

Virtual Events Guide

COVID Command Center - Joint Information Section - Virtual Outreach Team

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Virtual Events Program Overview

COVID Command Center- Joint Information Section- Virtual Outreach Team

About

The Virtual Events Program provides elected officials, community leaders, and government partners with a high quality, secure virtual platform to engage constituents and communicate information about COVID-19 related matters affecting local communities.

Virtual Outreach Team

The design and production teams have produced 300+ virtual events, reached over 18,000 viewers in English, Spanish, Chinese and Russian. The staff support events between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm, Monday-Friday.

Types of Virtual Events

The Virtual Outreach Team can provide and manage the platform for partners to convene the following:

- Trainings/Workshops
- Classic Presentations
- Community Engagements
- Press Releases
- Tabletop Exercises
- Townhalls
- Listening Sessions
- Virtual Tours

Event Attributes

The platforms utilized by our Virtual Outreach Team can include the following features:

- Video recording of event
- Screenshare presentations
- Stream live to Facebook & YouTube
- Customized RSVP page
- Language interpretation channel*
- Customized registration confirmation
- Breakout rooms
- Closed caption channel*
- Share videos and music

Event Process Overview

- Connect to our skilled design staff to share your event objectives and tailor your event program
- Spread the word about your event and distribute a registration link to your membership or network
- Develop your presentations and talking points; troubleshoot your hardware and software early
- Engage your community during the event and let our production team take care of the rest

Program Benefits

- Meet one-on-one with our design staff who will tailor the event to meet your messaging goals
- Receive the Virtual Events Guide on Host Best-Practices, Platform Moderation and other resources
- Schedule a dress-rehearsal for complex events with your presenters and our production team
- Participate in the Pre and Post-Event meetings to troubleshoot technology and debrief with our team
- Receive the event video file, registration list, chat file and audio transcript

Schedule Your Event

Contact Russell.Allen@sfgov.org to set up your Design Interview

*Interpreters are to be provided by meeting convenor. Closed Captioning available for public events exceeding 100 participants or focused on those with access and functional needs.

Virtual Event Profiles

COVID Command Center- Joint Information Section- Virtual Events Program

About

The Virtual Events Program offers various event types that are matched to your event objectives. Connect with our design staff to learn which event type is ideal for you and your audience. Some features require approval.

Event Profiles

Classic Presentations, Townhalls, Press Releases and Virtual Tours

- Objective: Communicate information with limited participant engagement
- Invitation: Public, In-network or Private
- Platform features: Speaker audio, video, screensharing and annotation; Stream to social media, record event, language interpretation and closed caption
- Participant functions: Chat to host; no audio, video, or screensharing
- Barriers to participation: Low
- Disruption Risk: Low

Community Engagements and Listening Sessions

- Objective: Present subject matter, stimulate discussion and elicit feedback from participants
- Invitation: In-network or Private (public invitations highly discouraged)
- Platform features: Speaker audio, video, screensharing and annotation; breakout rooms, polling, and closed caption; no event recording
- Participant functions: Chat publicly, audio and video; no screensharing
- Barriers to participation: Medium (Participants will need to register and be vetted)
- Disruption Risk: Medium (Participants can use video, audio and public chat)

Trainings, Workshops and Tabletop Exercises

- Objective: Educate, train, synthesize information and allow for participant collaboration
- Invitation: In-network or Private (public invitations highly discouraged)
- Platform features: Speaker audio, video, screensharing and annotation; video playback and record event
- Participant functions: Chat to host, with limited audio and video; no screensharing
- Barriers to participation: Medium (Participants will need to register and be vetted)
- Disruption Risk: Medium (Participants can use video, audio and public chat)

Host Best Practices

COVID Command Center- Joint Information Section- Virtual Events Program

The Virtual Outreach Team's mission is to provide a safe platform for hosts to convene the community to share information on COVID-19, information on City resources and discuss matters affecting local communities.

The following guidance will support your events' success and security. By preparing ahead of time, you'll decrease last-minute complications, increase your ability to focus on your content, and better engage your participants. You'll also find top production tips to reduce distractions and elevate the caliber of your event.

Before the Event

Connect and Design: Meet with our designers at least a week in advance to discuss your proposed event objectives, format and the Zoom security and functional settings. Schedule a rehearsal if your event is complex.

Prepare Early: Our Production Team is already working to create a safe space for your participants and a smooth event, but they'll need the following at least 2 business days in advance to pull it off:

1. Finalized agenda with facilitators, speakers, timing, and event flow/transitions.
2. Emails of all event planners' and speakers' so we can invite them to the pre-event meeting.
3. List of event-specific roles such as note-taker, chat monitor, interpreters and their email.
4. PowerPoint Presentations you or your speakers will use.
5. Administration privileges to your social media if you choose to stream live to social media.

Test Your Tech: Your event takes place in an evolving digital environment. Test your tech early and often:

1. Before you promote the event link to your network, register yourself for the event to ensure the registration process meets your expectations.
2. Download Zoom or update your Zoom software on the device you'll use to join the event. Use your desktop computer/laptop and test the software in advance of the event to troubleshoot technical issues.
3. Rehearse with teaching aides, accessories, earbuds or software you'll use when presenting.
4. Schedule a rehearsal with us to practice your screen-sharing or other complex functions.

During the Event

Join Early: By logging into the event 20 minutes early, you enable our production team to review the flow of the event, test your video and audio connections and start your event on time.

Present with Confidence: Here are the top production tips for fearless presentations:

1. Plug your device into an ethernet cable and consider pausing simultaneous, high-bandwidth activities.
2. If the meeting is critical, keep an alternate connection ready, such as a WIFI hotspot or smartphone.
3. Use your built-in computer mic for quiet environments and plug-in headphones for noisy ones.
4. Find a private space that is free of distractions or bright backlighting. Consider using a digital background.
5. Reduce distracting noises such as computer notifications, ringtones, jewelry or pets, and mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
6. Position the camera at eye level and at a distance where your shoulders and head are visible.

7. Move your notes near your camera so participants can make eye contact with you.
8. Renaming yourself with your gender pronoun, title or organization helps to create an inclusive environment and provides context to participants.
9. When screen-sharing, declutter your desktop to keep the relevant information accessible at a glance.
10. Disable notifications, as messages might pop up unexpectedly while you are screen-sharing.
11. Speak more slowly than you might normally, articulate, and wait for the other person to finish speaking, as latency can cause team members to speak over one another, especially when using closed captioning or interpretation.
12. Use inclusive language and visuals that make all participants feel welcome.
13. Finally, thank the participants, speakers, planning team and others who contributed to the event.

After the Event

Stay Connected: The event has ended for your participants, but the next 20 minutes are vital to providing feedback to the production team and designing an upcoming event.

1. We'll take a minute to reflect on the event with your speakers and then thank them for their time.
2. If emerging needs or next steps were identified in the event, we'll document and assign ownership.
3. Assess the format, flow and meeting objectives of your event. What worked, what needs refinement?
4. Detail any plans for future events and work with our designers to deliver necessary artifacts.

Thank you for entrusting the Virtual Outreach Team with your event, speakers and network participants. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out to your VOT contact or the Outreach Branch Coordinator.

Virtual Meeting Moderation

COVID Command Center- Joint Information Section- Virtual Events Program

Overview

FOR PUBLIC EVENTS: This guidance document was created to ensure a safe and distraction-free environment for public, virtual events. Moreover, the guidance protects participants' Freedom of Speech by ensuring that only disruptive behavior elicits removal.

Objective

- Provide guidance for the removal of disruptive participants
- Provide guidance for moderating participant audio and video
- Provide guidance for addressing participants following a disruption

Precedent for Removing Disruptive Participants

- California Government Code Section 54957.9
- Acosta v. City of Costa Mesa, 718 F.3d 800 and Norse v. City of Santa Cruz, 629 F.3d 966
- Board of Supervisors Rules of Order 1.7-1.9
- Robert's Rules

Identifying and Responding to Distractions and Disruptions

Types of Distractions/Disruptions	Recommended Action
Unintentional or annoying noise or video	Stop audio/video
Inappropriate statements by audio or chat Inappropriate video or backgrounds	Stop audio; change chat to host only Stop video Address participants
Comments meant to disrupt the event Video backgrounds, nudity or other visuals meant to disrupt the event	Remove participant from meeting Address participants Report to manager, platform, and SFPD/FBI

Post-Removal Protocol

- Inform participants that the participant(s) removed had disrupted the meeting and was removed. Indicate if any changes to security settings have been made and follow-up steps as listed below.
- Document the disruption:
 - Identifying information of the disruptor
 - Specifics of the incident
 - Remedial actions taken to resolve the incident
- Report incident to platform
- Report incident to COVID Command Center manager
- If applicable, report to SFPD/FBI

Creating Safe Spaces

COVID Command Center- Joint Information Section- Virtual Events Program

Overview

Virtual events are the standard model for community engagement and business meetings at large. But as the number of virtual events grows, so too have incidents of interruption and harassment. Event planners should use the following guidance to create safe spaces for their event participants.

- **Step 1 Identify Your Event as Public or Private**
 - Public: Invitation link was posted to a webpage, social media or subscription newsletter (High risk of disruption)
 - In-Network: Invitation link was sent to an internal group(s) (Medium risk of disruption)
 - Private: Invitation link was sent to a specific guest list (Low risk of disruption)

Public Events

- **Step 2 Adjust Default Security and Functional Settings in Zoom Account**
 - Disable:
 - Participant video, join before host, screen sharing for participants, annotation, whiteboard, remote-control, removed participants to rejoin and participants to rename themselves
 - Enable:
 - Require a password, mute participants upon entry, hide participant profile pictures and waiting room for everyone.
- **Step 3 Create Your Event**
 - Security functions
 - Require registration, generate meeting ID automatically and require passcode
 - Participant functions
 - Video off, mute upon entry and enable language interpretation
- **Step 4 Start Meeting: Adjust Security and Functional Settings Prior to Participant Admission**
 - Disable
 - Participants to unmute themselves, participants to rename themselves
 - Manually disable participant videos one by one
 - Enable:
 - Mute participants upon entry, waiting room and adjust chat to "Host only"
 - Assign language interpretation and or closed captioning
- **Step 5 During Event: Monitor and Manage the Meeting**
 - Disable participant video as they enter the event to reduce risk of disruption
 - Mute/Unmute identifiable or known participants
 - Monitor chat from participants
 - Remove participants that disrupt
 - Address participants if an incident occurs

Call-in Tutorial

By the Virtual Outreach Team, COVID Command Center

Ways to join by phone

- **Participants receive call-in information either by:**
 - Registering and reviewing the confirmation email (the confirmation email contains call-in numbers and meeting ID but does not have a participant number), or
 - Joining the meeting and selecting the option to join audio by call-in, or
 - Receiving the call-in number and meeting number from the host (this is not advisable because it allows participants to bypass the registration process).
- **If a participant joins video via device and audio via call-in:**
 - If they use their participant ID to call in, their audio and video should merge automatically (e.g., the participant will be listed once in the participant list).
 - If they do not use a participant ID to call in, they will appear to be two participants (e.g., video and phone will appear to be separate participants). However, the host/cohosts can merge the participant's video and phone.

How to unmute call-in audio

- **If participants are allowed to unmute themselves:**
 - If participant is in the meeting via call-in only, or by call-in and video via device but they are not merged: unmute by *6 on phone
 - Audio by call-in and video via device and they are merged: unmute via microphone icon on computer or *6 on phone
- **If participants are not allowed to unmute themselves:**
 - If participant presses *6 on phone, they will receive a response that the host is not allowing them to unmute.
- **If host "asks to unmute":**
 - Regardless whether participants are/are not allowed to unmute, the participant will hear "host has asked you to unmute, press *6 to unmute." They can then press *6 to unmute.

Other functionality for call-in

- Call-in participant can raise hand by *9
- Call-in participant can be assigned to breakout rooms. However, if the participant joined audio via call-in and video via device, the host should make efforts to determine this and to either "join" audio and video or to send them to the same breakout room.

More information: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362663-Joining-a-Meeting-by-Phone>