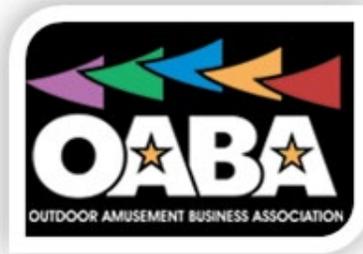




## COVID – 19 Operating Plan & Mitigation Strategies

*Prepared with considerations from:*



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## INTRODUCTION

*Elliott's Amusements, LLC* is a family-owned and carnival operating in the State of Michigan. We operate at 25 fairs and festivals in Michigan each year providing a safe, friendly and appealing atmosphere. The health and welfare of carnival employees and guests on the midway is our top priority in reopening our industry. The procedures and mitigation strategies presented below have been recognized by our industry for protecting carnival employees and guests from potential exposure to COVID-19. By minimizing contacts, promoting social distancing, and increasing cleaning protocols and sanitization, we can welcome guests back to the midway experience *safely*.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To operate carnivals at fairs, festivals, and events in 2021.
2. To create a safe and healthy environment for our guests and employees that is both manageable and enforceable while maintaining compliance with local, state and federal health and safety orders.

The health, welfare, and safety of carnival employees and guests on the midway is our top priority. The procedures and mitigation strategies presented below have been recognized by our industry for protecting carnival employees and guests from potential exposure to COVID-19. By minimizing contacts, promoting social distancing, and increasing cleaning protocols and sanitization, we can welcome guests back to the midway experience safely.

## WHY CARNIVALS DIFFER FROM OTHER MASS GATHERINGS

Carnivals are uniquely different from other mass gatherings such as concerts, movie theaters, and sporting events in the following ways:

1. The number of attendees is a fluid number. Unlike other events, our patrons attend at their own convenient time frame each day. Some guests may stay

for an hour, some may stay 3 – 4 hours. It is rare that guests will arrive at opening and remain for the full operating day. This unique factor allows us to provide for more patrons spread throughout the day. If necessary, the total number can be regulated by gate and count.

2. Carnivals can also manage and reduce capacity by:
  - a. Featuring less attractions, allowing for social distancing.
  - b. Reconfigure attraction placements including widening midway walkways while laying out the midway to allow for queue line placement that includes social distancing.
  - c. Utilizing employees to control seating positions in rides and at games by directing nonfamily members to sit in every other seat or station.
  - d. Offering ride promotions or pricing discounts during opening non-peak hours to draw more guests to less popular times.
3. Most carnival attendees travel as a family, which means that they live in the same home and thus do not need to be physically distanced from each other.
4. Potential exposure times between non same household is generally incidental and below recognized minimum threshold levels because carnival guests move freely through the OUTDOOR midway and are NOT sitting in a single location, elbow to elbow, for an extended period.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- If a guest or employee is sick with COVID-19, was recently exposed (within 14 days) to someone with COVID-19, or just does not feel well, they should not visit the midway.
- Anyone who is in a high-risk category, as defined by the CDC, should not visit the midway.
- All guests and employees shall wear a cloth face covering in public areas.
- All guests and employees shall practice social distancing protocols in public areas per local regulations.
- Carnivals shall communicate and inform guests and employees of all the new protocols and procedures prior to arrival through employee training, social media, traditional announcements, and signage.
- There will be a designated individual on staff responsible for coordinating COVID-19 policies and procedures with the event producer and local health department.

- The COVID-19 coordinator shall document the execution of all protocols on a daily basis.

## GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY

The following considerations must be emphasized. The Carnival will work in conjunction with event organizers on all issues of health and safety.

- Establish protocols for interim sanitation of all high touch points for each ride, game or concession.
- Establish increased protocols for sanitizing all public and communal areas, i.e., restrooms, ATM's, ticket purchase/exchange locations, etc. Encourage purchases be made online or in advance.
- Utilize touch-free or contactless payment options where possible. This includes transactions for rides, games, and concessions.
- Provide additional handwashing and/or hand sanitizing stations throughout the midway at entry and exit points, key thoroughfares, attractions, rides, games, food and beverage concessions, and outside restrooms.
- Place protective screens (plexiglass or other hygienic barriers) wherever possible to separate employees and guests.
- Establish protocols when an employee or guest exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 when entering or on the midway. Coordinate action with the committee/sponsors to remove the party from public interaction and provide medical services off the midway.
- Establish pedestrian traffic flow plans to reduce bottlenecks and ensure the ability to maintain social distancing on the fair grounds.
- Increase the number of available restroom and handwashing facilities to alleviate crowding caused by waiting guests.

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

- The key tenet to this guidance is based on managing physical/social distancing between guests on the midway and within attractions and other spaces within the venue.
- Establish overall capacity limits based on local formulas for the current circumstances.
- We can limit the number of and capacity of individual rides and games to comply with local regulations for social distancing. Recognize that family members from the same household can be closer together and can be considered a “family unit”.
- Implementation of queue lines that indicate local requirements for the current circumstances. (usually 6 feet for individuals or 10’ for family units)  
. No switchback or serpentine lines.
- Employees will avoid physically assisting/lifting guests. If a guest needs assistance, the family will be encouraged to help.

## FACE MASKS / CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

The wearing of face masks or cloth face coverings (covering nose and mouth) provides an additional level of safety for guests and employees and reduces the likelihood of contagious virus droplets transferring from one person to another.

Signage will encourage/require patrons to wear face masks/cloth face covering. It is important to note that some people should not wear masks/face coverings. The CDC in the US cautions that cloth face coverings should not be placed on children younger than 2 years of age, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without assistance. As a result, those individuals may not be able to experience some attractions.

PPP will be provided to our staff along with information on the proper use, removal, and washing of masks.

## EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

A designated member of our staff will be responsible for coordinating COVID-19 policies and procedures with the event as well as with local HEALTH DEPARTMENTS.

- Each employee's temperature will be checked and logged before work shifts and they will not be allowed to work should they register a fever above 100.4 degrees.
- Staff will be educated on COVID-19 to include sanitation procedures for public and personal areas, social distancing requirements use of PPE, and guest responsibilities.
- Staff will be trained with protocols developed for the specific ride, game or food concession they work.
- Staff will be provided cloth protective face coverings, face shields, and other PPE as needed to be worn during all interactions with the public.
- Employee rotation cycles will be monitored to keep work teams together to reduce interactions between different groups of employees when possible.
- Absenteeism of employees will be monitored, and staff will be cross-trained to respond to staffing shortages that may be COVID-19 related.
- Employees will be instructed to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer at least every 60 minutes and after any of the following: using the restroom, sneezing, touching their face, blowing their nose, cleaning, sweeping, mopping, eating, drinking, smoking, entering, or leaving a guest area, and before and after their shift.
- Employees will be discouraged from using other workers' phones, desks, offices or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- There will be periodic meetings with staff and key stakeholders to review problem issues and plans to improve the experience and to incorporate customer comments and concerns.
- A policy regarding employees that feel ill or show symptoms of virus or infection, encouraging them to stay home without fear of being punished or losing their jobs will be implemented. Staff will be educated on when they can return to work.
- When appropriate, following CDC guidelines, shields and temporary barriers will be used between employees and the public.

- As a rule, carnival employees should avoid physically assisting/lifting guests. If a guest needs assistance, they will first ask another family member to help. It is understood that carnival employees may still need to physically assist / lift guests in the event of a ride evacuation.
- Employees should treat all bodily fluids as if they are infectious. They will always wear PPE if moving materials with fluids on them or cleaning areas where fluids have been.
- Employees will be reminded they have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- Employees will be encouraged and incentivized to get the COVID vaccine when it is available to them.
- Due to the unreliable nature of advance screening and temperature checks, particularly in outdoor environments, they are not recommended as a primary operating principle regarding patrons. Some government agencies may require them and specify how they are to be managed.

## CLEANING & SANITIZING

The CDC defines cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting as follows:

- **CLEANING** removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and risk of spreading infection.
- **SANITIZING** lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements. This process works by either cleaning or disinfecting surfaces or objects to lower the risk of spreading infection. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects.
- **DISINFECTING** works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

High touch surfaces should be cleaned throughout the day with an alcohol-based disinfectant. Periodically, depending on the current COVID-19 level at the time, the attractions will be thoroughly sprayed with EPA approved disinfecting solutions. It is difficult to recommend a single approach to cleaning/sanitizing frequency as a number of factors should be taken into account when making that decision. Those factors include traffic/number of touches, environment (indoor/outdoor, warm/cold, wet/dry) location, the surface being cleaned, and the cleaning agent properties.

## FOOD & GAMES

- Food stands will endeavor to follow the most current CDC and local health department guidelines as issued.
- Consumption of food or beverages is permitted only in a designated dining area where patrons are seated, and groups are separated by six feet.
- Commonly used areas around food stands will be cleaned and sanitized periodically throughout the day.
- Food stands will separate payment handling employee from food handling employees.
- Open access condiments will be eliminated and replaced with single-use packets or portions available upon request.
- Self-service drink stations will be eliminated.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be made available.
- Barriers can be erected between food service employees and the public. Self-service drink stations will be eliminated.
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- Barriers can be erected between food service employees and the public.
- Self-service napkins and cutlery dispensers will be eliminated, and items provided to guests with meals upon request.
- Customers and staff can exchange cash or card payments by placing them on a receipt tray or on the counter to avoid direct hand to hand contact.
- Contact can be minimized by handing food items to guests on a tray or with gloved hands.
- Games will be reconfigured whenever possible and/or strategies employed to maintain social distancing and minimize contact.
- Game equipment touched by the public will be wiped after each use.

- Prizes will be sanitized and quarantined before being placed into service in a game and will be kept out of the guest's reach before selecting.
- Social distancing between players not in the same family unit can be implemented.

## INFORMATION SHARING & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Implementation of a public awareness campaign for social media (paid and non-paid), mass media (paid and non-paid), web-based platforms, signs, and public address announcements to advise the public of new policies and procedures for their safety.
- Signs with health and hygiene reminders will be visible throughout the midway. The CDC, and many states, have PDF bilingual signs available on their websites. With the use of signage developed by the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity guests will be instructed of proper hand washing, and other hygiene precautions. Guests will be reminded to practice social distancing in all areas of the midway per local regulation.
- Signs with the following or similar language should be on display: **“We have taken enhanced health and safety measures for our guests and employees. You must follow all posted instruction while visiting the midway. An inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, senior citizens, and guests with underlying medical conditions are especially vulnerable. By visiting the midway, you voluntarily assume all risks related to the exposure of COVID-19”**
- The on-midway cleaning/sanitation team will be highly visible to provide guest reassurance.
- Contact information to report problem areas or customer concerns will be posted so situations can be promptly remediated.

## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND NOTES

**Gloves** provide a false sense of security and are therefore not recommended as a part of general protocols. If someone wears gloves, touches an unclean surface, then touches their face or another surface, they will spread germs. Rather, frequent hand washing is important to ensure hands are clean. Hence, gloves are not included in most of this guidance. This guidance does not apply to protocols that require gloves (i.e. food handling, cleaning functions with chemicals, First Aid operations), which should be strictly followed.

**Hot vs. Cold Water for Hand Washing** – The US Center for Disease Control recommends handwashing be performed for 20 seconds using warm or cold water and soap. Hot water is not required, and warm and cold water are equally effective. The key is in the duration (20 seconds or more) and the use of soap. The chemical make-up of soap/soap bubbles break the walls of the bacteria and the water washes it away.

**Liability Waivers** – Many governments do not honor/accept liability waivers and can be socially unacceptable in some parts of the world, limiting their effectiveness. As an alternative, we will post signs/notices to ensure guests understand there is known risk associated in being in public spaces with others.

**Temperature Checks/Screening on Entry** – Temperature checks are not recommended as a primary operating principle due to the inconsistent nature of readings, particularly in outdoor environments. Individuals carrying COVID-19 can be asymptomatic, including maintaining a normal body temperature. As a result, screening is not an effective way to keep individuals with the disease out of the venue. It is effective to assume everyone is COVID-19 positive and take the necessary precautions to avoid spreading the disease (handwashing, physical distancing, cleaning, and sanitization).

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES

- It is important to note that these considerations will change as best practices, government guidelines, and guidance from medical professional evolves. The CDC, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Governors office, and other regulating authorities are constantly changing.

This mitigation strategy can be altered and/or changed to meet the most current guidelines.

- Considerations and mitigation strategies listed in this document have been compiled from best practices documents provided by:
  - State of Michigan
  - MIOSHA
  - OSHA
  - CDC
  - Outdoor Amusement Business Association (OABA)
  - IAAPA – The Global Association for the Attractions Industry
  - EPA

#### Additional documents for considerations

- Covid-19 Workplace Safety Guidance for Sports and Entertainment Facilities
- Proposed Covid-19 Guidelines for Michigan Ski Areas
- South Florida Fair Covid-19 Safety Plan  
[www.youthfloridafair.com/p/thefair/safety-plan](http://www.youthfloridafair.com/p/thefair/safety-plan)
- Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity MISafeStart: Entertainment Guidelines and Recommendations
- Proposed signage examples available at:  
[www.michigan.gov/leo/0,5863,7-336-100207\\_101272---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/leo/0,5863,7-336-100207_101272---,00.html)