
FAQ: End of School Year Gatherings and Graduations

Purpose

This document provides additional detail in response to frequently asked questions about [2020-2021 End of School Year Gatherings and Graduations](#), issued April 23, 2021.

Q1. How will contact tracing work if there's a case at one of our year-end celebrations?

You will work with the Health Department in a similar manner as you have throughout the year. For event attendees who weren't identified as close contacts, but *might* have had a low risk exposure, the Health Department has created a [template letter for school event attendees](#).

Q2. At graduation, do the graduates count in the total number of participants for graduation?

Yes. However, per the Vermont Forward guidance staff and vendors are not counted in the maximum gathering number. Vaccinated individuals are not included in total counts.

Q3. At graduation, should households be seated 6 feet from one another or is it sufficient to follow the guidance around vaccinated/unvaccinated capacity?

Households should still be seated six feet from one another to the best of your ability. If the seating is indoors, guests must wear masks. If the seating is outdoors, guests must wear masks if households cannot be seated at least six feet from one another.

Q4. Do vaccinated and unvaccinated people need to be seated separately?

No. Following applicable guidance on masking and distancing is sufficient.

Q5. How should schools manage the 6-foot distance rule at proms?

Schools should do the best they can to hold proms in a responsible way. Strict supervision of distancing is not necessary during social events such as prom.

Q6. Can students dance at prom?

Yes. Students may dance at prom if they are wearing masks.

Q7. For events that are neither graduations nor proms – such as award nights – should we follow the Strong and Healthy Year guidance or the Vermont Forward guidance?

For school events occurring outside of the school day you should still follow the Strong and Healthy Year guidance.

Q8. Can visitors outside of the school community attend year-end events and celebrations?

Visitors may attend graduations and proms in compliance with the Vermont Forward guidance and [2020-2021 End of School Year Gatherings and Graduations](#). For other year-end events and any field trips, schools should follow the Strong and Healthy Schools guidance, where visitors should not participate, but vaccinated volunteers are allowed at the discretion of the school (i.e. chaperones).

Q9. Are there any restrictions on food service for year-end gatherings and celebrations?

If participants will be unmasking to eat or drink, particularly inside, particular attention must be paid to maintaining physical distancing of greater than 6 feet between households. Consult with your food service staff for best practices.

Q10. How are we to determine the vaccination status of attendees?

When schools need to determine the vaccination status of participants, they should do so through some means of self-attestation. The Vermont Forward guidance states that if your event has no way of determining if an individual is vaccinated, you should assume all are unvaccinated when determining your capacity limit.

Q11. Are we expected to collect a name and phone number for everyone who attends graduation for contact tracing purposes?

Per the Vermont Forward guidance, contact tracing logs will no longer be required for events and gatherings such as graduation. Per the Strong and Healthy Year guidance, however, schools should keep careful student attendance records related to before- or after-school activities for students, which would include any end of year events related to sports, extra-curricular activities, field trips or class social events, such as prom.

Q12. If we do a drive-in graduation, do we still need to collect information about vaccination status?

If you conduct your graduation ceremony such that all non-student attendees remain in their personal vehicles for the entirety of the event, the event capacity limits related to vaccination status would not apply.