



COVID-19 GUIDANCE

Prom

Prom is a yearly celebration that usually occurs near the end of the school year and commemorates the completion of high school. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there are ways to minimize the risk of catching or spreading the virus while still having fun and celebrating this opportunity.

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) advises Coloradans to think carefully about how they can lower risk, not only for themselves and their families, but for their communities. It is still very important to follow best practices to help prevent COVID-19 from spreading. Coloradans must wear masks that fully cover their nose and mouth per executive order, wash hands frequently, maintain 6 feet of distance from people outside of their assigned pod, and follow other public health guidance. As always, schools and local public health departments can choose to be more restrictive than the guidelines outlined below.

Continue to prioritize in-person learning, and reconsider in-person celebrations if transmission in your community is high or if your school is struggling to sustain in-person learning. If found that the risk of spreading COVID-19 is too high to safely hold a prom in-person according to Colorado's [COVID dial framework](#), schools can plan virtual proms instead. Proms should follow CDPHE's [indoor](#) and [outdoor](#) events guidance.

Follow local health guidance and understand local trends. COVID-19 risk varies depending on the spread in specific communities, so follow the guidance of your local public health department.

Protect yourself and your community

Regardless of your community's level on the [dial dashboard](#), people should not participate in any in-person activities if they:

- Are sick, especially with [COVID-19 symptoms](#).
- Have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are currently in the quarantine period.

- Have recently tested positive for COVID-19 and are currently in the isolation period.
- People at [increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19](#) should think about the risks and benefits of activities they are considering.

COVID-19 testing

The state is not requiring testing. However, CDPHE recommends that schools utilize the tests allocated via the [Binax At-School COVID-19 testing program](#) to test students prior to attending prom. If your school would like to use the BinaxNOW tests for this event and need additional tests, please request more tests using [this link](#).

See the following excerpt from the CDC's [Event Planning](#) FAQ:

Should organizers test all attendees and staff for COVID-19 before they can enter an event?

CDC does not recommend testing all attendees and staff before allowing them to enter. Testing all event attendees and staff for COVID-19 before allowing them to enter the venue has not been systematically studied. It is unknown if entry testing at event venues provides any additional reduction in person-to-person transmission of the virus beyond what would be expected with other preventive measures (such as social distancing, wearing cloth face coverings, hand washing, enhanced cleaning and disinfection).

CDC does recommend conducting health checks such as temperature screening and/or symptom checking of staff and attendees safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.

Venue

Use [Colorado's COVID-19 dial framework](#) to help determine how to celebrate prom in your community this year, especially when considering group sizes and venues.

Choose the safest options:

- Virtual gatherings are the safest option. Limit in-person gatherings as much as possible. For example, shift traditionally in-person activities to virtual, such as crowning a prom king, queen, or court.
- Outdoor gatherings are generally less risky than indoor gatherings.
 - Avoid indoor venues that have poor ventilation and do not offer fresh air from the outdoors.

- If shelters are provided for outdoor venues, avoid fully enclosed shelters and take measures to ensure continuous airflow through these shelters.
- Smaller groups are generally safer than larger groups.

All in-person events are required to follow capacity limits guidance for [Indoor](#) and [Outdoor](#) events; however, we **highly** recommend that schools consider hosting these events outdoors when possible. In particular, prom event planners and Coloradans are reminded to:

- Use [Colorado's COVID dial framework](#) to determine capacity limits.
- Collect contact information of attendees through tickets, reservations, requiring RSVPs, or having sign-in sheets, and times of arrival and departure to help with potential exposure notification whenever possible.
- Operate on a one-in-one-out basis when at capacity, and limit capacity to support 6 feet of physical distancing.
- Consider two or more timed events to allow greater spacing while still allowing full participation.
- Give reminders to observe 6 feet of physical distancing before, during, and after events.
- Post signage with easy-to-interpret graphics in commonly used languages reminding everyone to maintain 6 feet of distance, wear masks, wash hands, etc.
- Establish single-direction traffic flow in and out of venue and seating areas. Consider separate entrances and exits.
- Enhance [cleaning and disinfection](#) of common touch points (doors, stairwell handles, light switch, elevator switch, etc.).
- Wash hands frequently and follow respiratory etiquette.
- Attendees must wear a mask unless eating or drinking (more information on eating and drinking can be found below).
- Maintain a list of all attendees for contact tracing purposes.

Prom event planners are encouraged to:

- Assign students to groups or pods of no more than 10 students.
- When possible, limit students from outside of the community or school.
- Complete temperature checks and health screenings at entrances to the event.
- Designating spaces, squares/circles, or pods, with 6 feet between each, where students will gather during the event. Pods of students should be determined prior to prom and have an assigned space for the duration of the event.
 - When possible, these should be chaperoned by a responsible adult.

Pods

Pods are assigned groups of no more than 10 attendees. Pods should be determined days or weeks prior to prom. While at prom, attendees are allowed to be less than 6 feet from members within their designated pod but must remain at least 6 feet away from separate pods. Examples to differentiate one from pod from another include:

- Color-coded wristbands (i.e. blue pod, orange pod)
- Numbers assigned to tables and dance circles on the floor. For example, students assigned to table 1 would dance in dance circle 1. Prom planners can tape off circles on the ground that allow for 6 feet of space between dance circles.
- Prom planners can use the [Pod Social Distancing Calculator](#) (click the tab on the left labeled “pod”) to ensure that physical distancing and capacity can be maintained depending on the size of the venue. The calculator allots 9 feet of space for each pod.
- Pods can also help prom planners support reservations; for example, blue pod, green pod, and yellow pod are reserved to be at prom from 6 PM to 8 PM while red pod, orange pod, and pink pod will be at prom from 8 PM to 10 PM.

Dinner

Dinner at prom is not recommended. Instead, prom planners should encourage attendees to eat dinner prior to prom. If dinner will be served, follow restaurant guidance per [CDPHE](#), the CDC, and the following recommendations:

- Eat outdoors, if possible. You are less likely to get or spread COVID-19 during outdoor activities.
- If the event is catered, do not allow for self-service stations or buffets.
- Prom planners should discourage congregating around water stations.
- Create a designated area for attendees to eat and drink that is physically distanced.

Dancing

If dancing will be available, attendees should dance with those in their assigned pod. Each pod should remain at least 6 feet away from other pods to abide by physical distancing guidelines. Attendees must keep their masks on while dancing.

Visitors

Visitors may be allowed only if capacity limits as determined by [Colorado’s COVID dial framework](#) and [indoor](#) or [outdoor](#) events guidance allow. A school may choose to restrict or not allow visitors.

For more information, see the following resources from the CDC:

1. [Large Gatherings](#)
2. [Event Planning and Attendees FAQ](#)
3. [Community-Based Events](#)