

**Guidelines on Hosting MICE Events in the
COVID-19 Pandemic**
4th edition

Japan Convention Management Association
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Introduction

In order for MICE organizers to hold MICE events hereafter in safety and with peace of mind, the Japan Convention Management Association (JCMA) has formulated these MICE hosting guidelines to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

The “Analysis of the Response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Recommendations” issued by the Expert Meeting on the Novel Coronavirus Disease Control (hereinafter “Expert Meeting”) on May 4, 2020, concluded as follows. “To prevent the infection from spreading at the same time as conducting socio-economic activities, it is especially necessary for businesses to consider and implement specific infection prevention measures in the scenes in which they provide each of their services. Because the risk of infection varies in each case, we would like each industry to create guidelines or other policies to prevent the infection from spreading and implement them by trial and error, using their ingenuity.”

In the midst of this situation, many organizers have contacted JCMA’s member companies seeking consultation about the hosting of events that have already been decided upon, and those that are proposed for the future. We at JCMA are concerned that without the formulation and observance of guidelines as sector standards, opportunities for MICE organizers to convene MICE events will not arise for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, since in the earliest stages of the spread of COVID-19 there were cases in which clusters occurred at MICE events aimed at the general public, we consider it vital that we share a common recognition of the necessity of both providing a sense of reassurance regarding MICE events and preventing such reoccurrences throughout the entire sector.

It is thus at this juncture that we wish to create guidelines for the hosting of conventions and other MICE events, establish safe and reassuring management methods as a sector organization and connect these with the resumption of MICE events. The countermeasures that we consider requisite are compiled herein in these Guidelines on Hosting MICE Events in the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The significance of hosting MICE events is covered later in this document, but we would be grateful if all those hosting MICE events, which play an important social and economic role, would use these guidelines and share them with operators, hosting facilities and all other stakeholders.

JCMA will aim for the earliest possible recommencement of MICE events, use this opportunity to endeavour to gain a broad understanding of the significance of hosting MICE events, and hope to function as a driving force in the post-COVID-19 society.

Please note that the content of these guidelines has been and is subject to revision when necessary according to the latest knowledge on COVID-19, changes in the related policies/countermeasures, as well as the opinions of MICE organizers, operators and hosting facilities, and experience and knowledge obtained in the course of recommending MICE events.

The 3rd Edition of these guidelines has resulted from the content of the announcement by the government on September 11 concerning the risk mitigation measures based on the easing of restrictions on hosting events.

The 4th edition of these guidelines incorporates the content of new knowledge based on cases of MICE events that have been held, which was collected through questionnaires sent to members, and the communication issued on November 12, 2020 by the Cabinet Secretariat's Office for Novel Coronavirus Disease Control entitled "Regarding the Strengthening of Measures towards the Thorough Observation of Guidelines on Infection Prevention Measures at Events etc."

I. Significance and characteristics of the hosting of MICE events

- Creation of business and innovation opportunities
- Positive effects on local economies
- Improvement of national and urban competitiveness

Since they are events in which "people assemble," MICE are regarded as events that lead to the exchange of knowledge and information, through which academic promotion and the creation of business opportunities, and in turn considerable economic effects and added values, such as urban branding, are all brought about. In fact, we are also proud to have also contributed to international peace by creating fora and chances for numerous participants to mingle regardless of nation, region, gender or age, and across all sorts of fields.

Business events are at the core of MICE

The vast majority of MICE events are regarded as business events to be participated in by business people, academics and stakeholders in each sector and academic field. BtoC events aimed at the general public also take place, but these guidelines are based on the premise of business-oriented events in which the participants are a specified audience.

One major feature of MICE as business events is that regardless of whether the participants are registered beforehand, on the event day or restricted to registered participants only, **it is possible for those hosting the events to ascertain the contact points for all participants.** This is in other words

the decisive difference between MICE and types of businesses aimed at unspecified numbers of people, and **in the event of an emergency it is possible for all of the participants to be easily traced.**

Furthermore, **through the use of IT tools** it is now realistic to attempt to **mitigate the risk of infection through contact and droplet infection.**

Based on the hosting guidelines it is now feasible for all of the operators and hosting facilities to host MICE events in safety and with peace of mind through the formulation and observance of suitable operational methods in line with the guidelines.

II. Identification of infection risks

The hosting of MICE events necessitates the consideration of countermeasure according to infection risks.

- **Closed spaces (poorly ventilated closed spaces)**
- **Crowded places (where large numbers of people are concentrated)**
- **Close-contact settings (where conversation and speaking take place in areas within arms' length of others)**

Places to which these three conditions (the so-called “three Cs”) apply are considered to be at high risk of spreading infection.

There is a need to avoid the occurrence of these conditions at all costs, and conduct measures to secure sufficient space between people (social distancing).

Furthermore, there is also a need to be thorough in preventing exposure of oneself as well as others to infection.

The expected infection risks in hosting MICE events are as follows.

II. 1. Contact infection risks

Identify the areas and frequency of commonly touched objects and doors. Particular attention is required regarding the following.

- Public spaces:
Tables, chairs, elevator buttons, escalator handrails, other handrails, toilets etc.
- Participant registration reception:
Cash, credit cards, ID cards, programs, congress bags etc.
- Cloakroom spaces:
Cloakroom tags/tickets, baggage deposited, etc.
- Session rooms:
Doors, tables, chairs, podiums, microphones, laptops, simultaneous interpretation receivers, etc.
- Party/social gathering rooms:
Doors, tables, chairs, tongs, cutlery, glasses, etc.

- Exhibition rooms:
Exhibit booths stands, exhibit materials, explanatory material provided by exhibitors, etc.

II. 2. Droplet infection risks

Identify the extent to which space between people can be secured, while taking into account the state of ventilation in the hosting room.

At the same time, it is also important to make provisions so that participants can communicate with each other while retaining an appropriate distance between themselves. In the case of MICE in particular, since it is vital to pay attention to the transmission of infection through conversation and speaking, the wearing of masks that are effective in the restriction of infection via airborne transmission of droplets floating in the air (micro-droplet infection) is imperative.

- Public spaces:
The distance between specified numbers of participants at crowded times
- Participant registration reception:
Queues while waiting, distance between operational staff and participants
- Cloakroom spaces:
Queues while waiting, distance between operational staff and participants
- Session rooms:
Queues during entrance and exit, audience seating layout, distance between speakers, distance between speakers and participants, state of ventilation, etc.
- Parties/social gathering rooms:
Table layout, seating order, content of attractions and situations in which people speak in loud voices, distance between participants in the event of standing buffets, state of ventilation.
- Exhibition rooms:
Distance between exhibitors and participants during business talks, distance between exhibitors and participants during explanations given at booths, layout of booths, width of aisles, etc.

II. 3. Participant attraction measure risks

Identify around how many participants are expected, and bearing in mind both the number of participants and the capacity of the room, identify **whether or not safe distances between people can be secured**. In addition, since a certain number of people will lead to congestion for some time, there is a heightened requirement for ventilation.

In consideration of the above, **identify the number of participants that can be accommodated throughout the entire facility and each room used**, which is the criterion for assessing the **restrictions on entering the room**. This also ties in with the rough target for the gradual easing of **hosting restrictions** indicated by the government concerning MICE, including events and exhibitions, and the accompanying **easing of the ceiling placed on capacity ratios and numbers of people**.

III. Safety measures for participants

III. 1. Planning and preparation stages of MICE events

III. 1. 1. Formulation of infection countermeasures by stakeholders

- (1) **The sharing of roles and scope of responsibilities should be decided between the organizers, operators and hosting facilities, shared among stakeholders and the responsibilities of each organization determined.**
- (2) **Stipulate the criteria and process for deciding whether an event should be postponed, cancelled, or held online.**
- (3) The businesses and organizations that host MICE events are highly varied, and there is a need to utilize the new technology and systems/skills of these businesses and organizations at the stage of formulating the implementation plan in order make good use of them in preventing the spread of infection.
 - ▶This may include for example, **mechanizing the reception desks or making them unmanned, cashless payments, the introduction of prior reservation systems for programs, and the joint-use of mechanisms such as online/virtual hosting.**
 - ▶It is to be hoped that stakeholders will be flexible in considering the actual type, scale and budgets of events to be held.
- (4) Consider the design of systems that enable people to be traced in the event of an infection outbreak at a MICE event, such as making online participation registration requisite for local participants as well. In such cases, also consider the methods for explaining this in a readily understood manner for those with low IT literacy.
- (5) Consider requiring participants **to submit a state of health check sheet**. If doing so, include every participant including the exhibitors.
- (6) Compile a list of the names and contact points of all operational stakeholders including staff setting up the event venue and operational staff and ensure that it is possible to contact them in the event that an infection is discovered after the event.
- (7) Consider alternative plans for cases in which the speakers are unable to deliver their addresses due to testing positive.
- (8) With regard to guest speakers invited from outside of Japan, in accordance with the latest information on restrictions on entry to Japan, respond flexibly by **switching to online presentations**, etc.
- (9) **With regard to participants who have already paid registration fees but cannot participate because of temperature readings indicating a fever, refunding procedures should be considered and pre-defined.**
- (10) **Discuss with the hosting facility and the organizers how to respond in a scenario in which a participant is suspected of being infected.**

- (11) In preparation for emergencies, make sure to **ascertain the public health center and medical institutions in whose jurisdiction the MICE event is held.**
Check with the medical institutions to confirm whether or not they are able to provide foreign language services.
- (12) In cases of **large-scale events** with more than 1,000 participants, **report about the events to the hosting local governments and discuss capacity rate limitations etc.** in advance. Written requests for cooperation from the person in charge at the organizers may be effective. If there are any changes in the regional infection status, flexible responses should be adopted.
- (13) Formulate guidelines taking into account the points of difference between both the guidelines created by the hosting facilities and local governments and these JCMA guidelines.

III. 1. 2. Announcements to the public

Organizers planning to convene MICE events are requested to proactively make announcements about the various measures being taken to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 infection to the participants and the host community.

Doing so, in tandem with requests to participants to cooperate pursuant to the hosting guideline decisions mentioned above, will tie in with the promotion of understanding towards the hosting of MICE events on the part of the hosting communities by transmitting information to them about the fact that events will be operated safely and securely.

- (1) **With regard to the content of initiatives taken by the organizers to prevent the spread of infection and the accompanying matters to be observed by participants, the following information should be relayed at the earliest stage prior to hosting** through the official website and social media, etc.
- (2) Indicate **the criteria for self-restraint concerning visiting the rooms**
 - a) In the case that a participant has a fever or higher than usual temperature, or other symptoms such as coughing or a sore throat.
 - b) Cases in which participants have, within the previous 14 days, visited a nation where infection is continuing to spread.
 - c) In the case that a participant turned out to have been in close contact with a COVID-19 infected person.
 - d) In the case that a participant has been in close contact within the previous 14 days with a traveler from or resident in a country or region subject to entry restrictions.
- (3) Be thorough in the basic infection countermeasures of keeping a **social distance from others, wearing a mask and washing hands** as recommended by the Expert Meeting, and **request the cooperation of participants in these efforts.**
- (4) **Request cooperation and encourage understanding concerning implementation of measures to prevent the spread of infection** before, during and after MICE events.
 - ▶ Specifically, **this includes the registration of participant information; temperature reading before room entry; cooperation with operational rules including securing of**

social distancing, adhering to directional signage inside rooms and during entry/exit processes; cooperation in post-event questionnaires (when necessary); and understanding with regard to changes in details of various services compared to standards in normal times.

- (5) **The use of the recently developed COVID-19 Contact-Confirming Application (COCOA) should be publicized and disseminated, as should the notification services in each region.**
- (6) In addition to guidance in the programs and over websites, send e-mails to all the registered participants to notify infection countermeasures.
- (7) Provide the latest information on restrictions on entry to Japan that are in place as a part of the Japanese government's "New measures to strengthen border measures," such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website.
- (8) When MICE participants use public transportation systems, they should be reminded to stagger the times of the trains, etc. used. Where pre-booking or other systems can be used to promote staggered use of public transportation systems, their utilization should be considered.
- (9) Regarding private dining during the MICE events too, MICE participants should also be reminded that they should avoid crowded places and encouraged to use restaurants with proper infection countermeasures in place.

III. 2. During MICE events

MICE events are varied in terms of theme, participants' attributes, scale of event and hosting facility, and therefore require responses tailored to the circumstances of their hosting.

In response to the fact that the Expert Meeting's recommendations on "a new lifestyle" also stated that **the distance between people should as far as possible be kept at two meters (or a minimum of one meter)**, countermeasures shall be taken that include consideration of the scale of the event and size of the rooms.

It should be noted that participants should refrain from conversation as much as possible and if there are any participants who speak in loud voices, staff members should be posted at appropriate spots so that they can warn those participants individually.

The following are measures that should be referred to by organizers and operators in order to preserve the safety of participants in the main situations occurring when MICE events are held.

III. 2. 1. Participant registration reception

- (1) In addition to requesting participants **to have their temperatures' read before entering the rooms**, the **criteria for self-restraint concerning visiting the rooms** (mentioned above) should be publicized on the official website of the event, and clearly indicated at the entrances to the

hosting facility. Furthermore, QR codes should be displayed at the entrances and beside the reception counters so as to promote the uses of the COVID-19 Contact-Confirming Application (COCOA) and the notification services of each region.

- (2) By following the procedures detailed below, the distance between the participants queuing at the reception desks **should be kept to a minimum of one meter.**
 - a) **Restrict the number of people who can enter the rooms at one time.**
 - b) Devise the structure of the event program (by, for example, staggering starting/finishing times when several rooms are used), **to split up the timing of arrival at the rooms.**
 - c) **Use floor markers etc.** to guide participants, **and secure distance between people.**
 - d) **Station guide staff**, who will manage the execution of the above and request the cooperation of participants.
- (3) In order to deal with people who are running a temperature upon entering the rooms **situate an isolation zone near the entrance/exit.** In addition, **using temperature reading equipment (thermography etc.) and the stationing of staff with non-contact thermometers**, swiftly guide those with temperatures over a certain level to the isolation zone, contact medical institutions and follow their instructions. As a rule of thumb in these guidelines, a person with a temperature of 37.5° or over is considered to have a fever.
- (4) **Temperature reading should also be conducted for speakers in the similar manners to those of general participants.** If as a result they are found to have a fever which exceeds certain limits (37.5° or over for example), such countermeasures should be considered as cancelling their speeches or changing them to on-line lectures.
- (5) Those who have had their temperature read should, for example, **affix on their name tags a different colored sticker each day** to raise visitors' awareness of infection countermeasures and create a sense of security.
- (6) At the participant registration reception desk (or via prior participant registration) **ascertain all participants' names, affiliations, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, etc.**, and implement measures **to enable the tracking of people** if necessary. **Give prior notice** to participants that in the event that it is necessary the above information may be provided to public bodies such as public health centers.
- (7) **In order to reduce the handling of cash to the maximum extent possible**, examine the introduction of prior participant registration and cashless payments.
- (8) In order to reduce the chances of direct contact between reception staff and participants during reception hours and congestion around the reception area to the maximum extent possible, it is recommended that **technology such as tablet terminals and others is used.**
- (9) Request participants to **wear masks, observe coughing/sneezing etiquette, and wash and disinfect their hands and fingers. Maintain a certain amount of masks at the participant registration reception desk** in case people come without a mask.
- (10) Plan a route to guide participants to the point for reporting their health condition by submitting the check sheet of the state of their health etc.

- (11) **Also consider trying the use of acrylic panels and transparent vinyl curtains** in order to shield participants and staff from each other. When installing such shields for droplet infection prevention, attention should be paid to avoid any impact on ventilation, and they should not, in principle, be installed close to fire-using equipment and devices or such heat sources as incandescent light bulbs. Shields should be made of flame-retardant (flame resistant, non-combustible or flame-proof) materials.
- (12) **The staff at the participant registration reception desk must wear masks.** Also consider the use of face shields, and maintain appropriate spaces between staff.
- (13) As a countermeasure against heat stroke, on summer days when the temperature and humidity are high it is permissible for participants and operational staff to remove their masks when outdoors as long as sufficient distance between them can be assured (two meters or more).
- (14) **Avoid the passing out by hand** of congress bags, pamphlets, leaflets and questionnaires etc., and **request the participants to collect such items themselves.** The digitization of paper media is desirable.
- (15) In order to secure social distancing during times when the arrival of participants is concentrated consider opening the reception desk, once staff are ready for handling participant registration, earlier than the planned venue opening time so that crowds of participants do not form.
- (16) As it is foreseeable that VIP participants will not pass through the same registration desks and temperature-reading areas as the ordinary participants, consider implementing temperature-reading in separate rooms according to budget.

III. 2. 2. Cloakroom spaces

- (1) Ask participants to look after their own hand baggage as much as possible, and in the event that cloakrooms are set up consider the use of **acrylic panels and transparent vinyl curtains** as at the registration reception desks.
- (2) **Staff at cloakroom spaces should wear masks and gloves,** disinfect their hands with alcohol hand sanitizers and wash them at frequent intervals. Also consider the use of face shields.
- (3) Consider using disposable paper cloakroom tickets.
- (4) Notify the participants in advance if it is decided that cloakrooms will not be made available as an infection countermeasure.
- (5) Since it is possible that the risk of infection will be heightened during the winter when cloakrooms are requested to look after more coats, inform participants in advance of measures such as requesting them to leave their coats in their place of accommodation.

III. 2. 3. Session rooms

- (1) As far as it is possible **select session rooms in which physical distance between participants can be maintained,** according to the expected size of the audience.
- (2) With regard to the capacity rate for MICE events without loud shouting or cheering by the participants, up to **100% of the maximum capacity in the session rooms can be allowed.**

Seating arrangement in such situations should avoid close-contact setups while maintaining proper physical distance between participants.

In the case of events in which loud shouting or cheering are expected to occur, only up to 50% of the maximum capacity can be allowed. Where there is no maximum capacity specified, sufficient physical distance between participants should be secured.

- (3) The use of standing room should in principle be prohibited.
- (4) During panel discussions adequately secure the **distance between speakers, and between speakers and audience (as far as possible keep it at two meters (or a minimum of one meter))**. In the event that such distance cannot be secured, also consider the installation of acrylic panels around the speakers.
- (5) At the room entrance implement **restrictions on the number of people who can enter**, and prevent the session room from becoming a crowded place.
- (6) Assume there may be cases in which not all participants can enter the session room, and consider establishing a **room where the proceedings can be watched via live broadcast**.
- (7) Clearly **separate the entrances and exits to the room**, lay appropriate directional floor markers so that those entering and those exiting do not intermingle between sessions, and use clear notification signage throughout the room.
- (8) Take measures at **room entrances such as providing liquid or gel hand disinfectant**.
- (9) In addition to mechanical ventilation, as far as possible **leave open two doors at the entrance/exit, etc. and strive to keep the room well ventilated**.
 - ▶In the event that ventilation is difficult due to the structure of a room, **consider the installation of a device such as a circulator**.
 - ▶Since some doors will be kept open, endeavor to give directions in order to maintain silence in the corridors, lobby and areas around the session room.
 - ▶In cold environments during winter etc. take care to maintain an appropriate indoor environment (temperature and humidity) while also providing sufficient ventilation.
- (10) **With regard to jointly used items and equipment such as microphones, strive to frequently disinfect or change them, and consider the introduction of alternative technologies such as chat systems** for Q&A from the floor.
- (11) **Avoid the passing out by hand** of pamphlets and other material and **request the participants to collect such items themselves**. The digitization of paper media is desirable.
- (12) Prepare an in-venue network and Wi-Fi environment for the downloading of electronic media.
- (13) Before the start of sessions **use the screen to notify and make participants aware of infection prevention measures etc.**
- (14) **Items lent to participants such as simultaneous interpretation receivers** should be sterilized in advance, and their use must be withdrawn in the event that they cannot be adequately sterilized. It is therefore necessary to ensure an adequate amount of such items is secured.
 - ▶Also **consider the introduction of simultaneous interpretation systems that can be listened to by participants on their own smartphones or tablets**.

- (15) The section below on “eating venues” describes measures regarding luncheon sessions with the provision of lunch boxes or pre-packed food.
- (16) In the event that a poster session area is set up within the exhibition site, follow the measures in III.2.4. “Jointly organized exhibitions.” It should be noted that in order to minimize face-to-face talks, digital Q&A methods should be considered, including electronic posters.
- (17) Consider regulating departure from the venue in order to avoid close contact due to crowding on escalators and in halls after sessions.

III. 2. 4. Jointly organized exhibitions

Exhibitions held jointly with conventions:

- (1) If the room is also the exhibition room, **the move-in and move-out entrance should be partially opened** to create an air flow.
- (2) During the exhibition period, at the end of each day the **aisles and common areas should be disinfected where necessary**.
- (3) **The state of crowding in the rooms should be frequently monitored**, and in the event that it is judged that adequate space between participants cannot be secured (**as far as possible it should be kept at two meters (or a minimum of one meter)**), **entry should be restricted**.
- (4) Request the cooperation of exhibitors in placing restrictions on the number of staff providing explanations per booth.
- (5) Request exhibitors to conduct **measures to prevent contact infection from exhibits** (by frequently disinfecting them and prohibiting anyone from touching them without permission).
- (6) Request exhibitors **to avoid handing out explanatory material and request the participants to collect such items themselves**. Alternatively, request them to make every effort to provide material in electronic format. Request that all computer terminals/devices are frequently disinfected.
- (7) In the event that restrictions are placed on the exhibitors regarding distribution of explanatory material or the enticement of participants to booths is forbidden, ensure that such measures are properly explained and requests for cooperation made at the explanatory meetings for exhibitors.
- (8) Request exhibitors to ensure **those providing explanations consider the use of face shields, etc., as well as masks**.
- (9) Request exhibitors to **allow for more space than usual when planning the booth design**.
- (10) Request exhibitors to **refrain in principle from providing food/drinks in booths**, and if provided ensure the same care as in parties and social gatherings is paid.
- (11) Consider making exhibitor passes disposable in order to avoid them being reused by others, and the distribution of new passes to exhibitors each day.
- (12) With regard to the setting up of exhibition booths and the operations within the room, **refer to the guidelines of the applicable industry organization such as Japan Exhibition Association**.

Please note that if associated events involving the participation of local people are hosted, it is highly desirable that **the policies and guidelines of the local government where the events are held and related organizations are referred to.**

III. 2. 5. Eating venues

The purpose of the parties and social gatherings hosted in tandem with MICE events is not simply to eat; they are opportunities for networking between participants, which could be described as an important purpose of hosting physical MICE events. However, since masks are removed while eating and drinking and the risk of the spread of infection is heightened there is a need for various measures to minimize that risk.

Note that luncheon sessions etc. at which food is provided are vital parts of MICE event programs, and separate measures should be taken to those for parties and social gatherings at which the main purpose is eating and networking.

- (1) In the event that parties or social gatherings where food and drinks are served take place, as is the case with the session rooms, **rooms of a size in which physical distance between participants (as far as possible it should be kept at two meters (or a minimum of one meter)) can be maintained must be selected** according to the number of expected participants, and care taken to ventilate them through the use of ventilating equipment or by leaving doors open.
- (2) When using places for the provision of food, they should hold only up to 50% of their maximum capacities. Where there is no maximum capacity specified, sufficient physical distance between participants should be secured.
- (3) Adopt a **prior registration system** in order to ascertain the number of participants.
- (4) Where possible, consider **shortening the time of these events or using outdoor spaces.**
- (5) In order to secure distance between people, **consider refraining as much as possible from stand-up meal formats and use a seated service format.**
- (6) Participants should be reminded via in-room announcements and so on that **they should always wear masks while not eating and drinking.**
- (7) **When using a seated service format, secure distance between tables, seat people at tables in numbers** that maintain distance between them, and also arrange seating diagonally from each other.
- (8) Make every effort **to avoid buffet formats** in which large numbers of people take food from the same serving dishes, and **implement individual provision of pre-packed food or lunch boxes etc.**
 - With regard to the provision of lunch boxes, consider measures such as asking participants to take them to the table themselves rather than handing them out.
- (9) When standing networking is conducted, notify participants in advance to wear masks and **communicate with each other while maintain physical distance**, using notices and in-room announcements.
- (10) Another option is to provide networking time at a separate room prior to meals.

In such cases, remind participants to wear masks, design a layout that will avoid crowding, and request that conversation during meals be kept to an absolute minimum.

- (11) Secure an **adequate distance between participants and stages (as far as possible it should be kept at two meters or more)** where greetings are given or entertainment presented. Refrain from presenting entertainment that involves the entertainers speaking in loud voices.
- (12) Consider the use of video screenings and other content that can be enjoyed without conversation in order to minimize movement between tables at meal times.
- (13) Consider the use of **radio system equipment** in order to secure distanced between interpreters and participants in the event that whispered interpreting is used.
- (14) Take the following measures at luncheon sessions etc. hosted with the provision of food.
 - a) Ensure the meals provided are boxed or packed, and either place them at the seats in advance or ask the participants to collect them upon entry.
 - b) If participants arrive at the eating venue before it opens, ask them to wait in line and maintain an appropriate distance so that close contact is prevented.
 - c) Strictly enforce the wearing of masks at times other than eating or drinking.
 - ▶ Check that masks are being worn upon entry, and distribute or sell them where necessary.
 - ▶ **Prior to the start of sessions use slides or announcements to notify the need to wear masks at times other than eating or drinking.**
 - ▶ Organize an appropriate monitoring system within the venue and request that masks are worn without fail.
 - d) **Forbid eating or drinking during Q&A sessions at which people are likely to speak**, and consider the use of alternative technologies for Q&As such as chat rooms etc.
 - e) Take care to ensure adequate ventilation.
 - f) Ascertaining contact points
 - ▶ Ascertain contact points using **an advance reservation system or designated seats** as far as possible, or by identifying participants upon entry.
 - g) Shortening meal times
 - ▶ Request participants to eat swiftly in order to greatly minimize the time they remove their masks.
- (15) Eating and drinking should be allowed only in rooms and areas with appropriate infection prevention countermeasures in place. Eating and drinking in public spaces during break time should therefore be refrained from.

III. 2. 6. Public spaces (foyers and general directional routes, etc.)

- (1) Envisage beforehand events, times of the day and places in which crowding is expected, use floor markers and partitions etc., take steps to **avoid concentrations of participants in queues** and so on within certain areas, and when necessary implement **restrictions on the number of people**.

- (2) In cases in which multiple events are being held on the same day at a room, coordinate beforehand as it will be necessary to segregate the registration reception desks and separate the resultant directional routes and queues.
- (3) Particular care is necessary in the event of the operation of shuttle buses and so on in which large numbers of participants will become concentrated.
- (4) **Directional guidance** provided by the operational staff should be given **using a megaphone**, etc. in order to prevent speaking in a loud voice.
- (5) Identify the places and times that participants are likely to gather, and take steps to disperse them (for example, positioning guidance staff in such areas).
 - ▶During break times in particular, people become concentrated in places such as restrooms, so devise the structure of the event program in order to achieve the dispersion of crowds.
 - ▶The event should in principle be non-smoking, and indoor smoking areas at facilities closed.
- (6) Use signboards, etc. in appropriate parts of the room to post notices requesting the cooperation of participants in measures regarding the prevention of the spread of infection.
- (7) Consider establishing outdoor resting places, taking into account the weather.
- (8) In cases in which the hosting venue is a hotel, carefully consider the location of temperature-reading points as it is possible that participants staying at the hotel in question will enter via different routes.

III. 2. 7. Emergency responses

- (1) Enact **measures to deal with the occurrence of participants or operational stakeholders who are suspected of being infected.**

It is essential to establish a designated first-aid office, prepare the requisite equipment/supplies, and **discuss and make a manual on response procedures with the hosting facility.**

- a) If a participant or operational stakeholder shows symptoms of possible infection **swiftly isolate them in** an isolation space established near the reception desk or **the first-aid office.**
- b) **Staff responding must wear masks, gloves, face shields and if possible gowns.**
- c) Swiftly contact a medical institution and follow the instructions given.
- d) Depending upon the symptoms of the participant, the person in charge at the organizers or the person responsible for operations should provide an explanation and request them to go home.
- e) Be thorough in washing hands before and after dealing with such occurrences.

III. 3. After events

- (1) If a participant or operational stakeholder is suspected of being infected, **cooperate with any questioning by public institutions such as public health centers, and provide them with the requisite information.**

▶Pursuant to the information acquired on participants, share the information with participants who may have come into close contact with the infected person, and advise

them to seek medical diagnosis in the event that they are displaying any symptoms suggestive of infection.

- (2) Note that from the perspective of protecting personal information, **adequate measures to store the list of participants must be taken**. For the foreseeable future, it should be stored for at least one month.

IV. Safety of operational stakeholders

The operation stakeholders include various directors, part-time staff, sound, lighting and video operators, construction staff and the staff of the hosting facility. Since it is possible that these personnel may change from one day to another set up a system through which the organizers and operators can thoroughly manage personnel.

- (1) Provide adequate explanation about infection prevention measures at the orientation briefing for operational stakeholders.
- (2) **Before starting work, take temperatures and check for any noticeable symptoms, summarize them to the persons responsible for operations** and keep a record.
- (3) Consider measures to provide participants with peace of mind such as affixing “temperature-read” stickers on name tags each day when operational stakeholders have had their temperature read upon arriving at work and no abnormalities found.
- (4) Stipulate in advance the **contact and decision-making process** for the occurrence of people displaying symptoms suggestive of infection, and take measures such as **requesting operational stakeholders to wait at home**.

Also request them to wait at home in the case that they turned out to have been in close contact with a COVID-19 infected person, and that they have been in close contact within the previous 14 days with a traveler from or resident in a country or region subject to entry restrictions.

- (5) Ensure thoroughness in **hand-washing and disinfecting of hands and fingers** when staff check-in for work, when they commence the duties at each position they are in charge of, and after using toilets.
- (6) **All operational stakeholders must wear masks**.
- (7) The **registration reception desk and cloakroom staff**, who are at a higher risk of direct infection, **should wear gloves**. Also consider the use of face shields.
- (8) Calculate the requisite number of operational staff for the safe and anxiety-free operation of the event, and **devise job rotation schedules**.
- (9) With regard to work, take the necessary steps to maintain health such as ensuring **appropriate breaks and rehydration**.
- (10) As a countermeasure against heat stroke, those working outside on hot and humid summer days may, as long as adequate distance between people can be secured (two meters or more), may remove their masks.

- (11) **Liquid hand and finger disinfectants** should be placed at points where people who are handling cash and participants' baggage but cannot frequently wash their hands are stationed.
- (12) All operational stakeholders should be aware of their social responsibilities and **ascertain the state of their own health.**
- (13) Encourage each and every member of the operational staff to maintain their health by **eating a sufficiently nutritious diet and taking adequate sleep.**
- (14) Consider the installation of acrylic panels in the operational secretariat, a u-shape style conference room setup rather than a banquet style setup, and other measures to ensure operational stakeholders are not directly facing each other such as seating them at the inner side of the u-shape.
- (15) Manage transceivers used for operational purposes on an individual basis and do not allow them to be used by other staff.
- (16) Consider the installation of air circulators in order to ensure thoroughness in the ventilation of streaming venues and rooms where operators are permanently stationed.
- (17) Consider the formulation of programs without tight time schedules, the positioning and the numbers of staff in attendance, as situations in which operational stakeholders congregate at meal times etc. may arise.
- (18) Strive to improve literacy of operational staff concerning safe and anxiety-free operations by including in their manuals the latest governmental guidelines and standards as of the time of hosting.

V. Matters to be requested of the hosting facilities

In order to enable MICE events to be operated safely and free from anxiety for participants, organizers and all operational stakeholders, the cooperation of the hosting facility should be asked for and close collaboration with the facility conducted.

- (1) Consultation between hosts and stakeholders
Preparatory meetings on the hosting of the event should be held between the organizers and operators.
In particular, if multiple events are being hosted on the same day at the same facility, separate the location of registration reception desks, routes and queues.
- (2) Since there are differences in the responses and conditions relating to infection countermeasures at each facility it is foreseeable that each event will require coordination and checking. Try to coordinate from the start the matters stated in these guidelines and the management rules of the facility concerned.
- (3) Even when an entire venue is block booked, since unidentifiable people are likely to enter it in the case of public facilities try to coordinate in order that the strongest possible collaborative relationship can be achieved between the facility side and the organizing/operating side.
- (4) Increase the **frequency of cleaning and disinfecting** within the facilities, and make a particular effort to remove all items that people are likely to come into contact with often.

- (5) In order to enable visitors and operational stakeholders to disinfect their hands, place hand and fingers **disinfectant** around entrances and in easily reachable places (after touching door knobs etc.) and in restrooms. Do not place items for shared use such as towels etc. in restrooms.
- (6) **Temperature-reading equipment (thermography devices, etc.) and non-contact thermometers should be installed.**
- (7) Share with hosting facilities the way to distinguish people who have had their temperature read from those who have not.
- (8) Regularly disinfect items, places and materials that unidentified numbers of people are likely to touch such as tables in rest areas, chairs and touch-screen panels.
- (9) Disinfect all the materials and equipment loaned out by the facility at the end of each day (microphones, podiums and moderator's desks, etc.)
- (10) **Air circulation** in the facility
Use the air circulation and ventilation systems of the facilities to let in fresh air.
In cold environments during winter etc. take care to maintain an appropriate indoor environment (temperature and humidity) while also providing sufficient ventilation.
- (11) **Prevention of closed spaces and infection dispersion**
In order to prevent closed spaces and poorly ventilated spaces and places where people gather in crowds, **close the smoking area.**
In order to prevent dispersion, **switch off the hand-driers in restrooms.**
- (12) **The facility staff must wear masks.**
- (13) **Checking medical institutions and public health centers**
In order to enable swift collaboration in the case that a participant suspected of being infected emerges during the MICE event, **check the contact numbers of the nearest medical institutions and the public health center with jurisdiction over the site.**
- (14) **Establishment of first-aid office**
Secure a place where participants suspected of being infected or with health problems can temporarily stay.
- (15) **Cleaning**
Garbage to which nasal mucus or saliva is attached should be placed in a plastic bag and tightly closed. Personnel collecting garbage must wear masks and gloves while working and without fail wash their hands with soap and running water after removing their masks and gloves.

VI. Matters to be requested of hosting local governments and convention bureaus

Obtain **an understanding of the fact that when MICE events are hosted participants will come from other prefectures and other nations.**

In addition, with regard to the operation of safe and anxiety-free MICE events, request **cooperation and support as the hosting site**, including fostering interest in the event.

- (1) If the local government has its own guidelines, seek to **coordinate them with these guidelines** and ask for their understanding in avoiding any disagreement about operational methods.
- (2) In cases of **large-scale events** with more than 1,000 participants, **report about the events to the hosting local governments and discuss capacity rate limitations etc.**
- (3) In cases in which the local government and the convention bureau have in place a **system for supporting infection prevention measures**, check the applicable conditions, details of support, application methods, and **consider the use of such systems.**
- (4) When MICE events are convened, report to the local governments that these guidelines will be stringently observed and infection prevention countermeasures pursued.

VII. Creation of a verification and collaboration system

JCMA will pursue the following initiatives in order to ensure that all hosts can convene MICE events in safety and peace of mind.

- **JCMA will compile examples of cases** in which it is deemed that its members have contributed to the safe and anxiety-free operation of MICE events, as well as cases in which there was a need to reconsider the way that a MICE event was operated.
- When necessary, **information will be provided to members**, and ongoing efforts will be made to improve and standardize the operational knowhow of members, and their sustained awareness of infection countermeasures.
- **JCMA will put forth efforts to share information through collaboration with other MICE-related organizations.**

This information will from now on **be accumulated as operational methods that can contribute to the hosting of safe and anxiety-free MICE events, and will be reflected in future revisions made to these guidelines.**

JCMA has publicized these guidelines (posted for guidelines of each business category) on the websites of relevant organizations as well as JCMA website so that not only JCMA members but also organizers and MICE stakeholders can organize and operate MICE events safely and securely.

Revision history

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