

Dear BACDS Board,

In mid-December 2021 after the December Board meeting, the existing BACDS dance re-opening committee consisting of Lise Dyckman and Alan Winston was joined by Chrissy Howell, Sasha Madison, and Matt Mathis. The committee has met six times over the past three months by Zoom and email to develop recommendations for BACDS to adopt regarding re-opening BACDS dance events in light of the SARS-CoV-2 global pandemic. During this time period we witnessed the omicron variant peak, followed by a decline in case rates which is where we are today.

We have sought to follow CDC guidance in developing recommendations, although there have also been marked shifts in CDC guidance. Much of our discussion has focused on when to mask, types of masks, when to test, types of testing, whether to use a case rate threshold, and what a suitable case rate threshold might be. There has generally been consensus that dance event participants should all be vaccinated and boosted so we have not discussed that at length. We have also discussed ventilation and our impression that dance venues vary widely in their ventilation options.

In late February 2022 the CDC released a new set of color-coded maps with three tiers to convey varying risk levels. At present California DPH has deferred to the CDC's color-coded risk tiers, and so we propose that BACDS base its re-opening requirements on <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html> . If California state and federal agency designations vary at a later date, we propose that BACDS should follow the more conservative risk assessment.

At present that map color-codes each county at a **red (high)**, **yellow**, or **green (lower)** level, and we recommend different policies depending on these three risk levels. BACDS events will consider the risk levels in all 6 Bay Area counties (Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Alameda, & Contra Costa) when determining which set of policies to follow for its dances. If all 6 counties are in the **green** tier, the event will follow the corresponding **green** recommendations. If there is a mix of colors (levels) among the 6 Bay Area counties, the organizers should base their decision of which set of guidelines to follow on:

- a) the level in the county where the event is located, if it is more restrictive (Example: if the home county is **red** but all the other Bay Area counties are **yellow**, the dance should follow **red** precaution levels); OR
- b) the more frequent risk level for the other Bay Area counties, if the home county is in the majority. (Example: if the home county is **yellow**, three other Bay Area counties are also **yellow**, but one other county is **green** and one is **red**, the dance should follow **yellow** precaution levels.)

**Important notes:** These policies are minimum protections. Dance managers or programers may set more restrictive policies for their dance events if they decide it is necessary. No matter what the tier (**green**, **yellow**, **red**), dance organizers may cancel the dance at their discretion due to safety concerns.

Likewise, the BACDS Board may amend these policies whenever it deems necessary and as guidance from the CDC, California DPH, and/or individual county public health departments changes over time.

### **Specific guidelines:**

#### **A. Dancers at BACDS events should:**

- show proof of full vaccination (initial vaccination + all boosters for which they are eligible).
  
- fill out the checklist at each BACDS dance, be able to attend according to those criteria, and agree to follow BACDS procedures and to notify BACDS if they become infected (tests positive or shows symptoms) within two days after attending that dance.
  
- MASKS: In **red** or **yellow** levels, dancers must wear a KF94, KN95 or N95-comparable mask at all times in the dance space. At the **green** level, dancers may wear a surgical or cloth mask so long as it is well-fitting, and may briefly remove their mask to eat or drink so long as they are 6 feet or more away from other dancers, and put their mask back on immediately afterwards.
  
- TESTS: In **yellow** or **green** levels, dancers are **advised** to:
  - test less than 24 hours before attending a dance, **or**

- follow CDC guidance in regards to testing, using the CDC's When to Test app for individuals ([whentotest.org](https://www.cdc.gov/when-to-test)). This app is a decision-support tool intended to help decrease the spread of COVID-19 and includes questions about vaccination status, masking, average number of close contact interactions per day, and social gathering attendance frequency.

At **red** levels, dancers are **required** to test less than 6 hours before attending a dance event. This could be with an antigen at-home rapid test or NAAT test (a PCR test, if it can be processed quickly enough, would also be acceptable). Dancers should bring their negative test, or a photo of the negative test, to the dance. (Note that testing supplies are not considered medical waste when the test is negative and may be thrown in the trash).

#### **B. Dance managers should:**

- CHECK VACCINATION STATUS of everyone admitted to a BACDS event and collect contact information for each participant. This could be done in advance, and/or at the door. Managers may keep a list of the names of dancers who have shown proof of full vaccination at a previous dance, to avoid having to check at each dance event

- REQUIRE ALL dancers, musicians, sound tech, or other volunteers at that event to FILL OUT THE ADMISSION CHECKLIST, and to verify that they qualify for admission (that is, all items are checked and that the infection questions are all "No".) Managers may choose to collect the checklists on paper, or online (via a Google form), or both. *The checklist replaces the pre-pandemic sign-in sheets that were used at BACDS dances.*

- NOTICE OF EXPOSURE: if/when there is a report of a confirmed COVID infection soon after one of their dance events, managers will retrieve contact information for all the people present at that dance and notify them of a possible exposure (without identifying the person infected). Managers will also report that exposure to the BACDS Board.

- REFRESHMENTS: when any of the BACDS counties are at **red** or **yellow** levels, dance managers cannot allow eating or drinking in the dance space; dancers must stay masked at all times there. (If possible, managers should designate somewhere outside the building (when **red**) or in another room in

the same building (when **yellow**) where dancers can drink or eat.) At **green** level, dancers may briefly remove their masks in the dance space to drink, or to eat individual servings of snacks.

**C. Dance managers and programmers should** devise a plan for how to make their dance space safer. Points to consider are:

- Come up with new limits on the maximum number of dancers to admit (the committee considered setting percentages of full capacity, e.g. 50% of max occupancy or 50% of normal attendance numbers, but we defer to dance managers who best understand the space layout of the dances they handle).
- Increase air circulation using fans and/or air filters.
- Designate which windows and doors can remain open while the dance is going on, and for how long.
- Set the program to include more frequent short breaks.
- Plan to separate musicians at least 6 feet away from the dancers, with additional fans or filters if needed to protect the musicians.

The plan could include whether to relax any of those protections in **yellow** or **green** levels (and if so, which ones). For example, managers could revisit caps on the number of dancers admitted as risk levels change.

**D. Talent (musicians and callers)** at BACDS dances **should** follow the same requirements as dancers, with these exceptions:

- *Wind instruments or singing* is not permitted in **red** level. Those are permitted at the **yellow** level if wind players are wearing special masks designed for that activity, and if separated from the dancers or other musicians by more than 6 feet. At **green** level, musicians can unmask to play a wind instrument so long as they re-mask immediately afterwards.
- *Vocal music* (singers) should follow the same restrictions at **red** and **yellow** level. At **green** level, they can unmask for that purpose so long as they are at least 6 feet away from everyone else.
- *Callers* must follow the same restrictions as dancers.

E. **BACDS Board** will:

- post the requirements and recommendations for dancers on its websites, email lists, and social media,
- collect reports of possible exposures at any of BACDS events.
- advise dance managers and programmers on their plans, and assist them with the process of verifying vaccination status and collecting checklists.
- reassess the recommendations and revise the protocol as needed based upon most current public health guidance, should any of the BACDS counties approach the red tier, or if new variants of concern arise.

We also strongly encourage the Board to have lenient cancellation / refund / compensation policies for last minute cancellations by dancers or talent.

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From the ad-hoc reopening work group:

Alan Winston, Chrissy Howell, Lise Dyckman, Matt Mathis, & Sasha Madison.

March 16, 2022