

SAFE MICE

Safe Event Guidelines for Meeting & Event Planners

For successful events that reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease.

Revised May 9, 2023





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For inquiries regarding these guidelines, contact:
Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau MICE Promotion Department
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Osaka MICE Official Website: <https://mice.osaka-info.jp/en>

Why We Revised These Guidelines

1.

The MICE industry is a catalyst for economic development and community building.

For the past several decades, MICE* events (i.e. business events such as exhibitions and academic conferences) have been actively held around the world. The MICE industry has generated business opportunities and innovation, advanced research and development, and created significant economic effects through event attendees' expenditures on transportation, food and drinks, and accommodations. MICE events thus carry out a vital role as a driving force in economic development and regional activity.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic starting in 2020 caused nearly all MICE events to be cancelled or postponed. Because of this, small and medium-sized companies lost sales from the products they would exhibit at trade shows, while academic exchange and research stagnated with the loss of presentation and networking opportunities. Furthermore, companies, hotels, caterers, the tourism industry, and others involved in the events industry grappled with critical operating conditions, and the economy was dealt a devastating blow.

Amid this situation, in order to restart the MICE industry, the Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau (OCTB) developed Japan's first safe event guidelines, released in June 2020. Subsequently, in July 2020 the OCTB worked together with many players in the MICE industry to host the 12th Kansai Hotel & Restaurant Show alongside six other trade fairs, becoming the first major exhibitions in Japan to be held amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines and the management methods implemented at these events spread nationwide.

Not limited to business events, the OCTB has also been approached by the organizers of events in the fields of sports, culture, entertainment, and more, and was able to realize the revival of many different events all happening in Osaka. Awareness of Osaka's resilience and collaborative attitude quickly spread among meeting and event planners, bringing in many events. Most significantly, Osaka will be the site of the next World Expo. This event, known as Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, will be Japan's largest event to be held since the pandemic and is an incredible opportunity to catalyze the recovery of business and leisure travel. Expo 2025 also has a mission to promote Japan's economic vitalization and post-disaster recovery to the world, a mission that the Tokyo Olympic games were unable to fulfill. This means that Expo 2025 is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the world to see Japan, and we believe that showcasing Osaka's relentless energy in the MICE industry will strongly benefit Japan.

Furthermore, in the wake of the pandemic, cities around the world are beginning to recognize anew the inherent value of the MICE industry: meeting and events have a significant impact on society. We believe that this facet will continue to be universally understood, as the MICE industry plays a role as a catalyst for economic development and community building. We ask for understanding and cooperation from all those involved in the industry.

* : MICE is an acronym for the business events industry indicating Meetings, Incentive tours, Conventions/ Conferences, and Exhibitions/ Events

Why We Revised These Guidelines

2.

MICE events lead the way in post-COVID economic recovery!

The Osaka prefectural government, the city of Osaka, and the Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau all position the MICE industry as an important strategy for economic vitalization and believe it is imperative that we establish an environment where events can meet in-person while mitigating infection risk. To foster recovery from the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we actively strive to attract in-person events which promote business travel and have a significant economic ripple effect.

Since first formulating these guidelines in April 2020, while avoiding stipulating overly minute details, we have striven to ensure that organizers will be able to understand the important points of these infectious disease prevention measures and be able to adapt on-site to any unpremeditated situations and devise creative solutions. In this way, these guidelines have endured until today with minimal revision.

Now three years since the start of the pandemic, the world is well on its way to returning to its previous state. Events that were temporarily held online are increasingly returning to their in-person format. However, for an industry like business events which gather people in massive numbers from around the globe, infectious disease will continue to remain a considerable risk that event planners must prepare for, much as for earthquakes, inclement weather, and other natural disasters. It is therefore important to incorporate the experiences gained during the COVID-19 pandemic into permanent guidelines.

This is why we have revised these guidelines to focus on basic public health and sanitation measures that work to prevent all infectious diseases, not just COVID-19, and we recommend that meeting and event planners make use of these guidelines when organizing in-person events. We are confident that the technology developed during the pandemic will continue to be a tool to increase the value of in-person events, and that MICE events will continue to evolve to create even more fulfilling connections and innovation between people.

It is our hope that the MICE industry will once again flourish nationwide and contribute to Japan's economic development.

These guidelines are intended to be applied in accordance with Osaka Prefecture and other government authorities' policies on infectious disease control measures, and will continue to be revised flexibly as circumstances change.

Check the boxes to use these guidelines as a checklist.

1. Develop policies and structures for preventing the spread of infectious disease

- 1-1. Maintain accurate sources of information on current infection status.
e.g.: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (mhlw.go.jp), Osaka Prefecture (pref.osaka.lg.jp), Osaka City (city.osaka.lg.jp)
- 1-2. Establish decision criteria and procedures for postponements and cancellations.
e.g.: In cases when voluntary restrictions are requested by prefectural and local authorities.
- 1-3. Clearly establish and document who is responsible for infectious disease prevention measures, as well as the structure and division of roles.

2. Prepare in cooperation with venues and partner companies

- 2-1. Clearly establish and document the division of roles and areas of responsibility between organizer and venue, and provide opportunities to share basic measures to prevent all new infections, not just COVID-19.
- 2-2. Check that the below measures are being carried out at the venue, and in the event that they are believed to be insufficiently handled, prepare additional countermeasures or request that the venue do so.
 - A) Ventilation inside the venue (location, method, and frequency)
Consider the below if current measures are insufficient:
 - Keep doors/ windows open during meetings and seminars to create air flow and take in outside air.
 - Partially open loading docks during exhibitions to create air flow and take in outside air.
 - B) Cleaning and disinfection of communal facilities such as restrooms, as well as garbage removal (location, method, and frequency)
 - C) Providing guidance for staff (including those of the venue's partner companies) on infectious disease prevention measures
- 2-3. Collaborate with the venue to create a list of emergency contact information (of hospitals/ health centers in the area, etc.) for use in the event an attendee is suspected of having an infection. Additionally confirm in advance which hospitals will accept foreign nationals.
- 2-4. Collaborate with the venue to create a network of emergency contact information.
- 2-5. Carry out the above preparations together with all partner companies as well.

3. Spread awareness to event attendees

Increasing attendee awareness is the best preventative measure, so ensure that the following items are carried out.

- 3-1. Request all attendees in advance to refrain from attending if any of the following applies to them:
 - A) Fever
 - B) Symptoms such as cough, sore throat, or shortness of breath
 - C) They are under health observation from a health center or other institution
 - D) Any other instance of feeling unwell (such as abnormal sense of taste or smell, or extreme fatigue)
- 3-2. Announce in advance that anyone with any obvious change in physical condition may be asked to leave the venue immediately.

Items to Implement During the Event (Including Setup and Teardown)

Check the boxes to use these guidelines as a checklist.

1. Deny entry to those with fevers or who are otherwise unwell

- 1-1. Check on the physical condition of organizing staff and prevent those who are unwell with fever, etc. from working. Request similar measures from the venue, partner companies, exhibiting companies, etc.

2. Spread awareness of the principles of public health and sanitation

- 2-1. Place disinfectant dispensers at the entrances to the venue, dining areas, and restrooms, and recommend that attendees to use hand sanitizer.
- 2-2. Periodically disinfect common-use surfaces, such as toilets and doorknobs, that have a high risk for spreading infectious disease.
- 2-3. Advise all attendees to exercise caution in avoiding infection risk and to adhere to the basic principles of public health and sanitation such as washing and disinfecting hands, observing proper cough etiquette, etc.

3. Prevent closed spaces

- 3-1. Be diligent in ventilating the venue, and keep all entrances, windows, loading docks, emergency exits, etc. open if possible.
- 3-2. Based on the venue's construction, if the ventilation is believed to be insufficient even when carrying out the above point 3-1, implement additional measures to create air flow and take in outside air (such as by installing air circulators near entrances, etc.)

4. Prevent crowded places and closed-contact settings

- 4-1. Create systems to reduce lines at venue reception by encouraging attendees to pre-register online and then sending entry badges in advance or allowing attendees to bring printed passes. Additionally, at reception or other areas where lines may form, create a system to ensure that attendees will leave sufficient distance between them and those around them.
- 4-2. **For exhibitions, events, etc.:** Consistently monitor crowding within the venue, and if it is believed that attendees will be unable to maintain sufficient distance from one another, consider implementing the below measures:
 - A) Determine the estimated venue capacity and implement entry restrictions based on the degree of crowding.
 - B) Provide enough space at waiting areas to prevent crowding.
 - C) Carry out these same measures during both event setup and teardown.
- 4-3. **For seminars, conventions, etc.:**
 - A) Allow sufficient space between the podium and the audience.
 - B) Allow a reasonable amount space between members of the audience.



Meeting & Event Planning Support from the Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau

The Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau supports meeting and event planners every step of the way through a wide array of options. Contact us to see how we can assist the planning of your next event.

Contact information:

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