



Iowa Department of Public Health

Novel Influenza A (H1N1) Recommendations for Mass Gatherings/Large Public Events

Should mass gatherings/large public events be cancelled?

IDPH does **not** recommend cancelling mass gatherings/large public events at this time.

- Examples of mass gatherings/large public events include: church services, sporting events, concerts, social and cultural celebrations, weddings, conferences, etc.

I am attending a mass gathering/large public event. Should I wear a mask?

IDPH does **not** recommend wearing a mask to mass gatherings.

If I am sick can I attend a mass gathering, as long as I stay away from other people and do not cough or sneeze on them?

No, sick people should stay home. Sick people can give the influenza virus to other people by sneezing or coughing on or near them. People can get influenza by touching something with flu viruses on it (such as a door knob) with their hand and then touching their mouth, eyes, or nose.

I am attending a mass gathering/large public event. How can I protect myself from getting sick?

- Avoid being near sick people and people who are coughing or sneezing
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand gel (especially after coughing or sneezing)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with your hands. Germs spread this way

I am planning a mass gathering/large public event. What can I do to protect other people attending?

- Make sure you, and others around, you cover your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze.
- If possible, provide education for the attendees about staying home if they are sick.
 - This can be done through newsletters, newspaper notices, Web site postings, text messages, or other communication methods before the event takes place.
- Make hand washing facilities with soap and running water, hand gels, and tissues widely available at the event
- Consider providing alternative options and venues for participation (e.g., remote Web-based viewing sites) to reduce the risk of disease spread
- If a planning a long term event, consider providing on-site medical assessment and care for persons with influenza like symptoms. If someone develops symptoms while attending the event, have a place for them to go to stay away from others or sent them home.