

Governor Reynolds and Other Iowa Officials,

Wedding and event professionals are extremely concerned about the future of our industry. Majority of the event professionals in Iowa are small business owners and we have suffered substantial loss from the shutdown. Events have been cancelled, refunds given to couples, and some 2020 scheduled events have postponed well into 2021 consuming otherwise viable rental dates and income for next year. If we are able to reopen immediately, we can begin to recover and prevent any more businesses from bankruptcy. It is our plea that you consider opening event venues and allow receptions under the same guidelines as restaurants. We strongly feel professional event spaces and vendors have the ability to operate safely and the immediate opening would save our small businesses and the wedding industry from collapse.

We believe Iowa is ready to re-open for private events. Our couples have all vocalized how they are just praying we reopen and are willing to make adjustments just to be able to still hold their momentous event with those closest to them. The fact is, they trust in their wedding vendors, because we are professionals and they know we will take all necessary precautions to operate a safe event for not only them, but each and every one of their guests. We simply ask that you also trust in us, just as you do in restaurant management.

Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas and South Dakota have opened for Weddings. Many other states have either planned openings in June or are already operating with DHMs. In 2019, there were 19,436* weddings with an average of \$22,435 spent for each event. That is \$436,046,660* in revenue going to small business owners right here in Iowa. We need to get back to work and our clients want to celebrate their events. As you have mentioned in multiple press conferences, Iowans are smart and do the right thing.

Find our solutions below for what we are assuming some of the state's concerns for weddings receptions and other events. We have also included a plan put together the Event Safety Alliance on how to open safely during this out-break. The Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide is the product of contributions from more than 300 professionals from all facets of the live event industry, from the smallest to largest producers and the many businesses that work to support them.

Sincerely,
Iowa Wedding and Event Professionals

We will abide by all protocols set forth by the CDC for restaurants and will include the following parameters, or as directed by the Iowa Department of Public Health and CDC.

Relationship:

- Guests in attendance are family and close friends to the venue's client. All guests also have a personal interest in the health and well-being of all attendees.
- Clients have personally contacted each of their guests and notified that they should not attend if they are feeling ill or in a vulnerable population.

Spacing & Seating:

- Clients will have a specific invite list with the count set to the venues 50% capacity limit.
- They can customize their invites to each the ceremony and the reception.
- A final rsvp list and count will be shared with venues at least 2 weeks prior to the event. Venues can provide a custom layout design unlike many restaurants. Venues can ensure a minimum of six feet, if not more, between each table for guests' comfort and safety.
- The average table in a restaurant is 36-42 inches wide. Most venue tables are 60 inches wide, which would ensure even more social distance between the guests at each table.
- Commonly only one family per table is assigned.
- With assigned seating we feel we can limit the amount of direct contact with other guests.

No Self-Service:

- This is included but not limited to: self-serve buffets, salad bars and beverages.
- Caterers will be required to serve all food directly to guests including but not limited to cake, desserts and appetizers.
- Bartenders serve directly to guests in disposable glasses.

Additional Measures:

- All staff and vendors must wear cloth masks.
- Prescreening all staff members health.
- Venues and Vendors will communicate to staff to stay home if they have any symptoms or are not feeling well.
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*The Wedding Report <https://stats.wedding.report/>