

GUIDELINES ON MASS GATHERINGS, SOCIAL EVENTS, MEETINGS OR TRAINING SESSIONS

(As of 18 April 2020)

This guideline is drawn up in response to the current COVID-19 pandemic in Brunei Darussalam. Brunei Darussalam is currently in the containment phase of the pandemic, i.e. cases have been detected in the country. These public health measures are put in place in order to reduce the risk of local and further transmission in our community and one of the known effective measures is to limit large crowds and mass gatherings in close proximity over a prolonged duration.

1. Definition of Mass Gathering (MG)

A Mass Gathering (MG) has been defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an occasion, either organised or spontaneous where the "number of people attending is sufficient to strain the planning and response resources of the community, city, or nation hosting the event" (WHO, 2008).

2. The following are the types of events that falls under Mass Gathering (but not limited to):

- a) Ticketed events (cinema, cultural, sports and entertainment events);
- b) Personal or social events that involve large crowds (weddings, birthday, BBQ or karaoke, family or social get-togethers);
- c) Conferences or Training courses;
- d) Meetings;

- e) Recreational activities in open areas (sports and physical activities); and
- f) Religious gatherings (to also be guided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs)

3. Precautionary measures that organisers need to put in place to help with the government's effort in controlling the COVID-19 transmission:

Organisers are advised to postpone the event if possible. However, if the event needs to proceed, they must put in place the following precautionary measures in accordance to each event:

a) Ticketed events (cinema, cultural, sports and entertainment events)

Currently, all ticketed events such as cinema, cultural, sports and entertainment events are not allowed.

b) Personal or social events that involve large crowds in residential locations (birthdays, BBQ or karaoke, family or social get-togethers)

- i) Limit the number of attendees to 20 to 30 people;
- ii) Ensure physical or social distancing measures are put in place. For example, stagger seating arrangements at least 1 to 2 metres apart;
- iii) Ensure good ventilation. Encourage the use of fans and open windows, where possible;
- iv) Reduce contact with others e.g. avoid shaking hands;
- v) Know your guests or who you invite - place measures to facilitate contact tracing if needed, such as obtaining contact details of attendees;
- vi) Always ensure personal and environmental hygiene. Ensure that there are adequate and clean toilet facilities as well as for washing hands with soap

and water, also disposable hand towels or tissues and covered rubbish bins.

Do also provide hand sanitisers, where possible;

- vii) Attendees must practice social responsibility including respiratory etiquette at all times; and
- viii) To advise family members who are not well not to attend.

c) Conferences or Training courses

- i) Limit the number of participants to 20 to 30 people (depending on the size of the room);
- ii) Wherever possible or if there are more than 30 participants to use teleconferencing for any training sessions;
- iii) Employees are seated 1 to 2 meters apart from each other or put in place markers or stickers on the floor or seats;
- iv) Avoid shaking hands;
- v) Keep the room well ventilated;
- vi) Place measures to facilitate contact tracing if needed, such as obtaining contact details of attendees; and
- vii) Ideally the venue should not have more than one person per 16 square metres of usable space.

d) Meetings

- i) Limit the number of participants to 20 to 30 people (depending on the size of the room);
- ii) Wherever possible or if there are more than 30 participants to use teleconferencing for any discussions or meetings;

- iii) Employees are seated 1 to 2 meters apart from each other or put in place markers or stickers on the floor or seats;
 - iv) Avoid shaking hands;
 - v) Keep the room well ventilated;
 - vi) Place measures to facilitate contact tracing if needed, such as obtaining contact details of attendees; and
 - vii) Where feasible and as much as possible, organize the meeting so as not to exceed 30 minutes and avoid long speeches or formalities which cause attendees to congregate longer than as necessary.
- e) Religious gatherings (for example Majlis Tahlil / Doa Selamat and mass prayers at home – to also be guided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs)**
- i) Limit the number of family members to 20 to 30 people (depending on the size of the rooms / house);
 - ii) Ensure physical or social distancing measures are put in place. For example, stagger seating arrangements at least 1 to 2 metres apart;
 - iii) Ensure good ventilation. Encourage the use of fans and open windows, where possible;
 - iv) Reduce contact with others e.g. avoid shaking hands;
 - v) Know your guests or who you invite - place measures to facilitate contact tracing if needed, such as obtaining contact details of attendees;
 - vi) Always ensure personal and environmental hygiene. Ensure that there are adequate and clean toilet facilities as well as for washing hands with soap and water, also disposable hand towels or tissues and covered rubbish bins. Do also provide hand sanitisers, where possible;

vii) Attendees must practice social responsibility including respiratory etiquette at all times; and

viii) To advise family members who are not well not to attend.

f) Recreational activities in open areas (sports and other physical activities)

i) To maintain a distance of 1 to 2 meters apart from each other during the activities

ii) Ideally not to have more than 5 people in a group

iii) Not to loiter in large groups after the activities

iv) If you are unwell, do not participate in any recreational activities

4. Those with the following conditions are particularly advised not to attend:

- Elderly with chronic diseases;
- Immunocompromised individuals such as suffering from kidney or lung problems, cancer or other immunosuppressed conditions;
- Pregnant women;
- Infants and children below 5 years' old;
- Those who are unwell especially with respiratory symptoms.

5. Precautionary measures attendees / participants of events need to take after attending an event:

- Attendees / participants are advised to monitor their own health conditions after attending the event.

- They should seek medical attention if they become unwell with fever and/or respiratory symptoms and know of a person attending the same function has been confirmed as a case of COVID-19.
- Please contact the Health Advice Line 148 for further advice or instructions.