

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance for Political Campaigning

As national elections draw closer, political parties and their campaigns will gear up in support of their candidates, as well as local and statewide ballot measures. It will be important to consider how to connect with voters in ways that keep both the public and campaign staff healthy and minimize the chances of exposure to COVID-19. Although traditional indoor campaign and fundraising rallies, shaking hands or “meet and greets” in private homes are not allowed, there are many other ways to connect with voters. This guidance document outlines multiple ways in which campaigns can safely reach out to the voting public.

Digital Options

- Virtual townhalls or webinars - digital platforms can allow a handful, hundreds or even thousands of people to join a video call on their phone, tablet or computer. Campaigns can invite people to join by emailing or texting out a link or call-in number.
- Live Streaming - Events can be streamed in real time on social media platforms.
- Emails and Websites - Communication and fundraising can be hosted on campaign websites and through email communication.
- Digital Advertising

Traditional Lower Risk Options

- Television and radio advertising
- Outdoor spectator free debates between candidates are allowed if all individuals are spaced at least 6 feet apart.
- Telebriefings/TeleTownhalls - Connecting with multiple individuals through large conference calls.
- Phone and Text Banks - Contacting voters one-on-one to communicate issues and obtain feedback.

New Approaches with Lower Risk:

Car parades that comply with public health guidance for vehicle based parades are allowed including drive in events where individuals can receive campaign material or a treat bag (limited to commercially packaged non-perishable treats) or take away items from an organizer while the participants remain in their vehicle.

Allowed Activities with Increased Risk:

While, virtual events are strongly recommended to limit opportunity for community transmission, in-person campaign events are allowed in outdoor settings only. Sponsors and participants must comply with the following:

- Symptom checks are conducted before visitors or speakers may enter the outdoor facility. Checks must include asking about cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever or chills and whether the individual is currently under isolation or quarantine orders. These checks can be done in person or through alternative methods such as on-line check in systems, phone apps, or through signage posted at the entrance to the facility stating that visitors with these symptoms should not enter the premises.



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- Visitors arriving at the campaign event are reminded to wear a face covering at all times while at the event and on the premises. This applies to all adults and to children 2 years of age and older. Only individuals who have been instructed not to wear a face covering by their medical provider are exempt from wearing one. To support the safety of your employees and other visitors, a face covering should be made available to visitors who arrive without them.
- Food and drinks may not be served at these events
- Measures have been implemented (advance registration, counting attendees at entry) to assure attendance does not exceed the number of people who can be accommodated at the outdoor space with physical distancing (non-household members seated or standing 6 feet apart).
- Parking areas have been reconfigured to limit congregation points and ensure proper spacing (for example, by closing off every other space).
- Clear pathways have been identified between parking areas and other arrival points and the site on the grounds at which the gathering is being held to minimize crowding, allow for monitoring of occupancy and to leave room for symptom checks as staff and visitors enter.
- A staff person (or staff people if there is more than one pathway) wearing a cloth face covering is posted at the start of the pathway but at least 6 feet from the nearest arriving or departing person to monitor use of face coverings and track occupancy.
- If attendees at events must wait in line prior to being seated or at any other point during their presence at the site, markings are used to demonstrate the required 6-foot distance between individuals.
- Outdoor areas are configured to permit physical distancing. If chairs, benches or standing space are used, arrangements and markings are employed to permit a 6-foot space between individuals or between household groups and other household groups or individuals.
- If applicable, aisles within the area used for outdoor events are designated as one-way to support physical distancing.
- Podiums, platforms and other speaker areas have been reconfigured to allow at least 6 feet between speakers.
- Microphones and podiums should be cleaned between speakers.
- Staff have been instructed to maintain at least a 6-foot distance from each other in all areas of the site.
- Virtual access is offered, if possible, to visitors who wish to participate but are at high risk if exposed to COVID-19.
- Arrangements are in place to make restrooms safely available to attendees at outdoor campaign events. The site may choose to provide portable outdoor toilet and handwashing facilities and/or to make indoor restrooms available. If indoor facilities are made available, the following precautions are in place:
 - a. A defined route is marked from the outdoor area used for the event to the indoor location of restrooms.

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- b. Tape or other markings are used to assure physical distancing if attendees must line up to use restrooms.
- c. Attendees are encouraged to use restrooms as needed during the event to avoid crowding at the end.
- d. Restrooms facilities are in good working order and are equipped with adequate soap and one-time use towels to permit required handwashing.
- e. Restroom facilities are configured to permit physical distancing outside of walled cubicles.
- f. A staff person (or staff people if there is more than one interior restroom option) wearing a cloth face covering is posted at the entrance to the restroom but at least 6 feet from the nearest arriving or departing person to monitor use of face coverings and track occupancy.
- g. Staff have been instructed to maintain at least a 6-foot distance from each other in all areas of the site, including any indoor work areas.

Permitted but Not Recommended.

Door to Door outreach falls into this category. It is important that any staff or volunteers going door-to-door are aware of the risks associated with interacting with individuals outside their household who may not be wearing a face covering. Staff participating in these activities should be properly trained to adhere to the following actions:

- Remain at least 6 feet from the individual who is being visited and any other people you encounter as you walk from door to door.
- Wear a face covering throughout the entire interaction. (Those who cannot wear a face covering for medical reasons should be excused from doing home visits)
- Remain outside the home during the entire visit. Explain to the individual that you are not allowed to enter their home and are keeping a distance in order to keep them safe.
- Do not shake hands. Limit you greeting to a verbal introduction.
- Avoid handing out material like pamphlets or giveaways. If you will be passing out material, be sure to ask if the individual would be interested in accepting the material first. If they decide they do not want the material after accepting it from you ask them to discard it; do not take it back.
- Carry hand sanitizer and be sure to use it after coming in contact with frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, handles, and doorbells.
- If the individual answering the door is not wearing a mask and/or appears to have symptoms, let them know you will return another day and send them information electronically or by mail.

Know where to get reliable information

Beware of scams, false news and hoaxes surrounding novel coronavirus. Accurate information, including announcements of new cases in LA County, will always be distributed by Public Health through press releases, social media, and our website. The website has more information on COVID-19 including FAQs, infographics and a guide to coping with stress, as well as tips on handwashing



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- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH, County)
 - <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>
 - Social media: @lapublichealth

Other reliable sources of information about novel coronavirus are:

- California Department of Public Health (CDPH, State)
 - <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/nCOV2019.aspx>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, National)
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/novel-coronavirus-2019.html>

If you have questions and would like to speak to someone call the Los Angeles County Information line 2-1-1 which is available 24 hours a day.

