

NEWS & INSIGHTS

Pennsylvania revises COVID-19 restrictions, including limits on gatherings

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The below information is current as of the publication date listed. Because COVID-19 response measures on all fronts are continually evolving, clients should stay alert to new developments and consult with counsel on any critical questions.

On March 1, 2021, Gov. Tom Wolf [announced](#) changes to some of Pennsylvania's COVID-19 mitigation measures,

including easing restrictions on events and gatherings, like funeral services.

Orders issued by the [governor](#) and [acting secretary of Health](#) now provide that indoor events and gatherings are limited to 15% of maximum capacity and outdoor events and gatherings are limited to 20% of maximum capacity, regardless of the size of the venue. As before, the limits include both attendees and staff. Maximum capacity is still defined by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code. If fire code capacity is unknown, maximum capacity is assumed to be 67 people per 1,000 square feet.

Under these orders, venues hosting events with fixed seating must meet new requirements, including allowing groups of more than 10 attendees only if they are all from the same household and separating each grouping by at least six feet. All gatherings must require attendees to comply with social distancing requirements, require attendees and staff to wear masks or face coverings, and implement best practices such as timed entry, multiple entry and exit points and multiple restrooms and hygiene stations.

Churches, synagogues, temples, mosques and other places of congregate worship continue to be excluded from the gathering limitations during religious services.

These orders also recognize a new exception to employee quarantine requirements in light of ongoing vaccine rollout. Under prior orders, an employee who had close contact with a person who was diagnosed with or tested positive for COVID-19 could not continue to work at an in-person business and was required to quarantine. Now, however, employees who have close contact need not quarantine if (1) they are fully vaccinated (meaning at least two weeks following receipt of the second dose in a two-dose series, or at least two weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine); (2) they are within three months following receipt of the last dose in the series; and (3) they have remained asymptomatic since the COVID-19 exposure.

In other orders, the [governor](#) and [secretary](#) also rescinded prior requirements that those traveling to Pennsylvania from another state provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test or quarantine for 14 days.

The state has updated its [frequently asked questions](#) website to reflect these changes.

Saxton & Stump attorney [Jason Benion](#) is available to assist death care businesses and professionals with these and other issues regarding operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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