

In conjunction with the Interim Guidance document provided for specific groups (available at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>) and consultation with local health authorities, it is important to consider specific [vulnerable populations](#) and circumstances when considering altering or cancelling an any event out of concern for the participants and COVID-19 infection. **The decision to cancel or modify an event such as a sports tournament, concert, festival, graduation ceremony or business conference is complex** and there is not a “one-size-fits-all” approach, even within prescribed levels of COVID-19 severity in Virginia generally or your community. Other factors such as the **demographics** of your participants, **event size**, expected **crowd density** and anticipated nature of contact among attendees as well as details of your event such as whether your event will be held in an **indoor or outdoor venue** and the **areas from which you anticipate your participants will be traveling from** to attend, must also be taken into consideration.

## Vulnerable Populations

Populations especially vulnerable to higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 include:

- Older adults (>60 years)
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease
  - Weakened immune systems

It may be advisable to cancel a mass gathering targeting older audiences, or audiences likely to have these chronic conditions, compared to an event where the target audience is not in these categories.

## Travelers from areas where COVID-19 is widespread

An additional consideration would be whether participants are travelling to your event from a location where COVID-19 is widespread in the community, and travel from these areas may increase spread of the disease. It may be advisable to ask event participants to review the status of COVID-19 in their communities before travel to the event and discourage even attendance by healthy individuals coming from areas with widespread COVID-19 infections in their home community.

## Event-specific Considerations

Once concern about COVID-19 has subsided, colleges and universities are encouraged to work with local officials to help scale back prevention efforts specific to COVID-19. Recommendations to consider in this phase of response include:

- Meet with the emergency operations coordinator or planning team for your company to discuss and note lessons learned.
- Maintain and expand your planning team.
- Participate in community-wide emergency preparedness activities

## General advice for participants

Encourage event participants and attendees to refrain from attending the event if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection regardless of their communities' COVID-19 status. In addition, event planners should also have a plan in place to respond to ill individuals and communicate that plan to participants with the goal of identifying illness early and quickly assisting that participant to a more isolated area to assess medical support needs.