



**Program and Event Guidelines Updated: August 19, 2020**

Table of Contents

**ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS.....2**

**USE OF FACILITIES BY EXTERNAL GROUPS.....2**

**PROGRAMS AND EVENTS WITH MINORS.....2**

**SPACE LIMITATIONS AND CAPACITIES.....3**

**EVENT RECOMMENDATIONS .....4**

**A&M-COMMERCE EMPLOYEES, VENDORS, AND VOLUNTEERS.....5**

**CATERING REQUIREMENTS .....5**

**CLEANING REQUIREMENTS .....6**

**NON-RESERVABLE SPACES FOR INFORMAL EVENTS.....6**

**PHYSICAL DISTANCING STANDARDS .....7**

**PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE).....7**

**SIGNAGE AND COMMUNICATION.....7**

**CONTACT INFORMATION.....8**

## ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

All events on campus will be required to follow current State of Texas, System, and local public health guidance related to physical distancing, group size, and health and safety regulations. If an event is scheduled in an indoor venue for more than ten (10) minutes and physical distancing is not possible, face coverings will be required. If additional health and safety requirements are required for a particular event, those requirements will be included in all advertisements for the event and posted at the entrance of the event's venue.

It is encouraged to implement additional safe practices such as a virtual or no-touch sign in process.

Activities such as clubs, lectures, fraternities/sororities, study sessions, intramurals, etc. that occur face-to-face will observe the limitations on the size of gatherings based on university guidance and the space used. Physical distancing practices will be used during all co-curricular activities (6 feet of physical separation).

University-sponsored student travel should be limited to mission critical functions to assure the continued safety of the campus. See additional information in the "Travel" section of the University Fall Return Plan. In order to provide clarity, any time "events" is used in the document, it is referring to a group of invited individuals coming together for a face-to-face gathering. Examples of those gatherings would include meetings, lectures, banquets, luncheons, workshops, fairs, and exhibitor tables, etc.

## USE OF FACILITIES BY EXTERNAL GROUPS

Use of university facilities by outside groups must follow the most up-to-date process used to reserve and request university space. The approval process will be revised as needed to fully consider the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and third parties, and will be updated on the applicable webpage related to the facility on the university's website. Use of facilities by outside groups should only be approved if the use advances the mission of the university.

Safety requirements and recommendations established by local health authorities and university policy in effect at the time of the event should be observed (e.g., gathering size, physical distancing, face coverings, etc.). All outside group members will certify they have not been determined to be COVID-19 positive, do not have COVID-19 symptoms, and have not been in the presence of anyone they knew to be COVID-19 positive in the last 14 days.

All individuals coming to campus to use A&M-Commerce facilities must complete the certification form and the event organizer is responsible for collecting and maintaining all forms. The template for the certification form will be located on the Stay Healthy Lions website.

## PROGRAMS AND EVENTS WITH MINORS

For 2020, programs for minors can begin after August 1, 2020 in accordance with the [Open-Texas guidelines](#) with the State of Texas and the Texas A&M University System guidelines.

Any program for minors sponsored by the University must have prior approval from A&M-Commerce executive leadership prior to any marketing and/or program announcements being released.

Programs for minors may only be day programs recommended at less than 4 hours per gathering. Event organizers wanting to exceed the 4 hour recommendation should submit their request and justification on the Risk Assessment Form for consideration.

Any gathering of more than 2 people must have appropriate facemask or face-coverings and practice physical distancing. A&M-Commerce programs for minors will require insurance, as well as trained and background-checked workers.

## SPACE LIMITATIONS AND CAPACITIES

Planning an event in the world of new capacities and space limitations can be a challenging ordeal. In order to provide some guidance for all the different event venues across campus, please use the following guidelines to ensure your space and event attendance expectations are compatible.

**Indoor Spaces** – When buildings are designed, occupant loading is used to determine the minimum number of exits, doors, stairs, room configuration, etc. necessary to safely evacuate people during an emergency. These amounts are set by the national fire codes. A classroom that has maximum capacity of 30 when the room is setup with tables and chairs (taking into consideration with exits, doors, etc.) will now have an adjusted maximum capacity in accordance with the current COVID-19 physical distancing guidance from public health authorities. The different stages for events (provided below) has the information on what the new adjusted percentages will be and when.

- As a general rule, when adjusting the capacity to account for true physical distancing (more than 6 feet between all individuals), this will significantly impact the rooms capacities.
- Most event venues have a good understanding of the space's capacity based on the setup of the room. If needing further assistance in determining the room capacities for your space, contact Campus Operations and Safety at [eoc@tamuc.edu](mailto:eoc@tamuc.edu).

**Open Space Areas** - Determining capacities for open spaces (i.e. Lawn areas, courtyards, pedestrian malls, open fields, etc.) will be dependent on the size and setup of the space. Use the guidelines below to determine the right space for the expected attendance at your event. PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE ARE JUST FOR OUTDOOR SPACES.

- Open area with no tables/chairs - the standard capacity for an open area 100 square feet in size with no equipment is 11 individuals. At 50% capacity for that same space, the new capacity will be 5 individuals.
- Banquet style – tables will be limited to 6 individuals per table and the tables should be setup with no less than 7 feet of distance between them.
- Any campus requests (departments and student organizations) to host an event that will exceed the current space capacity must request approval through the division's Vice President. All events with more than 10 people in attendance will have final approval from the A&M-Commerce executive leadership team. All requests for approval must be submitted at least 30 days prior to the event.

It is understood that there are different groups/events on campus that must adhere to governing bodies (outside of the University) to which they belong. These governing bodies may have different standards to which they must follow:

### *Intercollegiate Athletics:*

All Athletics programs (strength and conditioning, practices, and competitions) will follow the guidelines put forth by the State of Texas, Texas A&M University System, and the NCAA.

### *Commerce ISD and University Interscholastic League (UIL):*

These organizations will follow the standards put forth by their governing bodies but would also not go beyond the capacity standards put forth on University facilities.

# EVENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Virtual events are going to continue to be a critical part of the event planning process going forward. Whenever possible, it is highly recommended to move events to the virtual setting (Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams, etc.) instead of the face-to-face setting. If moving the entire event to the virtual setting is not possible, it is encouraged to incorporate a virtual component to ensure that attendees that need/want to view the program remotely have that option available.

If assistance is needed, please contact the venue's Event Coordinator for more specific information on the space/venue virtual hosting capabilities.

- Careful consideration should be applied when determining the venue capacity and the number of attendees invited to the event. This will be helpful in promoting physical distancing and ensuring that attendees don't exceed the new venue capacities.
- Ensure a process in which attendees waiting in line to enter a venue are maintaining at least 6 feet of distance between one another.
- Make sure to have a process in place where invited guest contact information (name, telephone, and e-mail) is gathered prior to the event and will be available upon request.
- In order to simplify the contact tracing process and provide an electronic alternative, event coordinators can use a sign in function.
- Event coordinators can use other methods to complete the contact tracing process, but the information must be completed before guests enter the event venue or before the event begins.
- Provide sufficient time between events to adequately clean/sanitize the event space before permitting occupancy by another group/organization.
- Promote messaging that encourage participants to follow physical distancing guidelines and discourages workers or attendees that feel ill from attending the event.
- Ensure signage is posted that notifies guests that their presence at the event signifies that they have completed the self-health assessment.
- During the event, display signs reminding participants of physical distancing standards and how they complete preventive measures.
- Eliminate self-serve food options like open chips and dip, and open cookie platters. Most Sodexo menu items are available but will be prepackaged depending on the size of the order. Design food options to be single serving (grab-and-go) instead. Depending of the service needs, extra labor charges may apply.
- Wear gloves and facemasks or face-coverings while distributing/serving food to event attendees in accordance with the applicable Health Department guidelines and the Texas A&M System guidelines.
- Events held in large open spaces need to program their activities so that the maximum capacities are not exceeded at any time during the event.
- In general practice, all staff should follow simple measures to lower the risk and prevent the spread of viruses (not shaking hands, practice physical distancing, wear a face mask, etc.). Handwashing facilities and alcohol-based sanitizers should be made readily available for employees and guests.
- Setups and configurations can have a significant impact on the success of your event. Event coordinators should use these setup standards to ensure physical distancing standards are maintained.
- Banquet style - tables will be limited to 6 individuals per table and tables should be setup with no less than 7 feet of distance between them.
- Classroom Style – each table will be limited to 1 person per table.
- Theater style - seating should have 6 feet between chairs, from side to side and front to back.

- Fixed seating – keep at least two empty seats between parties in any row, except when two or more member of the same household or when two individuals who are not members of the same household but who are attending together. These individuals can sit adjacent to one another with two seats empty on either side.
- Registration, Fairs, and Exhibitor Tables – each table will be limited to 2 people per table, with each person located on each end of the table. Multiple table setups should have at least 6 feet between tables.

## A&M-COMMERCE EMPLOYEES, VENDORS, AND VOLUNTEERS

All A&M-Commerce employees, vendors, and volunteers must follow the most current guidelines put in place within the [Fall Return Plan](#). These guidelines are here to ensure that all employees, vendors, volunteers, and the event attendees remain safe throughout the event experience.

- Event coordinators are responsible for ensuring the event does not exceed current venue capacities.
- Event organizers must coordinate the process to collect attendee contact information prior to the event (name, phone, and emails).
- All event workers must be trained on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette.
- Staff, vendors, and volunteers who are working an event will count towards the total capacity of attendee attendance.

All event workers must self-certify (prior to starting the shift) that they have not been determined to be COVID-19 positive, do not have COVID-19 symptoms, have not been in the presence of anyone they knew to be COVID-19 positive in the last 14 days, and in the last 14 days have not returned from travel or traveled through an area with state or local travel restrictions that mandate quarantine upon arrival home. Their presence at the event venue signifies that they have completed the self-assessment are not exhibiting any of the signs or symptoms of, or exposure to COVID-19.

## CATERING REQUIREMENTS

While providing a meal at an event for attendees can be such a great experience, with COVID-19, there are added safety measuring in place to keep everyone safe. Here are some quick tips for handling catering amid the COVID-19 pandemic:

- It is recommended that catered food and beverages be pre-packaged and pre-prepared with adherence to the strict food handling restrictions that are in place.
- Personal sack lunch or brown bag lunches are approved.
- If a buffet is offered, employees or the vendor will prepare and serve all food with strict adherence to food handling guidelines.
- Buffet lines will be one-sided and properly shielded according to the current Health Department guidelines.
- Bottled or canned drinks only. Keurig single-use coffee service is available. New cups are required for refills. Sugar and coffee creamers will be prepackaged.
- Parties must maintain at least 6 feet of distance, including while waiting to be served.
- Disposable flatware, silverware, and glassware will be used until the Health Department regulations allow for the use of china and silverware.

Remember, that if an external caterer is approved as an on-campus caterer, they must also follow the standards put forth in these guidelines.

If you have any questions about your specific event and the catering needs, please reach out to Sodexo Catering.

## CLEANING REQUIREMENTS

It is important that all event spaces are properly cleaned prior to attendees arriving. SSC teams have enhanced their disinfecting and cleaning practices and will be paying special attention to high-traffic areas. In addition to the routine custodial cleaning protocol, the University has instructed SSC to implement an enhanced cleaning frequency to clean and disinfect common areas and commonly touched surfaces in occupied buildings. Event spaces will be sanitizing prior to each day, Monday through Friday. If there are special circumstances that need to be addressed for your event space, please reach out to the facility manager.

Here are some general tips for cleaning and disinfecting of event spaces:

- Events on the weekend should work with the SSC and the facility manager to ensure that their event space has been disinfected prior to the event.
- If attendees wish to wipe down their workstation, sanitizing wipes should be available in public areas of most facilities.
- If wipes are not available at your event space, you should provide easily accessible disinfectant wipes so attendees can clean their own spaces before and after use, as they desire.
- If using the University provided VIREX II256 spray, make sure to follow the simple instructions below:
  - Pre-clean heavily soiled areas
  - Apply a light mist to hard, non-porous environment surfaces. To disinfect, all surfaces must remain wet for approximately 10 minutes.
  - Air dry, wipe surfaces to dry and remove residue, or rinse with potable water. Do not use VIREX on glassware, utensils, or dishes.
- Events occurring on the same day; one after the other, are encouraged to allocate time between events to complete the sanitizing process prior to the start of each new event.
- If you have any questions on the disinfecting process, need to request training and a supply of VIREX II256, or any other questions about cleaning, please reach out to SSC at 903-886-5761.

Anytime an event worker is cleaning the event space, they must use an EPA-registered disinfectant such as single-use disinfectant wipes or the multi-surface spray cleaner VIREX II 256. Always use cleaning products as recommended on manufacturer labels, including wearing disposable gloves and facemask where directed.

Use these simple instructions for the use of VIREX II256:

- Pre-Clean heavily soiled areas
- Apply a light mist to hard, non-porous environment surfaces. To disinfect, all surfaces must remain wet for approximately 10 minutes.
- Air dry, wipe surfaces to dry and remove residue, or rinse with potable water.
- Do not use on glassware, utensils, or dishes.

## NON-RESERVABLE SPACES FOR INFORMAL EVENTS

Non-Reservable spaces need to be configured in a way that ensures physical distancing. Common spaces should remove or rearrange tables and chairs or add visual cue marks to encourage physical distancing and must be

disinfected regularly (multiple times per day). Additionally, disinfectant wipes should be readily available for guests to wipe surfaces as desired.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING STANDARDS

Physical Distancing recommendations are made to reduce the introduction of the virus into new communities and to slow the spread of infection in communities already affected by the virus. These recommendations are not intended to supersede the advice of local public health officials.

Physical distancing requires 6 feet between individuals. This physical distancing standard will impact the capacities available per room/space.

All employees, volunteers, students, and visitors are required to wear appropriate facemasks or face-coverings on the campus of A&M-Commerce, and campus facilities, unless a health-related exception exists, in the following areas:

- Indoor public areas on campus, including all non-private office or residential spaces, such as lobbies, restrooms, common spaces in residence halls, conference rooms, break rooms, elevators, and related campus-community areas; and
- Outdoor spaces where six feet or more of physical distancing is challenging to maintain reliably.

Facemasks or face-coverings will continue to be required until public health authorities and A&M-Commerce decides to change the standard to “highly recommended”.

Events of any size should only be continued if they can be carried out with adherence to guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations, hand hygiene, and physical distancing.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is an important component to minimizing the spread of COVID-19. Event coordinators should ensure availability of handwashing facilities with soap and water and/or sanitizing dispensers. It is required that all event attendees wear a face-covering or facemask. As supplies become available, event organizers should provide masks to event attendees so that event attendees can have a mask.

## SIGNAGE AND COMMUNICATION

It is important to use signage, marketing material, and invitations to notify event attendees of the physical distancing standards and self-assessment process. Most university facilities will already have signage encouraging physical distancing and communicating the self-assessment process. Event coordinators should consider using promotional materials to communicate university expectations. These additional strategies can be helpful in determining the right signage for your event:

- Signage should be placed throughout the event space emphasizing physical distancing as well as providing details on the completing the self-assessment process. Only university approved signs and posters should be placed around campus. If additional signs are needed for signage that is not already established, please contact MarComm.
- Currently, the University will provide door, floor, restroom, wipe and hand sanitizing units, and signage for the self-assessment process. Any additional signage needs would be at the expense of the event planner(s).

- If your event is being held at an outdoor venue, it is important to have signage communicating university expectations. This signage can be setup using sandwich boards or other types of outdoor marking platforms.
- Current maximum capacities of the event space should be posted.
- A Public Service Announcement (PSA) has been created to help communicate the message prior the event beginning. Event organizers can read the PSA to the event audience. The PSA is as follows:  
“Texas A&M University-Commerce is committed to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with safety and the well-being of all students, employees, and visitors as a top priority. With everyone’s safety and well-being in mind, please remember to wear a face covering or facemask in accordance with Executive Order GA-29. It is also important to practice healthy habits such as, washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, covering your cough or sneeze with your elbow or sleeve and then wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects or surfaces, Avoid close contact with people who are sick, staying home if you are sick, and calling your doctor if symptoms persist.

Thank you for supporting A&M-Commerce and our efforts to keep the campus community safe.”

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Administrators are working nonstop to make decisions that affect every person at the University. Our goals are to make guidelines that are helpful, fair, and sensible for everyone. If you have questions about COVID-19, please visit [tamuc.edu/coronavirus](https://tamuc.edu/coronavirus) for more information. If you have need assistance regarding the event guidelines, contact Matt Bentley at 903.886.5809 or [matthew.bentley@tamuc.edu](mailto:matthew.bentley@tamuc.edu).