The Dinner Party’s COVID-19 Guidelines and Plan for Resuming In-Person Gatherings

Updated Feb 11, 2022

The Dinner Party reserves the right to change these guidelines as needed in order to ensure the highest standards of safety for our hosts and Dinner Partiers. We will work with you to make it possible for you to comply with these guidelines, and, we have the right to remove anyone not complying with these safety standards from our community at any time.

Current Operations

As of February 11, 2022, The Dinner Party continues to meet exclusively in virtual settings only—this includes all gatherings, tables, and community-wide events. By signing up for and/or joining any of these events, you understand that all gatherings you will be attending are virtual until further notice. No events will be hosted in-person for the foreseeable future. Should you choose to gather in person with anyone in our community (e.g. dinner partiers from a location-based table), you do so at your own risk.

Our Plan to Resume In-Person Gatherings, Expected 2022

What follows is an outline of how we anticipate resuming in-person events in 2022. These plans and guidelines can change at any time and we encourage you to check back if/when you have any questions.

Just like the rest of you, we continue to learn from evidence, experts, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) guidance about what can reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19, as we also continue to learn from you, our community, about how you want to come together with your table.

In addition to virtual tables, The Dinner Party is working towards reintroducing in-person tables in 2022. Vaccinated people can still contract and spread COVID-19, so we recommend that hosts who are ready to host in-person gatherings establish requirements that are stricter than the requirements outlined below. And as a reminder, if any health department covering your region has stricter requirements or more prohibitions than ours, those rules supersede our own, and you are required to follow the rules of that department—which may mean that an in-person gathering (other than with those whom you live with) may not be permitted at all.

Our requirements for in-person gatherings:
● INDOOR, VACCINATED: The indoor gathering option is available for vaccinated people (up to 15)
● OUTDOOR, VACCINATED: The outdoor gathering option is available for vaccinated people (up to 15)
● OUTDOOR, DISTANCED: At an outdoor gathering where vaccinations are not required, guests are subject to the masking, distancing, and other requirements detailed below (up to 15 people)

When setting up a table and/or reserving a seat, all hosts and guests will be required to accept an acknowledgment that they will do the following:

1) If hosting or attending an outdoor, distanced gathering that includes people outside of their own households, they will adhere to The Dinner Party's social distancing requirements.

2) If hosting or attending a gathering that requires COVID-19 vaccination, they must confirm that they are fully vaccinated, and that 2 weeks have passed since their last shot in the COVID-19 vaccination series they received.

Note: in the spirit of our belief that we are all our own best experts, we are using the honor system and will not require that hosts or guests show The Dinner Party proof/copies of vaccination cards. That said, it is every host's prerogative if they would like to make that a requirement for any event they are hosting. We encourage all hosts and Dinner Partiers to have an open conversation in any instance where more clarity around comfort or risk tolerance may be required, and proper expectations should be set between a host and anyone who has requested a seat.

Furthermore, The Dinner Party cannot guarantee that you will not be exposed to, contract, or spread COVID-19 while attending an in-person table gathering.

**General Guidelines for All Community Members**

1. Stay at home, or cancel an event when appropriate.
   - Hosts must cancel an event (or make it virtual) if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
   - Guests may not attend an in-person event if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days or are showing symptoms of COVID-19.
     - Hosts, consider encouraging your guests to use the CDC, [COVID-19 Symptom Self-Checker](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptom-checker.html).
2. Hosts, keep an updated list of guests who attend each gathering for potential contact-tracing needs.

**Requirements and Guidelines to help Hosts set up Outdoor, Physically-Distant Gatherings**

Masks
1. Masks are to be worn at all times when guests are present and the gathering is underway.
2. Masks may only be removed when guests are seated at their table/blanket.
3. Masks are strongly encouraged whenever guests might raise their voices, such as shouting, chanting, or singing.
4. For recommendations on choosing a mask, see CDC’s Types of Masks.

Physical Distancing & Ventilation
1. Gatherings must be hosted outdoors where 6 feet of distance can be maintained between members of different households.
   ○ The number of people allowed to participate may depend on the space available to have 6 feet between members of different households. Please pay attention to whether or not table/blanket placement may need to be greater than 6 feet apart to ensure that all attendees remain at least 6 feet apart.
   ○ If possible, arrange seating in advance of guests arriving so that guests can find their places when they arrive without congregating.
   ○ In addition to accommodating physical-distancing, the event may have no more than 15 persons total. If 15 people cannot be present while still remaining physically distant from one another, then the gathering may have no more people than can remain physically distant.
2. Consider pathways to places like restrooms and ensure that attendees can remain physically distant when accessing.

Handwashing & Covering Coughs/Sneezes
1. Ensure adequate supplies for handwashing or hand sanitizing are available for your events.
2. Ask guests to wash hands or sanitize upon entering, prior to eating, after using the restroom, and/or when removing/replacing their masks.
3. Have everyone be sure to cover coughs and sneezes.
   ○ Masks that become dirty or wet should be replaced with a clean one as soon as possible. Guests should throw used tissues in the trash and wash their hands immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When a mask or tissue is not available or in use, they should cough or sneeze into their elbow, not their hands.

Adequate Supplies
1. Ensure you have accessible sinks and enough supplies for guests to clean their hands and cover their coughs and sneezes.
   ○ Supplies include soap, a way to dry hands (for example, paper towels or a hand dryer), tissues, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, masks (as feasible), and no-touch/foot pedal trash cans.

Requirements and Guidelines for Maintaining a Healthy Meal Environment

Cleaning
Tableware should be washed as normal, with attention paid to washing hands after touching shared items and not touching one’s face while cleaning.

Consider wiping down higher touch areas after the dinner.

Limit Shared Items

- Consider disposable serveware and single-packaged condiments to avoid touching shared items.
- Limit the number of people handling or serving food.

Ventilation

- Ensure good ventilation by ensuring all activities are done outdoors, or with windows open if gathering indoors.

Food Service

- Guests may bring food, or the host may prepare food for sharing.
- Anyone preparing food must not be showing symptoms of COVID-19 when preparing food.
- Limit the number of people handling or serving food.
- Limit people going in and out of the areas where food is being prepared or handled.
- When serving food, consider identifying one person to serve all food so that multiple people are not handling the serving utensils.
- Do not pass bowls or platters among guests.
- Before preparing or eating food, it is important to always wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds for general food safety.
- Regularly clean kitchen counters and use a cleaning product where food is being prepped.

Questions or comments, please email dinnerpartiers@thedinnerparty.org.