**City of Austin – Risk factors and Criteria for Mass Gatherings**

In response to the increasing concerns of COVID-19 across the nation, Austin-Travis County leaders have declared a “local state of disaster” to more proactively increase preventative measures and require mitigation plans for events in the region. Following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the City of Austin is specifically focused on mass gatherings defined as a planned or spontaneous event with a large number of people in attendance that could strain the planning ad response resources of the community hosting the event, such as concerts, festivals, conferences, worship services, and sporting events.

**Events larger than 2,500 people are prohibited** unless organizers can assure Austin Public Health that mitigation plans for infectious diseases are in place. Each event will be evaluated case-by-case, but the likelihood of your event remaining prohibited increases significantly if:

* There is great likelihood for extended close personal contact.
* The crowd density of the event is high.
* There are a significant number of travelers from areas currently experiencing person-to-person spread of COVID-19 domestically and internationally.
* There are a high number of guests coming from unknown locations.
* There are insufficient mechanisms in place to isolate, manage and address the needs of people should they become ill or an outbreak occur at the event.
* The plan to disseminate information about the need for basic hygiene practices is insufficient.
* There is an insufficient number of toilet facilities available for the event.
* There is an insufficient number and type of hand washing and sanitizing stations available for the event.

If your event shares any of the above high-risk factors, we urge you to contact Austin Public Health immediately at EHSD.service@austintexas.gov or 311 (if you reside outside the city limits of Austin, the 10-digit number for 311 is 512-974-2000) to discuss your mitigation plans and determine whether you will be able to move forward with your event. Smaller events or those not fitting the above criteria are urged to also consider whether they have appropriate mitigation plans in place. Austin Public Health will prioritize evaluation of all mass gatherings first and will respond to each request for evaluation within 48 hours. Priority is for those events taking place from March 7 through May 1 events permitted in the City of Austin, regardless of size, will be contacted directly and required to submit responses to an Evaluation Checklist to ensure appropriate mitigation safeguards are in place. If your event is not regulated or permitted by the Austin Center for Events (ACE), we strongly encourage you to use the [Evaluation Checklist](http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/images/Homeland_Security/Evaluation%20Checklist.docx) guidance and consider adjusting your event to include appropriate mitigation strategies or cancelling the event if you are unable to appropriately put sufficient mitigation plans in place.

For questions about your mitigation plans, please feel free to submit them to the City of Austin at EHSD.service@austintexas.gov for review and we would be happy to partner with you to ensure safeguards are in place to protect the public health of our community.

 If you are planning an event that is in, or extends into, Travis County, please contact the Travis County Fire Marshal at fire.marshal@traviscountytx.gov, or by phone at (512) 854-4621.