

# BC MEETINGS & EVENTS INDUSTRY WORKING GROUP

December 6, 2021

## Re: UPDATE #5: BC Meetings & Events Industry - PHO Distinction for Business Events

Dear BC Meetings & Events Industry Partners,

Since March 2021, when the **BC Meetings & Events Industry Working Group** submitted its COVID-19 Safe Restart Plan to the BC Government and the Public Health Officer (PHO), the working group has been actively engaged with industry and government working toward a recognized distinction for business events from public and social gatherings.

Alongside advocacy efforts from the BC Hotel Association (BCHA) and the Tourism Industry Association of BC (TIABC), the working group has been in regular discussions with the BC Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture & Sport; the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery & Innovation (JERI); and the PHO, bringing awareness to the importance and rationale for such distinction.

Following a pivotal discussion last week with Dr. Bonnie Henry and Dr. Brian Emerson, chaired by Tourism Minister Melanie Mark, we were successful in receiving the distinction for business events in the latest provincial health order.

Here is the updated link for the order posted on Friday, December 3, 2021 along with some relevant points:  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restrictions>

- *Business Events are allowed to have standing events. Networking, receptions, mingling are all acceptable. Holiday parties associated with businesses are considered "business events".*
- *Events such as wedding receptions, funerals, theatrical and musical events, concerts must be seated.*
- *The health order separates the meaning of inside events into A & B categories (Page 6 & top of page 7)*
  - A. *"inside event" means (a) a gathering of more than 50 participants in an inside place for one of the following purposes: (i) a form of entertainment involving a performance such as a theatrical production, a concert, a symphony performance, a choral performance, any other type of musical performance or a dance performance; (ii) business, but limited to a lecture or presentation; (iii) a wedding reception; (iv) a funeral reception not held at a funeral home, 7 (v) a sponsored or ticketed party at which there is musical entertainment, other than for the purpose of providing background sound;*
  - B. *a gathering of more than 50 participants in an inside place for one of the following purposes (i) a business purpose not described in (a), and including a conference, convention, commercial trade fair or workshop or home show; (ii) gambling; (iii) recreational education or classes, including arts, crafts, music, photography, culture, or travel education or classes (c) a gathering of any number of participants in an inside place for the purpose of an adult sports activity, an adult exercise or fitness activity or class, or an adult dance class; (d) a sports event in an inside place; (e) a program for children or youth in an inside place; (f) a worship service in an inside place.*

*The important restrictions are on the top of page 11:*

*This indicates that only events in category "A" must be seated events. Category "B" events are legally able to be standing events.*

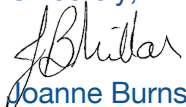
- *3. A person must not permit a place to be used for or must not organize an inside event with a purpose described in paragraph (a) (Category A) of the definition of an "inside event" unless the event is held as a seated inside event.*
- *4. A person must not permit a place to be used for or must not organize an inside event as a standing event, if the purpose of the event is described in paragraph (a) (Category A) of the definition of "inside event"*

*A final note on **dancing**: There is still no dancing allowed unless it is a performance. There have been conversations and advocacy around this issue, however, we do not expect that restriction to be lifted in the near future. Things are still in a tenuous place and while they had hoped that all restrictions would be lifted by now, the PHO is not ready to remove this one.*

The PHO and the respective government ministries involved have provided a forum for our issues and have listened to our messaging. We have learned that decisions are made in the best interest of community health & safety and the sustainability of the healthcare system. While progress for our sector has moved more slowly than we need to begin a measurable recovery, this distinction in the health orders is a big step in the right direction.

May 2022 be the year of recovery for us all.

Sincerely,



Joanne Burns Millar

BC Meetings & Events Industry Working Group

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

[www.bcmeetingsandevents.ca](http://www.bcmeetingsandevents.ca)

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