

NIH COVID-19 In-Person Meeting/Event Safety Plan Template and Instructions

Meeting/event planners or hosts should complete the form below prior to informing participants that the event will be in-person or entering into contractual agreements for the space (if non-government space). This process must be followed whether the event is held in NIH/HHS facilities or non-government facilities.

For information on how to use this form and when it is required to be submitted, please review the chart below and additional information in the [NIH COVID-19 Safety Guidance](#) document. Contact the Division of Occupational Health and Safety (DOHS) or your [Safety Specialist](#) if you have any questions. All locations and sites should follow recommendations for community levels. There are no differences in recommendations if you are in a healthcare location.

Community Risk Levels	< 10 participants	11-49 participants	50+ in-person participants
Low	Use recommended by event organizer	Use recommended by event organizer	Submit form to NIH Events Management , with Subject Line IN-PERSON EVENT REQUEST 50+ - {NIH IC} – {Meeting Name}
Approval Authority	N/A	N/A	Notification required, but no approval required.
Medium	Use required by event organizer	Use required by event organizer, safety measures to be communicated to participants. DOHS consult available and recommended.	Submit form to NIH Events Management , with Subject Line IN-PERSON EVENT REQUEST 50+ - {NIH IC} – {Meeting Name}
Approval Authority	N/A	N/A	DOHS approval required
High* In person events are not recommended.	Submit to DOHS with the subject line: IN-PERSON EVENT REQUEST LESS THAN 50	Submit to DOHS with the subject line: IN-PERSON EVENT REQUEST LESS THAN 50	Submit form to NIH Events Management , with Subject Line IN-PERSON EVENT REQUEST 50+ - {NIH IC} – {Meeting Name}
Approval Authority	DOHS approval required	DOHS approval required	DOHS, NIH and HHS approvals required

*If the location moves into the high-risk level, only mission critical in-person events will be approved, and approval must be received from DOHS for meetings of any size. The event planner should have a contingency to move to a virtual-only setting if community levels change to high-risk levels.

NOTE: Any student-led, in-person meeting must receive approval from OITE. Students should email OITE@nih.gov to request permission to lead an in-person meeting.

Reminder: This approval process for 50+ in-person events is separate from the Efficient Spending Policy (ESP). If your event is subject to the ESP, then you should obtain the needed approval(s) at the appropriate ESP threshold levels.

Important items related to the approval process for 50+ events:

- A sketch or floor plan of the meeting layout (locations of tables, chairs, panels, etc.) with room dimensions, and the proposed agenda and schedule for the event are required to be submitted with this form.
- Depending on community level, the package will be reviewed and routed by NIH Events Management (e.g., if the community level is "high" it will be routed for review and approval by DOHS, the DDM and the NIH Director (or designee)).
- NIH Events Management will coordinate all required HHS approvals after the NIH Director (or designee) approves the form.
- NIH Events Management will contact the event coordinator listed on the form with the final decision at "Medium" and "High" community levels.

Safety Plan for COVID-19 Infection Mitigation

All NIH sponsored meetings, whether held in an NIH building, a leased building, or an off-site facility, must abide by the following safety measures **as determined by community levels. Meetings should be kept as small as possible and to the minimum time needed to accomplish business needs and all [current NIH safety guidance](#) must be adhered to.**

Low:

- **Virtual option offered:** Remote participation options should be offered, and attendees should not be required to attend in-person unless necessary.
- **Cleaning and Hand Hygiene:** High touch surfaces and common areas should be cleaned at the beginning and end of each day. Disinfectant must be available for shared areas, and common items disinfected between uses. [EPA approved disinfectants](#) effective against coronavirus should be used. Hand sanitizer stations/bottles should be available, and their use encouraged throughout the event.
- **Symptom Screening and Positive Case Reporting:** Attendees should perform daily self-assessments for COVID-19 symptoms and should be reminded of these symptoms and how to report them and/or a positive test result in the meeting announcement or invite. Persons with symptoms must not attend in-person gatherings, no matter the size or community risk level. Symptoms should be reported, and attendee tested. Event organizer(s) will maintain a list of attendees in the event of a positive case and subsequent reporting to health department and to OMS for NIH staff.
- **Contact Tracing:** Event organizers must develop a process to support contact tracing for persons present at the event, or coordination with the local health department and in compliance with CDC recommendations. An attendee roster, including current contact information, is required. The NIH Occupational Medical Service (OMS) will perform contact tracing only for NIH staff in attendance.
- **Food service:** Shared food and beverage services are not recommended. A detailed description of food services available at the event, including the support of appropriate distancing during mealtimes, should be included. *NOTE: All prohibitions on use of appropriated funds for provision of food remain unchanged.*

Medium: Low level requirements plus --

- **Physical Distancing:** Seats must be spaced to ensure 6-foot distancing between attendees. Spacing must also be adjusted at tables during meals to provide ample distancing. Floor markers or signage directing flow of traffic must be used to assist in directional flow, as well as reminders for distancing at gathering spaces, i.e., coffee stations, registration desks, break areas/time, and in any vendor site.
- **Vaccinations:** Vaccinations are required for attendance. If someone is not vaccinated, they must show the meeting organizer proof of a negative test from within 72 hours prior to the event.

High: Medium level requirements plus --

- **Masks:** A well-fitted face covering must be worn as outlined in the current version of the [NIH COVID-19 Safety Plan](#).
- **Density:** Density limits match that of the local case rates as outlined in the [NIH Safety Guidance/COVID-19 Plan](#). Please refer to the page on [Additional Personal Safety Guidance Requirements](#).

NIH Institute, Center, Office (ICO) Information			
ICO		Office	
Event Description			
Title/Topic			
Purpose of Event			
Description of the mission-critical need for the event to occur in person, including justification for why it could not be held virtually			
Event Dates			
From:		To:	
Event Location			
Venue (if NIH space, list Building/Room(s))			
City and State or Country			
Audience			
Estimated Total Number of In-Person Attendees (cannot exceed room capacity)		Vaccination Status of Attendees (estimated percentage, if known)	
Room capacity at current space requirement based on community level		Virtual option being offered?	Yes No

Safety Plan Questions	
How will vaccinations and/or the negative test prior to attendance be documented and enforced? (Note: event organizers should not collect or store PHI.)	
Describe any specific cleaning requirements for this event.	
Will eating be allowed? If so, explain how mealtimes, and food/beverage services will be handled.	
What measures will be taken for contact tracing if an individual present at the event becomes symptomatic or infected with COVID-19 within 48 hours of the event? (Follow-up with OMS within 48 hours is required for all NIH personnel)	

The sections below must be completed if community level is HIGH or if the meeting planner is requesting exceptions to safety requirements. If not applicable, please indicate.	
How will you enforce any mask policy that may be in place?	
How will the venue's density limit and physical distancing be enforced?	
If there are requests for an exception to a safety requirement (e.g. no masks at high) listed in corresponding community level section, please explain here and include details as to how the attendees' safety will be maintained.	
Event Planner/Coordinator Information	
<i>By signing below, I am agreeing that all onsite attendees will be notified of the NIH COVID-19 safety requirements and will ensure these are enforced during the meeting.</i>	
Name/Title	
Contact Information (email and phone)	
Signature	
IC Executive Officer Approval (required for all 50+ meetings, and for all in person meetings when site is in high community level)	
Name/Title	
Signature	
ORS DOHS Safety Review & Approval (when required based on community levels)	
Name/Title	
Signature	
NIH Events Management Review & Approval (routing/signature from here down required only if 50+ participants)	
Name/Title	
Signature	
NIH Deputy Director for Management Approval	
Name/Title	
Signature	
NIH Director Approval	
Name/Title	
Signature	