



February 5, 2021

Attention:

Hon Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta
President of the Executive Council
307 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Ave
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Hon. Doug Schweitzer, Minister, Jobs, Economy
and Innovation
425 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Ave
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

Request for re-opening for the Live Events sector safely while allowing a runway of time to organize.

Dear Premier Kenney & Minister Schweitzer:

The Alberta Live Events Coalition (ALEC) recognizes the efforts of the Government of Alberta to help keep Albertans safe and our economy functioning during this prolonged pandemic crisis.

WHAT THE LIVE EVENTS INDUSTRY IS ASKING FOR:

1. Permit the event industry to plan safe events in restricted numbers, within **household** groupings, and with all required risk mitigation measures in place and to do so in a safe and controlled manner. We request that these events be allowed with the same gathering restrictions as restaurants, retail and places of worship.
2. Permit meeting and event venues to reopen with restricted limits of individuals, based on capacity and with strong risk mitigation measures in place and to do so in a safe and controlled manner. We request that these events be allowed with the same capacity restrictions as restaurants, retail and places of worship.
3. Government to work closely with the event industry to plan for appropriate and consistent expansion of event capacities as case rates and vaccination rates progress. We recommend that as restrictions ease for restaurants, places of worship and retail capacities expand, that they also expand for live events.
4. Base indoor gathering size on square footage of space available and overall capacity *instead of group size*, beginning with 15% and making our way to 100%.
5. Acknowledge the difference in the transmission rates between indoor social gatherings at homes and professionally produced events.
6. Clarify and eliminate overlap of guidelines which allow some events to open while others remain closed (i.e., designating an indoor light festival as “retail” and allowing it to follow retail rules while keeping other indoor events closed; or allowing some meetings to occur based on their industry (merchandising) while others are not.
7. Increase financial support for the event industry as event restrictions remain in place and prevent organizations from conducting business. Dedicate a team of support for the events industry as one of the hardest hit industries.



Commit to a plan of re-opening for the event industry that is tapered, stringent and methodical, with reopening plans based on science and common sense, with a vision to fully re-open in 2021.

The Alberta Live Events Coalition wishes to be a partner with the Government of Alberta to not only get events re-opening safely but to become a leader in the country in how events are regulated and managed. To do this we suggest meeting to discuss funding options and timelines.

Timeline:

As previously discussed, **the Meeting & Live Events Industry requires a runway of time to enact a successful safe re-opening.** *An event for even a small group of 100 does not take place without significant planning. The industry is struggling as events have been cancelled for 2021 Q1 and Q2 already as groups are not willing to financially risk waiting to find out if their event can happen. Without a solid plan in place soon, the events in Q3 and Q4 will also cancel, causing further financial losses. At this point we are trying to save 2021 Christmas parties and the suppliers who lost millions with the cancellations in 2020.*

What does a **Runway of Time** look like? The Alberta Live Events Coalition strongly recommends following the same opening restrictions as restaurants, places of worship and retail. In past months, our industry has been restricted to a specific number of guests that are allowed to gather regardless of capacity (e.g. 50 people for indoor events, 100 for theatre or seated events) – so, 50 people could meet in either 600 square feet or 10,000 square feet. *We propose that events are based on a percentage of square footage of the venue rather than a specific number.* **To continue restricting to an overall cap in numbers will mean the demise of our industry in 2021.**

Currently, places of Worship are allowed up to 15% of capacity to attend service on a weekly basis. The meeting & live events industry is asking to be treated with the same level of trust you have allowed non-event professionals to gather in.

ALEC is simply looking for a runway of time to open up safely with strong risk mitigation at the capacity rates similar to the restaurant and hospitality industry. Working together as a cohesive unit will make the process easier for the Government of Alberta and the Live Events community.

Regards,

Lesley Plumley
Director, Alberta Live Events Coalition

CC:
Whitney Issik, MLA, Calgary Glenmore