
- Bread must be pre-sliced or rolls must be served to guests so that they do not touch the entire loaf.
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner should be divided into time slots.
- Instead of traditional menus, disposable menus printed on paper or scannable digital QR menus should be used. In high-traffic places the use of laminated, cleanable menu cards is recommended.
- All service providers must offer contactless payment methods.
- Guests should be seated leaving enough space between them, if possible, maintaining the officially set social distancing between different parties.



WELLNESS

- Staff of the wellness area must undergo training that gives them appropriate information about the current contagious virus, measures implemented at the accommodation, and the symptoms of the disease, so that they can provide comprehensive information to guests.
- Limiting and enforcing the simultaneous capacity applicable to the entire spa and to individual pools, according to the relevant NNK guideline.
- Indoor pool- and rest areas should be ventilated hourly.
- Enforcing mandatory showering before and after using a pool is recommended.
- Pool handrails should be disinfected every 30 minutes.
- Strict compliance with the rules of operating engineering and water treatment systems – particularly ventilation equipment – and its verification are recommended. Rules relating to the water treatment of pools with water circulation must be followed strictly and monitored (e.g. chlorine level), according to the relevant NNK guideline.
- In rest areas (both indoors and outdoors) it is recommended to reduce the number of furnishings in order to avoid congestion. Sufficient distance should be maintained between furnishings at all times (the officially set physical distance must be kept between lounge chairs).
- In order to maintain the hygiene of common areas, changing rooms, showers, pools, other surfaces, and foot washing stations the prescribed cleaning guideline should be complied with in full (paying particular attention to using cleaning agents in the prescribed concentration).
- It is recommended to provide protective equipment (mask) to staff, introducing regular breaks in their daily work schedule, and separating staff of the same shift in indoor areas.
- It is recommended to provide hand sanitiser liquid/gel in main rooms frequented by guests (lobby, changing rooms, washrooms, rest areas, pool area, outdoor area, catering establishments).
- Washrooms should be cleaned hourly and the doors and inner surfaces of changing cabins and lockers should be disinfected regularly.
- Steam bath and sauna services, jacuzzies, and bubble baths should be operated in accordance with the relevant NNK guideline.
- Body- and therapeutic treatments may be performed as specified in legislation, in accordance with the relevant NNK guideline.
- It is recommended to make slippers mandatory in all spa areas and premises. Digital entrance wristbands should be disinfected after each use.



TASK OF EVENT ORGANISERS

Organisations operating in the meeting industry need to consider/implement the following:

- When organising business trips and events, a professional must be engaged. This does not limit the personal responsibility of the guests, which fact must be emphasized to them during the organisation process.
- Regardless of the number of persons attending the event, the event organiser must provide a Health & Safety Officer at the event venue, who is available 24 hours a day and can direct ill guests to the competent body according to the procedures defined in the official regulations in force. The Health & Safety Officer may be internal staff or an employee of an external company.
- Health advice must be presented during the entire process of organising and running business events, in the descriptions of programmes, digital channels, and other information surfaces.
- During the event all rules relating to precautions (e.g., the importance of social distancing, wearing masks, etc.) must be illustrated at the venue using pictorial signs/digital means, in the languages of all of the participants, but at least in English. Preliminary and ongoing communication via digital channels with those involved helps ensure sustainability and reduces contact.
- When organising conventions, 48 hours prior to the journey a self-assessment questionnaire must be sent out, which must be filled in and returned (did the individual travel anywhere in the past two weeks, have they noticed any symptom of an infectious disease). In addition to this, at the registration/before the start of work all persons taking part in the event must fill in a declaration of liability in the official language of the event, stating that they have not noticed any symptoms of a disease and that to the best of their knowledge they did not meet any person showing such symptoms in the 14 days before filling in the questionnaire/their journey.



- In all cases, participants must be given information about cancelling the event, restrictions in force at the venue and rules to be observed.
- Organisers must pay particular attention to linguistic, cultural, and skill differences when choosing how to communicate information related to an infectious disease.
- Organisers should prepare a simplified risk assessment of facultative leisure programmes on offer according to viral transmission and infection risk aspects and adapt their proposals to guests on its basis. It is recommended to maximise the number of outdoor programmes and suggest programmes and dining options near the hotel, thereby reducing the number of journeys made by guests.
- It is the duty of the event organiser to collect all necessary information and protocols from those involved and to provide information to guests continually about the implemented safety measures.
- For each event, a separate health protection plan must be created, to be presented to both the client, as a regulation supplementing the GTC (General Terms & Conditions), and to service providers. Every supplier and subcontractor must have its own health protection protocol in place, with verifiable training on it given to employees. (Pursuant to the Work Safety Act it is the task and responsibility of every legal person to meet this requirement. Since this is a professional activity, organisations should ask the assistance and involvement of their work safety engineers or technicians.)



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HYGIENE AND DISINFECTION DURING PREPARATION FOR THE EVENT AND THE EVENT ITSELF

In this changed situation all event organisers must carefully consider and comply with the following in order to reduce infection risks:

- As part of the access control process the body temperature of participants must be checked using a non-contact thermometer or – depending on the number of participants – a suitable number of thermal cameras or thermal gates. This activity significantly reduces infection risks. The organiser must consider the viability of this and must strive to implement it.
- Upon entry all persons must undergo a body temperature check. Persons whose body temperature is 37 °C/98.60000°F or higher may not be admitted to the event venue. It is recommended to perform this measurement outside the venue or in an isolated space. As an alternative solution, on-site rapid tests may be used, which must be discussed in advance with the competent health authority. This test is voluntary, so the participants and the service providers and employees engaged for the event may not be compelled to take the test and may not be banned from entering the event venue on account of refusing to take it.
- Before entering the event venue, all persons must use the hand sanitiser at the entrance.
- If a person shows signs of an infectious disease, they must be isolated according to the procedure published by the NNK.
- The event organiser must provide at least one dedicated staff member (Health & Safety Officer) who is thoroughly familiar with the rules of the event, venue, and health protection. The contact details of the H&SO must be made known and available to those attending the event.
- The tasks of the Health & Safety Officer are the following: enforcing health regulations and protocols, appointing and continuously liaising with subordinate supervisors, continuously monitoring events, answering participants' questions on infectious diseases and their prevention, giving a brief presentation at the start of the event on health regulations, cooperating with the various competent authorities, overseeing the process of temperature checks.
- If a guest is ill, it is the task of the dedicated staff member (Health & Safety Officer) to take steps; however, all staff members must be familiar with the health protection protocol of the event.



- At the event venue the event organiser must provide for the participants a suitable number of masks that cover the face and nose.
- If possible, the doors of premises open to participants should be left open, or staff should be provided to open doors, with the exception of doors that open electronically.
- Door handles, stair rails and surfaces subject to frequent contact (furniture, boards, counters, toilets, and particularly devices used to flush toilets, taps, etc.) must be cleaned and disinfected regularly (at least three times a day).
- Hand sanitiser dispensers filled with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser containing at least 70-80% alcohol must be placed at a clearly visible location at every entrance and exit, in washrooms, and in the guest area where meals are served / at buffets.
- At the neuralgic points of the event venue at least 1 hand sanitiser dispenser must be provided for every 50 participants.
- A suitable number of hand sanitiser dispensers must be provided in lavatories.
- Objects which have been disinfected (e.g. tables, chairs) must be marked clearly for the participants (e.g. with a guest card).
- During disinfection particular attention must be paid to items subject to intensive contact, such as microphones, interpretation receivers/headsets, keyboards, wireless presentation clickers, notebooks, pendrives, flipcharts, markers, and the lectern. These items must be disinfected thoroughly by designated staff before and after their use.
- The use of hard-to-clean items subject to common use (e.g. textiles) should be avoided and the shared use of items by staff must be minimised.
- In all areas of travel and business events the use of card payments is recommended. If possible, the circulation of cash should be minimised.
- Appointing a staff member who is fully familiar with symptoms of the communicable disease and measures (Health & Safety Officer) can help with enforcing health rules and protocol elements at the venue, checking that body temperature measurement is performed (if used), continuously monitoring the event, appointing and continuously liaising with subordinate "supervisors", answering the questions of participants on the communicable disease and its prevention, possibly giving a brief presentation before the event and cooperating with the various competent authorities.
- It is worth paying particular attention to the new rules for safe construction and demolition introduced on account of the virus, enabling independent work and, inasmuch possible, preparing a schedule for seamless and safe work/service provider changes (minimising contact between the various service providers, etc.)

Event planning taking health recommendations into account

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Preparations must be made for the resumption of business events involving attendance in person; therefore event venues and -organisers are advised to draw up an action plan for social distancing, which applies to physical, functional, and service areas alike and contains complex measures auditors can monitor. The plan must designate a responsible person who will enforce health recommendations. For the practical application of the action plan it is worth establishing a working group for its execution and the handling of incidents. This group should be composed of staff responsible for health safety and security staff.

Since the industry covers a broad spectrum of business events, this document contains general recommendations related to organising and running business events, which take international good practices and official regulations in force in Hungary into consideration. This guide aims to provide general information; event-specific recommendations should be developed individually by the meeting industry providers, who should share them with their partners and clients.



RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO CONSTRUCTING AND DISMANTLING THE EVENT VENUE

- Particularly strong emphasis must be placed on additional rules necessitated by the virus for construction and dismantling. Independent work must be enabled to the possible extent, and a schedule must be created for seamless and safe work and service provider changes (minimising contact between the various service providers, etc.).
- The event organiser must provide information to subcontractors in advance, in order to minimise on-site communication and administration.
- The event organiser must designate construction, packing, and dismantling routes and areas in advance.
- Inasmuch possible, subcontractors should make their deliveries to the event venue separately. Scheduled removal must also be planned for dismantling works.
- At the construction/ dismantling area all persons must observe the announced hygiene rules and must use protective equipment.
- Carpets used at events may only be re-used after steam cleaning.
- Before starting their work, subcontractors and suppliers must also provide a declaration stating that they have not noticed any symptoms of an infectious disease.



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EVENT PLANNING

- Events may only be held with a cap on the number of those present, established in advance. Participation must in all cases be made conditional on advance / online registration. Deviations from this rule are only permitted if a participant has a compelling reason for not registering in advance / online.
- In the above cases registration may also take place upon arrival at the venue. To prevent crowding, time slots must be established for registration. When setting up the event, it must be pointed out that for persons who belong to a group at risk it is not recommended to attend the event in person if they can also join in online.
- Rules must be drawn up for the safe conduct of guests in terms of health, to be attached to the proposal/confirmation before their arrival.
- If a registration post needs to be set up on site, it must be conformant with social distancing rules in force.
- In accordance with official regulations in force participants must be informed who to turn to should they notice any signs of an infectious disease. If organisers learn directly after the event that a guest has become infected, they must inform all other participants of this.
- Boards/displays containing the rules for the prevention of infectious diseases must be posted on the necessary surfaces.
- It is recommended to create an application/website for individual events where all rules, protocols, guidelines and professional materials for the convention (timetable, electronic meal tickets, etc.) are available. Maximising the number of online/electronic solutions can help compliance with hygiene rules.
- If the organiser insists on the use of physical materials (printed, CD etc.), those must be put together in compliance with the strict health safety precautions and presented to participants in bags. Reading materials (professional journals, leisure programme guides) should not be left out in lobbies / common areas / cafés.
- Inasmuch possible, information should be provided at the venue using non-contact equipment. (e.g. LCD screen which provides information continuously to guests about health precautions and recommendations.
- The event organiser must ensure the contactless scanning of tickets, entrance passes, or badges at the event/exhibition venue. (e.g.: QR code, barcode, other staff or guest ID).
- If necessary, a possibility should be provided for printing badges at contactless self-service stations on site.
- The use of wristbands is not advised. If their use cannot be avoided due to the need for visual identification, wristbands which guests can fit themselves should be used.



- The covered and contactless (e.g. foot pedal, sensor) waste containers installed on site must be disinfected at least once a day and more frequently, if possible. The size of the container should be increased in line with the frequency of its emptying, and the generated waste should be removed more frequently.
- Appropriate ventilation, temperature, and humidity, and regular disinfection of the air handling system must be ensured and monitored continuously. If natural ventilation is used, the best solution is plenum ventilation through windows, with pre-defined, regular ventilation breaks.
- It is recommended to increase the number of first aid stations and available medical assistance. The implementation of this measure should be considered with the involvement of a work safety engineer / technician.
- Prior to and during the event participants must be informed continuously about mandatory health rules and the virus situation at the destination. It is vital to present always the latest information.
- During the event participants must be directed and informed continuously, using cordons, markings painted on the floor, one-way systems, partitions, separate entrances and exits, and staggered entry times.
- It is recommended to reduce the number of persons sharing passengers elevators at the event venue, which should be pointed out with signs and legends. In addition, the use of stairs should be encouraged. Regular disinfection of passenger elevators is vital; frequently touched surfaces (call buttons, floor indicators, etc.) should be disinfected several times a day.
- The automatic and continuous counting of participants must be ensured, so that their number does not exceed the permitted capacity of individual premises, also taking social distancing into account.
- Inasmuch possible, personalised seating must be ensured for the event, so that in the event of the attendance of an actively infected person contacts can be identified.
- For the various section presentations and closing programmes staggered end times must be established, so that the event venue can be evacuated in an organised and controlled fashion.
- In connection with packaging materials and disposable items, in addition to health rules, sustainability must also be considered when organising the event. It must be ensured that measures necessary for reducing the risk of infection do not counteract other efforts – e.g. climate protection, environmental compatibility, etc. Accordingly, excessive use of plastic bottles and packaging and other disposable items should be avoided.
- Disinfectants should be used carefully and in a targeted fashion so that they cannot produce negative health effects (e.g. development of resistance and selection of microorganisms, etc.).



SETUP OF PREMISES AND SEATING

In the case of business events with seating inside an enclosed space, new forms of setup and seating must be implemented in order to comply with recommendations and social distancing requirements in force.

- Several options exist for the setup and seating arrangement of premises, depending on the size of the group. With larger groups, if appropriate social distancing cannot be ensured inside a single hall, it is recommended to split the group into smaller groups seated in multiple halls. Proper communication between these locations and the technical background necessary for this must be ensured in all cases.
- If seats are fixed, every second seat must be left empty, with staggered seating in consecutive rows. Seats should be occupied starting with the seats furthest from the entrances, and vacated starting with the seats nearest to the exits. Distancing in front, back, and sideways must be ensured according to the recommendations in force.
- For lectures, panel discussions, and programmes that require a stage a distance of at least 3 metres must be kept between the stage and the audience.



PARTITIONS AND FLOOR MARKINGS

For markings, a system of pictograms must be used, which guests can understand regardless of their cultural background and is accessible to them free of charge. These markings must be used along the entire path of guests. Regarding setup and markings the following must also be taken into consideration:

- Tables and chairs must be arranged in a way that minimises contact between participants as they approach them.
- Participants can also be informed of the quickest route in the hall using floor stickers or other markings.
- Partitions and floor markings can direct the flow of participants efficiently not only in halls, but also in key areas of the business event, e.g. in the parking lot, queues, and reception halls, along routes leading to entrances, in restaurants, at the catering service, around lavatories, in cloakrooms and at exits.
- For partitions, it is worth using solid and easy-to-move objects made from materials which are easy to clean and disinfect without damaging their material.
- At contact points where larger groups are more likely to form (e.g. info points) plexiglass or glazed versions of solid separation panels / partitions can be a suitable solution.
- It is advisable to supplement markings that warn of social distancing with solutions – a light signal, for example – that alert participants if they approach one another beyond the permitted distance. If such technology is used, the distribution, placement and cleaning of associated equipment must be defined.



RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO TECHNICAL SERVICES

Besides conventional technical systems, we would also like to point out the possibility of using equipment and solutions which efficiently support contactless and online options.

- Particular attention must be paid to and preparations made for presenters and participants joining in via hybrid and virtual methods. Solutions must be developed which maximise the number of participants that can be reached in the safest possible way (e.g. multi-venue or -hall solutions with projection or sharing of information, ensuring the technical conditions for joining in online, interactive applications in the online space).
- At events it is recommended to use contactless technologies on every possible surface (e.g. also in connection with convention materials).
- If possible, during events it is recommended that every lecturer, presenter and participant use dedicated equipment (e.g. microphones, interpretation receivers, etc.). Such equipment must be disinfected properly before and after use, paying particular attention to furnishings (e.g. lectern) and equipment (e.g. presentation clickers), which cannot be replaced during the event.
- It is particularly not advisable to pass equipment from hand to hand. During Q&A sessions audio technology challenges should be solved using a suitable application or microphones attached to fixed stands along passageways.
- Instead of sharing technical equipment and data carriers, dedicated workstations should be set up and dedicated installations and equipment (e.g. notebooks) should be used.
- The sharing of interpreter cabins is similarly not permitted. Instead, we recommend providing a dedicated cabin for each interpreter or using an interpretation application that can replace the given equipment.
- For sharing data, we recommend the use of free file-sharing platforms (e.g. WeTransfer, Google Drive) instead of data carriers and presentation rooms.
- Participants, performers and speakers must be informed of all safety rules in advance. Uploading these rules to the application / website of the convention in advance can be a good practice.



CATERING

- Catering activities must comply with the up-to-date guideline of the National Food Chain Safety Office.
- If the event venue has an outdoor dining area and the weather allows it, as many participants as possible should be seated outdoors for dining. Seating capacity must be reduced, leaving at least 2.5 metres between tables.
- Staff are strongly advised to wash and sanitise their hands thoroughly, for at least 20 seconds before/during/after preparing food, emptying the waste bin, etc. If soap is not available, the use of hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol is recommended.
- For seated dining alcohol-based hand sanitiser (with minimum 60% alcohol content) (or possibly pre-packaged sanitising wipes) must be provided for guests at each table (but at least in washrooms and at entrances). Images and signs should be posted to emphasize the importance of correct hand washing/sanitisation. If possible, event organisers are advised to use equipment that increases the distance between tables. If bar tables are used, several tables should be installed, with at least 2.5 metres between them. The maximum occupancy of tables must be observed. Caterers must be informed in advance of the special requirements and needs of the organiser.
- The use or sharing of re-useable items, such as menus, condiment holders and other food containers should be avoided, using disposable or digital menus, individual portions of condiments, contactless waste bins and automatic doors (or doors propped open) instead.
- It is recommended to include packaged individual portions of foodstuffs (sandwiches, salads) in the offering.
- Coffee- and drink counters should not operate on a self-service basis – guests should be served by waiting staff. The offering of drinks from trays should be suspended temporarily.
- Adequate ventilation should be ensured for indoor dining, preferably by opening windows and doors (provided that their open state does not present a hazard, e.g. risk of falling out or other health risks). Nonetheless, we recommend giving preference to dining outdoors/on terraces.



- Lobbies and waiting rooms should not be crowded. The use of phone applications, digital orientation boards and TVs and seat numbering are recommended for guiding guests. Avoid using re-usable or shared items.
- By "limiting" meals and dividing them into time slots overcrowding and excessive contact can be avoided.
- For seated service and buffet meals staff are advised to wear a mask. Food should be served to the plate of guests by staff.
- In order to avoid crowds it is recommended to use cordons and provide a sufficiently large service area.
- During a pandemic guests are advised to wear a mask when approaching buffet tables.



LEISURE PROGRAMMES

- Tour guides and all participants must wear a mask during both indoor and outdoor leisure programmes.
- Guests are also advised to wear a mask during the entire duration of programmes.
- Guests are advised to use headsets (tour guide system) to facilitate keeping the necessary distance from each other and from tour guides. The service provider must disinfect every element of the tour guide system before use and must organise a contactless solution for their issue and return.
- The tour guides engaged by the event organiser must be familiar with the special rules of the services used during programmes – e.g. museums and churches – in force during the epidemic and must also point these out to guests – in addition to the information provided by the event organiser – in advance, so as to ensure the best possible guest experience.
- It is the task of the tour guide to verify that service providers, e.g. transport companies, museums, restaurants, etc. comply with the pre-agreed safety protocols prescribed by the organisers.
- The tour guide should have masks on hand for guests without one.
- The tour guide should have hand sanitiser on hand, which they can provide to guests.
- The tour guide must be familiar with the protocol to follow in the event that a guest shows symptoms of the current communicable disease.
- Participants must perform a regular self-check – at least a temperature measurement – at least each morning, and if they notice any signs of illness, they must immediately notify the organiser. Persons with suspected symptoms must be isolated in order to prevent their contact with other guests.
- For each programme a separate guest list must be drawn up to facilitate eventual quarantine and contact tracing.
- Transport must be organised in compliance with current public health rules. Instead of public transport the use of chartered transport is recommended.



Communication- and crisis management





In order to limit the spread of the coronavirus epidemic it is extremely important to keep industry workers and guests informed comprehensively.

To this effect service providers, venues, and hotels must implement efficient communication- and crisis management.

In order to restore the confidence in travel that has been lost, one of the most important steps in the current situation is keeping participants informed. Information applications and promotional campaigns can be excellent tools to this end.

In the following we summarise the suggested steps of and recommendations for developing a communication plan.

SETTING CLEAR GOALS FOR THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- At the moment, clear and plain language is the most necessary element of communication. In addition, it is recommended to compose friendly, clear, and simple messages, which evoke and reinforce trust in those concerned.
- The voice of the brand remains important, but it must not be forgotten that the tone of communication must reinforce the importance and seriousness of messages.
- It is of primary importance to assess and plan internal and external communication capacities so that all information reaches staff, partners, and participants quickly – in real time, if possible.
- All persons concerned must be involved at the appropriate stage in the planning of their attendance of the event, indicating which precautionary requirements the individuals concerned (visitors, exhibitors, employees, construction and demolition staff) must satisfy.
- Communication aspects must be set out in the regulation of the event and mandatory elements must be included in the documents which govern relations between organisers / exhibitors / visitors (contracts, rules of participation, conditions of the registration process, etc.).
- It is recommended to prepare a planning and operational manual for the staff of the event venue, service providers involved in organising the event, and participants, so that everyone can follow a clear agenda.



THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF THE PERSONS INVOLVED

- Organisers must have thorough knowledge of the persons involved in the given business event: participants, staff, service providers, and the representatives of venues; that is, all internal and external stakeholders, whose maximum safety must be guaranteed before, during and after the event, with intensive communication of safety measures.
- When preparing for the event it should be pointed out that persons who belong to a risk group are advised not to attend the event in person. If possible, they should join in online.
- It is recommended to provide personal training to all concerned so that the exact tasks and full compliance with safety measures, such as enforcing social distancing in queues, using personal protective equipment, monitoring capacities, managing the contacts of visitors, and executing further cleaning protocols become ingrained practice for them.



SAFETY IN FOCUS

- Regarding communication, the emphasis should not be on promotions involving special offers. Participants primarily want to know how their safety will be guaranteed before, during, and after the event. At present, the correct communication of safety is crucial; therefore service providers of the sector, event venues, and hotels must pay particular attention to communicating this on every available platform in order to reinforce the message of safe event organisation. During the entire process the health of event organiser staff must be protected – this must be communicated to guests along with specific safety measures for the event. Personal responsibility is of key importance, since it is everyone's duty and interest to pay particular attention to full compliance with precautions.

The following can play an important part in communication:

- Developing and ensuring the application of special cleaning protocols for activities /event venues in the case of service providers and for operations in the case of hotels,
- Customer feedback, guest e-mails,
- Regular communication with local authorities and governments: it is recommended to inform them that the given service provider/event venue/hotel complies with requirements. It is also worth discussing new problems and areas for improvement with local authorities and governments.



CREATING SUITABLE CONTENT

- Suitable safety measures not only need to be communicated: they must be actually developed and enforced. Accordingly, communication should emphasize cleaning and disinfection measures for the event, use of personal protective equipment, compliance with social distancing measures, and available payment methods.
- On the website of the event it is recommended to introduce and continuously update a section containing pre-event information: – for example, whether capacity limits apply, preliminary registration or appointment is necessary, face masks must be worn, or if new or modified products or service packages are available – all these should be notified to participants in advance.
- In the changed environment it is recommended to offer small gestures to guests/clients, such as discounts for healthcare workers – these should be incorporated into the communication, as well.

CLEAR COMMUNICATION

At the moment, clear and plain language is the most vital element of communication. In addition, it is recommended to compose friendly, clear, and simple messages, which evoke and reinforce trust in those concerned. The voice of the brand remains important, but it must not be forgotten that the tone of communication must reinforce the importance and seriousness of messages.



CREATING SUITABLE CONTENT

In the interest of effective communication it is recommended that organisers use every communication channel available to them (website, public address system, dynamic communication, applications, etc.).

It is advisable to use all of the above in combination so that participants receive the necessary information in time and are frequently reminded to comply with rules. Safety measures and other information must be announced as widely and on as many platforms as possible:

WEBSITE

It is recommended to create a summary of the most important information, which should be posted in a prominent part of the website, with a link to a more detailed FAQ section.

Both participants and staff must be familiar with the Health & Safety plan and the current safety plan; therefore it is recommended to display the information collected on these on a separate subpage or provide a downloadable version. In the current situation design elements are secondary: facts are important.

SOCIAL MEDIA

It is recommended to peg the safety plan at the top of Twitter, Facebook and other feeds so that they can be found easily.

When editing data on social media, it is worth paying particular attention to providing up-to-date information to those concerned at all times.

It is particularly important to use a calm tone and to present the elements of the communication plan.

In the current extraordinary situation it is perfectly all right to repeat posts, as this ensures that important messages reach their targets.

Active social media presence and friendly gestures, such as congratulating other local enterprises nearby on their reopening are recommended.

EMAIL

Constant communication is important on every platform; therefore it is worth summarising safety measures in a separate e-mail that should be sent to partners.



EVENT APPLICATIONS

During events we recommend the use of customisable mobile applications whose smart functions facilitate more effective communication and preparation for events, make the participation of guests more comfortable and, last but not least, replace previously used services with contactless solutions.

Inasmuch possible, the application to be used should be suitable for the following:

- preliminary and on-site communication,
- follow-up,
- continuous provision of information, with quick and efficient transmission,
- possibility of two-way communication,
- safe and closed system,
- being in line with the spirit of environmental sustainability,
- registration for the event and replacing access control,
- overcoming previous obstacles to communication.

HANDLING FEEDBACK

Customer feedback is one of the drivers of continuous improvement; therefore particular attention must be paid to it. It is also important for the industry that the communication strategy should not be one-way.

Both clients and staff must be encouraged to provide feedback on all events we organise, from their start to their conclusion.

This feedback must be processed and evaluated so that we can serve the needs of our clients better and better each time. By "clients" we mean both external (guest, visitor, participant, exhibitor, etc.) and internal clients (employees, casual staff, etc.).

The current situation is changing constantly; therefore the communication strategy may also require adjustment, in which feedback from clients and staff can help.

Summary



THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH MEASURES

We trust that the aspects covered in this document can ensure the uniquely comprehensive safety of both business visitors to Hungary and Hungarian guests. The guidelines of this practical guide are not official rules set by the authorities, although their recommendations were used in their compilation. Guidelines based on international good practices contribute to creating a safe environment, which gives a positive image of our country and capital already before the guest's journey.

This manual was created upon the initiative of Budapest Convention Bureau, with the participation of the Association of Hungarian Event Organisers and Service Providers, the Hungarian Hotel & Restaurant Association, the Hungarian Inbound Professionals' Association, the Association of Hungarian Travel Agencies, Hungarian Tourism Agency, Budapest Brand Non-profit Ltd., Budapest Airport, HUNGEXPO Budapest Convention and Exhibition Centre, Bo Live Branding Agency, and Special Effects International Ltd.



Useful pages

Decree No. 18/1998: (in Hungarian)

<https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=99800018.nm>

National Public Health Centre (NNK):

<https://www.nnk.gov.hu/index.php/koronavirus/english>

Epidemiological care of persons without a social security number in connection with COVID-19 (in Hungarian)

<https://www.nnk.gov.hu/index.php/component/content/article/140-koronavirus-taje-koztatok/558-taj-szam-nelkuli-szemrlyek-jarvanyugyi-ellatasa>

WHO: Disease outbreaks

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/en/>

WTTC 'Safe Travels': Global Protocols & Stamp

<https://wttc.org/COVID-19/Safe-Travels-Global-Protocols-Stamp>



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COVID-19 recommendations of the National Public Health Centre (11.06.2020)

EventPlatform: Protocol for Business Events (15.06.2020)

Federation of Hungarian Event Organizers and Suppliers (MARESZ): COVID-19 manual for the safe resumption of events (08.06.2020)

Fira Barcelona: Covid-19 Risk Mitigation Plan (July 2020)

Fira Barcelona: Covid-19 risk mitigation plan at trade fairs held by Fira de Barcelona. Design and operational guide for Organisers. (July 2020)

Fira de Barcelona: Covid-19 risk mitigation plan at events. Design and operational guide for exhibitors (July 2020)

Government of Western Australia, Department of Health: Event Covid Safety Planning (28.07.2020)

Hungarian Tourism Agency (HTA): COVID-19 manual for accommodation and catering units (12.05.2020)

Mason Ledger: The Legal Framework for Safe Events Managing Safety Risk (29.07.2020)

NBTC Holland Marketing: Covid-19 Reopening Protocol for Business Events in The Netherlands (29.06.2020)

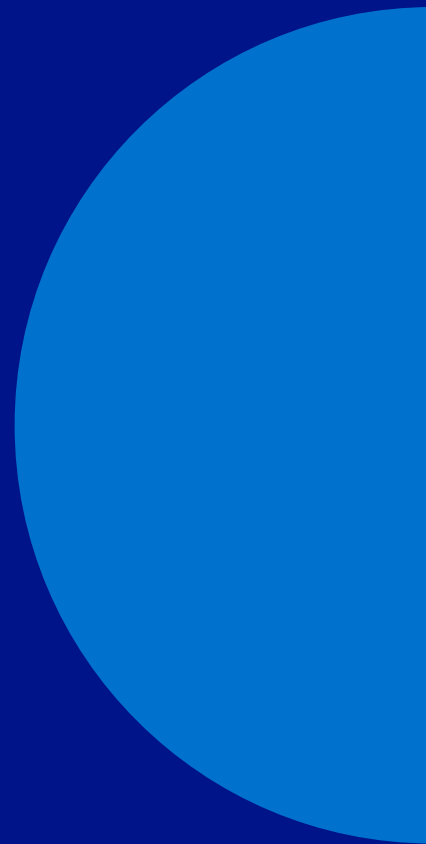
RIFEL Event Safety and Security in the Context of COVID-19 (Version 2.0, 28.04.2020)

Special Effects International Ltd.: Meet Safe Protocol (29.05.2020)

Vienna Convention Bureau: Guidelines Recommendations on Preventing Transmission of COVID-19 at Business Events (21.09.2020)

WHO: Clinical management of COVID-19 (27.05.2020)

COVID-19 Annex





KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COVID-19 INFECTION

According to the National Public Health Centre, at present seven coronaviruses are known to be able to affect people and be transmitted between them. The illness caused by coronavirus infection can range in intensity from a common cold to more severe respiratory diseases. A new virus belonging to the family of beta-coronaviruses has been identified as the underlying cause of the pneumonia epidemic that broke out in Wuhan in late 2019. The disease it causes is known as "coronavirus disease 2019", abbreviated as COVID-19. At present, the disease is transmitted between people primarily via droplets, with a typical incubation period of 5-6 days (1-14 days) according to current data. According to data of the World Health Organization typical symptoms of the illness include fever (88-93% of patients), cough (59-82%), fatigue (44-70%), lack of appetite (40-84%), shortness of breath (31-40%), and muscular pain (11-35%). Other symptoms may include a sore throat, nasal congestion, headache, diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting. Prior to respiratory symptoms the loss or anomaly of taste and smell may occur. Further possible symptoms include chills and conjunctivitis.



RECOMMENDED MEASURES FOR PREVENTING COVID-19 INFECTIONS

- Anyone who observes any symptom of the disease – fever, cough, sneezing, runny nose, diarrhoea – must stay at home and immediately contact a physician.
- Particular attention must be paid to personal hygiene. The most important measure for preventing infection is to wash hands regularly and thoroughly with soap or a hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol content. Everyone must follow personal hygiene precautions (particularly hand hygiene and cough etiquette).
- In order to prevent the coronavirus epidemic, which is spread via droplets, a face mask that covers the mouth and nose must be worn in all enclosed spaces.
- Wearing gloves can also help prevention; however, it cannot replace regular hand sanitisation. Gloves must be changed frequently.
- The required social distancing is always prescribed by the authorities (for COVID-19 it is minimum 1.5 metres); therefore particular attention must be paid to complying with it indoors.
- Particular attention must be paid to the cleanliness of facilities: a suitable amount of virucidal hand sanitiser, dishwashing liquid, surface disinfectant and cleaning products must be available.
- Frequently touched surfaces must be disinfected several times a day (including rails, toilet flushes, door handles, etc.). Alcohol-based rapid sanitisers or sanitiser wipes may be used for cleaning these surfaces.
- In order to reduce the number of pathogens, indoor premises need to be ventilated thoroughly several times a day, with a fresh air supply of minimum 10 l/s/person. Air technology equipment can increase risks by mixing air, levitating virus-containing droplets, and transporting the pathogen. For prevention, the use of natural instead of forced ventilation is recommended. If air handling units cannot be switched off, it is recommended to increase the proportion of clean, fresh air indoors and the filters of these units must be disinfected thoroughly on a regular basis.



EPIDEMIOLOGICAL CARE OF PERSONS WITHOUT A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER IN CONNECTION WITH COVID-19

Pursuant to Section 142 of Act CLIV of 1997 on Healthcare, from the range of epidemiological care, screening tests performed for epidemiological reasons, mandatory medical examinations, epidemiological isolation, the transport of infected patients, life-saving treatments for patients requiring immediate care, and the necessary care specified in separate legislation for urgent cases must be provided to all persons in Hungary as part of the basic package without requiring prior proof of their legal entitlement, in accordance with this act and separate legislation. Section 142(3) of the same act provides that – apart from the exceptions specified by law - from the care and tasks specified in this act, funds for the above care and crisis situation healthcare, among others, must be provided from the central state budget.

Examining the issue from the other side it can also be included that all persons in Hungary are obliged to submit to epidemiological care and abide by epidemiological measures. The epidemiological measures applicable in the current epidemic situation connected with coronavirus apply mandatorily to all persons in Hungary and serve primarily the public interest of the State; therefore as part of its healthcare responsibility it is the duty of the State to provide funds from the central budget for the epidemiological care of persons without health insurance..



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