



**Associazione Esposizioni e Fiere Italiane**  
Italian Exhibition & Trade Fair Association

# **AEFI REGULATORY PROTOCOL**

## **TO CONTAIN THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 AT EXHIBITIONS AND TRADE FAIRS**

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# CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION.</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. COMPULSORY HEALTH AND HYGIENE PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. CLEANING AND SANITISING OF INDOOR SPACES AND PREMISES AND COVID-19 MEDICAL STATION.</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5. ACCESS MEANS FOR OPERATORS.</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>6. EVENT / EXHIBITION PREMISES ORGANISATION.</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>7. COVID-19 HEALTH EMERGENCY PLAN.</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>8. DOCUMENTARY REFERENCES.</b>	<b>16</b>



## 1. INTRODUCTION.

AEFI – Italian Exhibition and Trade Fair Association - is the representative Association of the national exhibition system. It groups together the major companies and exhibition bodies that own, hold in various capacities, and manage areas specifically dedicated to the development of exhibitions (so-called Exhibition Districts) and directly organise trade fairs and exhibitions.

The objective of this Regulatory Protocol is to provide organisational and operational guidelines aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the precautionary containment measures adopted to combat the COVID-19 epidemic in exhibition environments, during exhibitions and events. The measures indicated follow the logic of protection and implement the provisions of the Legislator and the indications of the Health Authority. These measures must be activated and made operational, on a case-by-case basis, according to a proportionality criterion, scaled in relation to the type of events proposed and based on the expected attendance.

Compliance with national and local legislation on health and hygiene indications aimed at preventing the spread of the COVID-19 is an essential premise of this document.

The Recommendations of the World Health Organization, the Ministry of Health and the individual Regions and Autonomous Provinces are and will be considered a reference point in the application of these Measures and of this Events / Exhibitions Operational Protocol during the COVID-19 pandemic. Document reviews may be progressively adopted and disseminated in relation to the progress of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Provisions of the competent Authorities and this Operational Protocol apply to events / exhibitions held on the Italian national territory with the participation of national and international operators who, upon registration / access, necessarily approve compliance with the rules set out in this implementing protocol.

This document takes into account the following elements that characterise the exhibition sector:

- **People and business** - The exhibitions and events sector is based on the centrality of interpersonal relationships aimed at promoting business;
- **Safe and monitored environment** - The health and safety of people is, and has always been, a priority of the exhibition industry.



- Throughout Italy, wherever accredited exhibitions are held, there are solid and consolidated health and safety standards, and the exhibition Organisations have the ability to continuously raise them;
- **Additional safety checks** - Unlike most other types of large events, the format of an exhibition allows organisers to structure and guide the public in all phases of their stay within the exhibition district - from pre-registration, upon arrival on site and subsequent entry, to the way in which they pass through the various halls, meeting spaces and auditoriums, as well as when they use the food services and toilets dedicated to them. The exhibition venues are specifically designed to host this type of exhibition / event and to manage visitors according to the strict safety policies of national and local authorities and international safety standards;
- **Exhibitions create business** - Exhibitions are the meeting point for entire industrial sectors
  - at regional, national and international level. Exhibitions are a fast and indispensable path to drive economic recovery after COVID-19 - especially when thinking of small and medium-sized businesses, which represent the backbone of every economy and for which face-to-face exhibitions and events are an essential sales channel. In addition to the industrial sector, exhibitions contribute to the development of the entire national system, with a significant territorial impact, generating revenue for the travel and tourism sector, as well as for hotels, restaurants, retail and transport;
- **Our commitment** - To honour this responsibility towards the economy of the country and the industrial sectors, the exhibition system is ready to restart, providing the right guarantees to safeguard public health



## **2. COMPULSORY HEALTH AND HYGIENE PRINCIPLES**

The general indications of the microbiology and virology experts confirm that any organisational model for events / exhibitions cannot disregard some basic and important health principles that will remain in force during the COVID-19 epidemic health emergency phase.

- a) **SOCIAL DISTANCING:** all activities at the exhibition will ensure compliance with the rule that people stay at least ONE METRE away from each other.
- b) **USE OF PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):** mandatory surgical masks for everyone and availability of easily accessible disinfectant gel for hand disinfection.
- c) **HEALTH MONITORING AT THE ENTRANCES:** health monitoring methods will be applied such as, by way of example but not limited to, body temperature check, monitoring of the territory with staff charged of checking the correct use of masks and any other PPE. In the case of “low intensity” events, the health check may be replaced by a possible self-certification of not-being at risk of transmitting infection provided by the participant;
- d) **CLEANING AND SANITISING OF THE EVENT / EXHIBITION VENUE:** this activity will be carried out in compliance with the relevant legal provisions and on the basis of the measures adopted with this document.
- e) **MANDATORY EMERGENCY PLAN:** procedure aimed at the safe management of the case in which a person experiences a temperature above 37.5°C and COVID-19 symptoms. The procedure will provide for the identification of a suitable place for isolation and assistance by specially trained staff equipped with PPE to be used for contact with the potentially infected person.
- f) **APPLICATION** Legislative Decree 9, April 2008 no. 81 and subsequent amendments, and “Common regulatory protocol for measures to combat and contain the spread of the COVID-19 in the workplace” of 24 March 2020 - Rules of access and operation in health safety for offices and other work environments at the event / exhibition where the organisational staff, hostesses, audio-video technicians, staff dedicated to food service, fitters, etc. will work.



### **3. INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT.**

The Manager / Organiser informs all operators and anyone entering the exhibition district about the provisions of the competent Authorities in relation to the COVID-19 emergency, posting appropriate signs and / or information brochures at the entrance and in the most visible places of the premises, and strengthening communication, where possible through digital tools such as LED walls (and similar systems) and the exhibition Apps.

The basic information required by the regulations is:

- the obligation to stay at home in the presence of a high temperature (over 37.5°C), cough, rhinitis, conjunctivitis or other flu symptoms and to call your GP (*if you are a resident in Italy, obviously*) and the health authority;
- awareness and acceptance of the fact of not being able to enter or remain in the area of the event / exhibition if hazardous conditions exist (symptoms of flu, high temperature, coming from areas at risk or contact with people positive to the virus in the previous 14 days, etc.), also having occurred after entry, where the legal and regulatory provisions in force require you to inform your GP (in the case of people residing in Italy) and the Health Authority and to remain in one's home;
- the obligation to comply with all the provisions of the Authorities and of the Manager / Organiser for access to the district and to the exhibition (in particular: to maintain a social distancing of at least 1 metre in all activities, to systematically and continuously use personal protective equipment such as gloves and masks, observe the hygiene rules by frequently washing hands or sanitising them with hydro-alcoholic solutions and behave correctly in terms of personal hygiene);
- the obligation to promptly and responsibly report the presence of any flu symptoms while at the event, taking care to remain at an adequate distance from the people present.

In this context, the managers / organisers proceed to:

- prepare information on health and hygiene rules to be adopted at the event / exhibition, communicated prior to registration, which the participant undertakes to respect during the event / exhibition;



- prepare information on the health and hygiene rules advertised in an analogue and digital way at the event / exhibition, and in at least two languages (Italian and English);
- prepare information boards, signs or brochures, LED walls (or video clips or similar measures) on the health and hygiene rules to be adopted at the event / exhibition, publishing them on social media whenever possible and disseminating them in all identified areas;
- communicate through the methods deemed suitable on the availability of disinfectant gel at the event / exhibition venue.

During the course of the events / exhibitions, in order to reduce any risk deriving from episodic situations of lack of or insufficient social distancing, the Manager / Organiser stipulates that the mask must be worn at all times by all operators (visitors, exhibitors, fitters, staff and suppliers of the manager and organiser) present in the district. Access monitoring staff verify that entering operators wear masks. At the entrances there will be points of supply of masks for those without them.



#### **4. CLEANING AND SANITISING OF INDOOR SPACES AND PREMISES AND COVID-19 MEDICAL STATION.**

The Manager / Organiser guarantees:

- cleaning and sanitising, with products recognised by the Ministry, of the premises affected by the event before the start of each event / exhibition;
- daily cleaning and frequent periodic sanitation of all areas of the district used, with particular regard to those in contact with the public;
- adequate ventilation and continuous air exchange in the district's premises used by the exhibition;
- air extractors will be in constant operation in the toilets;
- frequent checks and replacement of filters and cleaning of AHU in air conditioning systems;
- wide availability and accessibility of dispensers with disinfectant liquid (hydro-alcoholic solutions) for cleaning hands with particular reference to entrances, passageways, toilets, refreshment points, etc., in an adequate number for the expected attendance and size of the exhibition.

The provision of adequate premises and a medical station present at the trade fair is also guaranteed, during the course of the events / exhibitions, with the presence of doctors and nurses equipped with the appropriate COVID-19 PPE and the necessary equipment and spaces, in order to also adequately temporarily isolate, according to the provisions of the health authorities, people showing fever and symptoms of respiratory infection (cough, etc.).





## **5. ACCESS MEANS FOR OPERATORS.**

### **5.1. ACCESS MEANS FOR SUPPLIERS / FITTERS**

For the access of external suppliers / fitters, the entry, transit and exit procedures will be predefined and differentiated, in order to reduce the opportunities for contact.

The personal data of all those who enter the District will be recorded on a special database which will be kept for at least 14 days and made available to the Local Health Authority if requested. Scanning stations will be set up close to the entrance where the body temperature of suppliers / fitters can be measured: if the temperature is higher than 37.5°C access to the workplaces within the exhibition district will not be allowed. The body temperature measurement may be replaced / supplemented by self-certification of good health and lack of contact with a Coronavirus infected person in the last 14 days.

In addition to the usual PPE, workers must be equipped with a mask.

The workers present in the exhibition district for maintenance, set-up activities, etc. must systematically and continuously wear PPE, a mask and operate at least 1 metre away from other workers.

Drivers of transport vehicles for the necessary loading and unloading activities must maintain a distance of 1 metre.

Special lavatories are arranged in the district for suppliers / vehicle drivers and / or other external staff. Adequate daily cleaning / sanitation and the presence of dispensers for hand disinfection are guaranteed in all toilets.

### **5.2. ACCESS MEANS FOR VISITORS / EXHIBITORS TO EVENTS / EXHIBITIONS IN PROGRESS**

Access for visitors and exhibitors takes place with predefined and differentiated entry, transit, exit procedures, methods, routes and timing, in order to reduce the opportunities for contact.

The personal data of all those who enter the District will be recorded on a special database which will be kept for at least 14 days and made available to the Local Health Authority if requested.



At each entrance, body temperature will be measured (limit 37.5°C) with a contactless type hygienic system and the correct use of the mask will be checked. Trained monitoring staff will be present to manage compliance with the rules.

At the entrance, people with temperatures above 37.5°C will be managed according to the “COVID-19 Emergency Plan” which will be drawn up before each event / exhibition.

The body temperature measurement may be replaced / supplemented by self-certification of good health and lack of contact with a Coronavirus infected person in the last 14 days.

To ensure compliance with the social distancing of 1 metre, assistance from monitoring staff will be provided in the access spaces and in all areas of greater foot traffic.



## **6. EVENT / EXHIBITION PREMISES ORGANISATION.**

### **6.1. CROWDING - DISTANCING**

The Exhibition Districts have sufficient capacity and internal and external spaces to guarantee social distancing of at least 1 metre between the operators present.

The Managers / Organisers intend to promote the following functional initiatives to contain crowding and ensure social distancing:

- remodulate the duration and opening hours of exhibitions with a high public attendance;
- balance the presence of visitors by favouring the booking of the visit with on-line ticketing and by encouraging the sale of tickets with telematic systems;
- redesign the spaces for exhibitions;
- break up the centres of attraction (leading companies, collateral events, conferences, etc.) across the entire area occupied by the event, with the aim of distributing the public over large areas and avoiding concentrations.
- avoid gatherings and incoming queues through the use of online ticket offices and fast access systems;
- reduce the queues and possible contacts at the bar / refreshment points, also through electronic payment systems and renewed / fast distribution of products;
- promote the use of dedicated platforms to schedule meetings during the day;
- reduce and distance the participants in the inaugural events by providing specific systems to be able to follow this and other significant events remotely;
- promote stand design criteria so that for exhibitors can ensure social distancing of 1 metre, and suggest the use of technologies that allow for remote participation;
- for the conference rooms, the seats will be positioned in such a way as to guarantee social distancing of 1 metre. The conference rooms will be cleaned and sanitised with a frequency determined by their use. The speakers' table and microphones will be sanitised at each change of speaker.

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For all operational procedures for the organisation of events / exhibitions, web and digital technologies will be used wherever possible to automate processes and reduce the opportunities for contact between people.



For large events, a Coronavirus manager will be identified who will be dedicated to taking care of the organisation and checking of all aspects reported in this protocol.

## **6.2. EXHIBITION AREA**

In the exhibition areas of trade fairs and conferences, all the general health and hygiene rules already mentioned will apply, such as social distancing and the use of PPE, both for the staff of the exhibiting companies and for participants and visitors.

The stands will be designed and fitted to ensure social distancing of 1 metre; they will be equipped with a dispenser for disinfectant liquid for hand cleaning. Adequately sized aisles will be provided in the design of the spaces to maintain social distancing.

During the set-up and dismantling phase, all staff will be equipped with PPE and will apply social distancing of 1 metre.

Commercial, promotional material and gadgets may be distributed through the use of special self-service containers and display units.

The exhibition area of the exhibition district will always be manned by monitoring staff.

## **6.3. FOOD SERVICE AREA**

For serving food and drinks during the event / exhibition, reference will be made to the specific rules.

By way of example, the following general indications are formulated which will however be adapted to the individual exhibition businesses.

The food service area will always be manned by monitoring staff.

In venues where it is possible to organise seats with distancing, meals served by catering staff can be organised. The meal will be served in the form of ready meals or delivered on pre-packaged trays. In all cases, a distance of at least 1 metre between the guests must always be respected.

Where it is not possible to provide adequate space for seated meals, trays or pre-packaged packs (“lunch boxes”) to be eaten



individually in the event area, or even in the vicinity, can be served, maintaining social distancing.

#### **6.4 COMMON AREAS**

By common areas we mean foyers, atriums, wide corridors, rest areas, any food service areas, and other spaces of common use. In these areas, the general rules of social distancing and use of PPE referred to above apply.

#### **6.5 TOILETS**

Toilets must be used complying with the prescribed distances and following a continuous cleaning service. Access queues will be organised in compliance with the general safety rules. Air extractors will be in continuous operation.

#### **6.6. EVENT PREMISES CLEANING SERVICES**

After the set up phase, all the spaces of the event / exhibition will be sanitised.

The cleaning service of the toilets with disinfectants will be scheduled with an hourly frequency or with continuous service, based on the number of participants. There will also be a special cleaning service for door handles, taps, soap and / or disinfectant dispensers, etc. Wide availability of soap for hand washing will always be guaranteed.

A general evening / night cleaning service of the common areas will be scheduled.

#### **6.7 USE OF THE CONFERENCE ROOMS**

In the conference rooms, the seating will be positioned distanced from each other in order to ensure social distancing.

By way of example, some general indications are provided.

Seats that cannot be used must be well identified with "do not use" signage.

The number of seats must be adequate for the number of participants.

Access and exit from the room must be organised with diversified entrances and exits, identified by appropriate signs.



Before the start of the session, the video on the health and hygiene rules to be respected at the arranged event may be shown.

If a direction or "slide centre" is arranged, a reception room for speakers and moderators will be provided and the space dedicated to the delivery of teaching aids must be set up in order to maintain social distancing. If PCs or other commonly available devices are to be used, cleaning with disinfectant will be provided between one user and the next.

The podium from which the event speakers will speak will be positioned at a distance of at least 2 metres from any other person on the stage and from the front row, in order to allow the presentation to take place without a mask. If a remote control, PC or other commonly available devices are to be used, cleaning with disinfectant will be provided between one user and the next.

The moderators seated at the table must maintain a minimum distance of 1 metre between each other, in order to allow them to intervene without wearing a mask. If PCs or other commonly available devices are to be used, cleaning with disinfectant will be provided between one user and the next.

## **6.8 STAFF**

All staff will be informed of the rules and their methods of implementation.

Staff will have access to the event / exhibition venue only after having measured their body temperature (below 37.5°C) and will wear PPE.



## **7. COVID-19 HEALTH EMERGENCY PLAN.**

It is mandatory that each premise and each event organisation has its own “COVID-19 Health Emergency Plan”, compliant and supplementary to their Risk Assessment Document.

The Health Emergency Plan will be verified in its applicability before each event, above all by certifying the availability of a space intended exclusively for the isolation of people suspected of being infected with COVID-19.

A staff of people adequately trained to deal with a COVID-19 health emergency will be present at the event / exhibition, equipped with a kit with all the necessary PPE.

In the event of a suspected COVID-19 contagion during access checking or at any time during the event, the emergency staff will be equipped with the emergency kit, must wear appropriate PPE, approach the person suspected to be infected, take them to the appropriate room or isolation space, measure their body temperature, call the public emergency services, stay nearby and assist the potentially infected person in case of need until the arrival of the health care personnel.

After the end of the emergency phase, the person in charge must remain isolated and dispose of personal protections in a special water and airtight bag. If possible, in addition to washing their hands, they will have to move away from the premises, wash, and change their clothes.

In agreement with the emergency services, notification of the emergency will be made to the local health authorities.



## 8. Documentary references.

- National legislation and national recommendations on the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.
- Provisions of the individual Regions and Autonomous Provinces regarding health and hygiene indications aimed at preventing the spread of the COVID-19.
- Recommendations of the World Health Organization with respect to the COVID-19 emergency.
- Common regulatory protocol for measures to combat and contain the spread of the COVID-19, , approved on 24 April 2020 between the Government and Social stakeholders
- Inail technical document on the possible remodulation of measures to contain SARS-CoV-2 contagion in the workplace and prevention strategies - April 2020

### - **Links**

#### **Italian Ministry of Health**

- Mode of transmission

<http://www.salute.gov.it/portale/nuovocoronavirus/dettaglioFaqNuovoCoronavirus.jsp?lingua=italiano&id=228#3>

- Surfaces and hygiene

<http://www.salute.gov.it/portale/nuovocoronavirus/dettaglioFaqNuovoCoronavirus.jsp?lingua=italiano&id=228#4>

#### **World Health Organization (WHO)**

- Recommendations for the public

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advicefor-public>

- Technical guidance points for organising mass gatherings

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus2019/technical-guidance/points-of-entry-and-mass-gatherings>

- Risk assessment for organising mass gatherings

<https://www.who.int/publications-detail/how-to-use-who-risk-assessment-and-mitigation-checklist-for-mass-gatherings-in-the-context-of-covid-19>

#### **UFI**

[https://www.ufi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Framework\\_for\\_reopening\\_the\\_exhibition\\_industry\\_Post\\_COVID-19.pdf](https://www.ufi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Framework_for_reopening_the_exhibition_industry_Post_COVID-19.pdf)