



CONSIDERATIONS FOR RE-OPENING SQUARE DANCING IN CALIFORNIA

Why do we want to get back to dancing? Of course, we love to dance – square dance, round dance, line dance, clog, contra, and more. But we also miss the fellowship, the social engagement, the exercise, and much more. So what might we need to do to resume this wonderful activity?

First and foremost, each association and club should monitor and follow state and local regulations and guidance regarding social gatherings. We also need to comply with any requirements put forth by our dance facilities. *Clogging, line dancing and round dancing may be able to resume earlier than square dancing, as they lend themselves more to social distancing. We may even start with some social activities like a picnic (without shared food) instead of a square dance.*

IF state, local, and facility regulations and requirement support resuming dancing:

COMMON SENSE AND CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS!

- Gently and frequently remind everyone that things will be different for some period of time. Approach these changes with humor, common sense, and consideration for others.
- Anyone who feels sick with ANY symptoms should stay home and self-quarantine based on guidelines. Encourage dancers to take their temperature before coming to the dance, and stay home if they have a fever or any other symptoms.
- Anyone who may have been exposed should stay home and self-quarantine based on guidelines.
- Anyone who develops symptoms after a dance should immediately contact the club or dance host so that others may be contacted appropriately.

MASKS

- Masks should be strongly encouraged /recommended given the best scientific knowledge being shared at this time. They are a way of showing consideration and respect to others in case someone is sick but asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. Remember – your mask helps protect me while my mask helps protect you.
- Masks need to cover the nose and mouth at all times if possible, and at least when coming within six feet of another person.
- If you wear glasses, your mask may cause your glasses to steam up when exercising or breathing hard. Try washing your glasses with soap and water, then rinsing lightly to keep a soap film on the lenses. A tissue folded and placed horizontally under the top portion of the mask can help as well.

FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider having social and, if possible, dance activity outside whenever possible.
- If inside, open doors and windows as much as possible to promote air flow.
- Prop entry door(s) open to reduce touching.
- Try to arrange for “no touch” access to restroom doors. If this is not possible, encourage dancers to use a paper towel to open/close the door (place trash cans inside and outside of the door) and/or provide hand sanitizer outside restrooms.
- Work with the facility to ensure appropriate cleaning prior to the dance.
- Have appropriate cleaning products (sprays, wipes) on hand to clean frequently touched surfaces.
- Limit the number of people touching commonly used surfaces such as tables, chairs, equipment.
- Work with facility to determine what cleaning is required at the end of the event.
- Provide plenty of hand sanitizer (assuming you can get it!)

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ARRIVAL

- Limit contact when greeting dancers (nods and a “welcome” rather than handshakes or hugs).
- Have one person sign-in dancers to eliminate sharing pens and touching table surfaces. You could also/instead ask attendees to bring a small card with their name and contact information.
- Consider having club members send a monthly check to cover dances instead of paying cash at the door; for visitors, provide a “no touch” donation jar.
- Gather contact information (e.g., phone, e-mail) for each person attending the dance, even if they are just visitors, in case someone later becomes ill and you have to contact those in attendance.

DANCING

- Space out squares on the floor to minimize proximity between dancers in separate squares. If your facility is small, have dancers alternate tips so there are not too many squares on the floor at a time.
- You may wish to consider “set squares” for some period of time to minimize the number of people in close contact on any one evening, but only do so if you can ensure everyone gets a chance to dance and that each square has a mixture of “strong” and “weaker” dancers.
- Allow time for dancers to wash hands before and after each tip. Ask callers and cuers to remind dancers to wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer generously between tips.
- Greet others in the square with a nod and “welcome” rather than handshakes or hugs.
- Encourage no contact dancing as much as possible. Ask callers to use no- or low-contact calls as much as possible (slide through instead of star through; partner trade instead of California twirl; back-to-back do-sa-do instead of highland fling; grand square without swings or high fives; and so on). Callers can be creative! They may try some two couple variations, or even one couple “squares” (like some callers are trying with virtual dances).
- Consider offering or even having someone teach some lines, clogging, or easy rounds which lend themselves better to social distancing.
- Be sure to support newer or weaker dancers, who may be less comfortable with “no hands” dancing or more creative calls or figures.

SOCIALIZING AND REFRESHMENTS

- Encourage social distancing between tips to minimize physical contact.
- Have each dancer bring their own individual water container (reusable or disposable bottle), labeled with their name. Discourage sharing of water bottles, open cups, or common water dispensers.
- Consider having no refreshments or have each dancer bring their own individual snacks. If snacks are provided, offer only individually packaged items. Institute a “touch it and it’s yours” policy – no picking through the packages to choose the one on the bottom!
- Have someone monitor the snack table and water (rotate so no one is “stuck” the whole evening).

CALLER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Encourage callers and cuers to wear masks at all times. If they can’t be easily heard or understood while wearing a mask when they call/cue, set up the hall so they are six or more feet away from any dancers. Have them put masks back on between tips or rounds.
- Avoid sharing microphones. Consider having the caller make all announcements unless a club officer has access to a separate microphone.

Respect each dancer’s individual comfort and choices. Some may want to stay home a bit longer. Some may want to come to watch or socialize from appropriate distances, but are not yet ready to get back on the floor. Some may be ready to go back “full bore” – but remind those more enthusiastic dancers to follow the health and safety precautions for everyone. Whatever we have to do, don’t let it keep us from getting back together and having fun!!!!