

Guidelines on Prevention of Respiratory Infections for Organizers of Public Functions

When planning and organizing for a public function, the Department of Health advises the organizers to follow the guidelines below and take appropriate measures to prevent the spread of respiratory infections during the function:

Before the function:

- Pay attention to announcements from the government on public health policy and instruction on public functions. When there is local transmission of respiratory infection due to novel pathogens (e.g. human swine influenza), the government may advise cancellation of public functions. Keep participants informed of the latest situation and contingency arrangements.
- Identify a co-ordinator and/ or team with defined roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response in protecting the participants from infections.
- Depending on the nature of public function (e.g. requiring personalised booking), keep a good record of the participants with corresponding contact method, in case source or contact tracing of infection might be needed by the Government.
- Prepare essential materials such as alcohol based handrub, facemask, and lidded rubbish bins for participants to facilitate their compliance on hand hygiene and cough manner.
- Consult the venue manager to ensure that the space and ventilation of the venue is appropriate and sufficient for the nature and expected attendance of the public function.

Environmental hygiene and ventilation

- Ensure proper maintenance and cleansing of the ventilation system as well as frequent air exchange.
- Disinfect the venue before and after the function - Clean and disinfect the venue, using 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of 5.25% household bleach with 99 parts of water), rinse with water and then wipe/mop dry.
- This disinfection procedure should be undertaken at least once immediately before commencement of the function and as soon as practicable after the function.

- Maintain cleanliness of the venue during the function. Clean the venue and its facilities using a 1 in 99 diluted household bleach solution at regular intervals as appropriate for the function. If the environment and facilities become dirty, the frequency of cleaning must be stepped up.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities, for example hand sanitizer with 70-80% alcohol are available in sufficient quantity at entrances and exits to as well as convenient locations at the venue and that such facilities are operating properly.
- Provide liquid soap, disposable towels and/or hand dryers in toilets.
- Ensure that rubbish bins are available in sufficient quantity and are emptied as frequently as necessary.
- If any article or surface is contaminated with vomit, phlegm or other bodily secretions, clean it with 1 in 49 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of 5.25% household bleach with 49 parts of water) immediately. Leave for 15-30 mins. Then rinse with water and wipe dry.
- Prohibit smoking strictly to minimize fire hazards and environmental pollution.

During the function:

Visual alert

Post up the "Guidelines on Prevention of Respiratory Infections for Participants of Public Functions" at the entrance and within function venue. You can download the guideline from CHP website

(http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/Guidelines_on_Prevention_of_Respiratory_Infections_en.pdf)

Crowd control

- To avoid overcrowding:
 - Venue operators and organizers should strictly observe the capacity specifications allowed for the venue.
 - Implement crowd control measures.

Food hygiene

- Serve food in an area equipped with adequate hygiene facilities, for example alcohol based hand rub and hand washing facilities.
- Use clean utensils to handle and serve food.
- Consider serving individually packaged food.
- Store and cover all food, beverages and tableware properly.
- Instruct staff to cover food properly during delivery.
- Staff should wear masks and disposable gloves as far as possible when handling food.
- Remind participants to perform hand hygiene properly before eating.
- Remind participants and staff to dispose of rubbish properly.

Law enforcement

- The Fixed Penalty (Public Cleanliness Offences) Ordinance, passed by the Legislative Council in July 2001, covers offences including littering, spitting, unauthorised display of bills or posters, and dog fouling in public places. Any person in breach of the provisions will be liable to a fixed penalty of \$1,500.
- Inform participants of the importance of personal and environmental hygiene and possible legal consequences of breaching the hygiene laws. The information can be delivered through messages printed on the tickets, public announcements and/or display of signs and posters.

Staff health

- Pay attention to the health conditions of your staff.
- Staff members who are sick should put on a mask, seek medical treatment and stay away from work to prevent spreading the disease.

Prevent spread of infections

- Advise people who are sick e.g. fever, or respiratory symptoms such as cough and runny nose not to attend the function. They should be advised to put on a surgical mask immediately and seek medical attention.
- Should there be ongoing local transmission of respiratory infections in the community, members of the public may consider putting on a surgical mask

for added protection. Face masks should be used along with other preventive measures to minimize the spread of transmission. Using a mask incorrectly may actually increase the risk of transmission. For correct use of mask, please refer to: http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/Use_Mask_Properly.pdf

- The organizer may consider temperature check for people who report feeling sick. However, it must be noted that mass temperature screening is not a guaranteed way to eliminate the possibility of respiratory infections. Some infected people may not have fever at the time of screening due to a variety of reasons.
- Should unusual infectious diseases be suspected, report to and cooperate fully with the Department of Health in the investigation and control procedures.

After the functions

- Disinfect the venue after the function - Clean and disinfect the venue, using 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of 5.25% household bleach with 99 parts of water), rinse with water and then wipe/mop dry.

Wish you success in organizing the function!

Department of Health
22 May 2009