



16 Chestnut Street | Gaithersburg, MD 20877 | Tel: 301-926-3100 | Fax: 301-926-1532 | www.mcagfair.com

May 28, 2021

Press Release:

The **9 Best Days of Summer** will return to Gaithersburg when the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair opens on August 13, 2021, at 3:00 PM and will be in operation through August 21, 2021. “Family Fun for Everyone” will feature farm animals, spectacular carnival rides, dozens of food selections, Monster Truck shows, Demolition Derby shows, agricultural shows, and exhibitions, as well as numerous vendors and free entertainment throughout the Fairgrounds. The most recent information regarding online ticketing, the schedule of events and COVID 19 details can be found in the coming days at mcagfair.com.

Operations Plan for COVID 19 Mitigation at the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair

August 13 – 21, 2021

Those restrictions that are dictated by CDC, State of Maryland and Montgomery County will be implemented on the Fairgrounds. If additional restrictions are added as we get closer to the August 13 opening day of the Fair they will be posted on our website at mcagfair.com.

August 7, 2021

Effective August 7, 2021, the Montgomery County Council has instituted an indoor face mask requirement for everyone over 2 years of age regardless of vaccination status. This mandate will be implemented in the following buildings on the Montgomery County Fairgrounds: Farm and Garden, Old Timers, Home Arts, Arts Crafts and Photography, 4-H, Chilly Mall, Big Cheese, Ice Cream Parlor, Heritage, all Restrooms, Birthing Center, Poultry Barn, Souvenir Booth, and First Aid. Face masks are also required for those persons who are working in food preparation throughout the Fairgrounds. Face masks will be required upon entry to the free Shuttle Buses that run between Lakeforest Mall and the Fairgrounds.

This is a summary of operational enhancements and planning concepts that will be implemented by the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and contract employees aimed at meeting the need for COVID 19 safety during the 2021 Montgomery County Agricultural Fair including compliance with public health guidelines.

1) GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY – Safety is our top priority.

- i. Outdoor and Indoor patron capacity will follow occupancy limits dictated by the CDC, Maryland State Department of Health, Montgomery County, and Gaithersburg City FireMarshal.
- ii. CDC, Maryland State, and Montgomery County guidelines that are in effect during Fair operations regarding facemasks and related COVID 19 guidelines will be implemented throughout the Fairgrounds.
- iii. All planned large group gatherings for entertainment during the 2021 Fair are outdoors.
- iv. Livestock-related education, exhibits and shows will occur under a roof with no walls or other vertical impediments which allows free and open-air exchange with the outside environment.
- v. 95% of Fairgrounds dining will occur outside. The remaining 5% will occur under the roof by implementing those standards for capacity that apply to the foodservice industry at the time of occurrence.
- vi. Clean hands are essential. The Fair will widely communicate reminders of the importance of frequent hand sanitizing through signage and on our public address system.
- vii. Disposable gloves shall be worn by all individuals preparing or otherwise coming in direct contact with food or beverage sold on the grounds.
- viii. Where privacy and modesty can be preserved, the Fair shall leave open restroom doors in order for users to avoid touching high contact objects such as restroom doors and handles and improve air circulation.

2) THE FAIR WILL IMPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING PROACTIVE PRACTICES:

- i. The Fair will promote and encourage the purchase of advance online general admission passes, advance online purchase for events that are in our outdoor Grandstand, and advance online purchase of carnival ride wristbands.
- ii. The Fair will implement the use of touchless payment systems, arrange credit card readers so guests can insert/swipe their own cards and arrange for touchless scanning of gate admission pass(es).
- iii. Communication protocols have been developed for use by Unified Command for EMT, Fire and Rescue, Police, Security, contracted employees and other personnel to respond appropriately to COVID-19 specific emergency medical service calls, and any need for an immediate cleaning or sanitation service.
- iv. Open-Access Condiment Stations will be utilized within the guidelines established by CDC, Montgomery County and the State of Maryland. Some foodservice operations will offer napkins, ketchup, mustard and other condiments to be served to guests upon request.

3) FIRST AID PROTOCOLS:

- i. Trained medical personnel from Shady Grove Hospital and Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue personnel will be on site during all hours of Fair operations, to address guests, volunteers or employees who present with COVID-19 symptoms as indicated below:
 - Medical personnel will be equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Maryland Public Health and CDC public health guidelines will be followed.
 - Volunteers, employees, contract workers and volunteer departmental superintendents will contact medical personnel if they become aware of COVID 19 symptoms being present.
 -

4) ENHANCED CLEANING AND OPERATIONAL INITIATIVES

- i. The Fair "Clean Team" are trained professional personnel under contract from Facilities Partners Inc. They will be highly visible in each restroom area as well as assigned public spaces to engage during all Fair operational hours to complete scheduled cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces. This would include tables, counters, baby changing stations, towel and soap dispensers, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.
 - ii. The Fairgrounds has over 40 permanently mounted sinks that are indoors and outdoors on the Fairgrounds to encourage hand cleanliness.
 - iii. An additional 75 hand sanitizing dispensers will be placed throughout the Fairgrounds and Carnival ride area to support our clean hands initiative. Sanitizing products will be alcohol-based (min. 60%) and have anti-microbial agent(s) that kills or renders inactive 99.9% of all known bacteria, viruses, and fungi including COVID 19.
 - iv. The Montgomery County Agricultural Fair 2021 enhanced cleaning and safety measures
-

ill be indicated on our website at www.mcagfair.com

5) FIRST AID PROTOCOLS:

- i. Trained medical personnel from Shady Grove Hospital and Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue Personnel will be on site during all hours of Fair operations, to address guests, volunteers or employees who present with COVID-19 symptoms as indicated below:
 - Medical personnel will be equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Maryland Public Health and CDC public health guidelines will be followed.
 - Volunteers, employees, contract workers and volunteer departmental superintendents will contact medical personnel if they become aware of COVID 19 symptoms being present.

6) ENHANCED CLEANING AND OPERATIONAL INITIATIVES

- i. The Fair “Clean Team” are trained professional personnel under contract from Facilities Partners Inc. They will be highly visible in each restroom area as well as assigned public spaces to engage during all Fair operational hours to complete scheduled cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces. This would include tables, counters, baby changing stations, towel and soap dispensers, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.
 - ii. The Fairgrounds has over 40 permanently mounted sinks that are indoors and outdoors on the Fairgrounds to encourage hand cleanliness.
 - iii. An additional 75 hand sanitizing dispensers will be placed throughout the Fairgrounds and Carnival ride area to support our clean hands initiative. Sanitizing products will be alcohol-based (min. 60%) and have anti-microbial agent(s) that kills or renders inactive 99.9% of all known bacteria, viruses, and fungi including COVID 19.
-

POWERS GREAT AMERICAN MIDWAYS COVID 19 Mitigation Plan for the 2021 Montgomery County Agricultural Fair

May 29, 2021

The health and safety of our guests is our top priority. We have implemented many measures that you will see on the carnival midway designed to protect guests and employees from potential exposure to COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2. By minimizing contacts, increasing cleaning protocols and sanitization, and implementing CDC, Maryland State and Montgomery County guidelines, we can welcome our guests back to the carnival midway experience that has created generations of memories.

Our rules and procedures include the best practices and elements of mitigation plans from amusement parks, carnivals, Fairs, and festivals as well as guidance from the CDC and state/local health organizations. Coupled with our own ideas and innovations, we will bring the best this industry has to offer.

As new information becomes available, we will adjust our plan to reflect the best practices provided with the most up to date information. We believe we can strike a prudent balance between safety and family fun if we all work together to provide a safe, healthy environment.

All guests are expected to follow the posted rules and procedures. Guests should follow all instructions from midway employees and respect the health and safety of others.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

All employees will receive mandatory training in operations with the most current health and safety protocols and implement CDC, Maryland State and Montgomery County standards at all phases of daily operations. Employees will clean rides and frequently touched areas on games and equipment on a regular basis using CDC and EPA approved materials that combat pathogen spread. Rides will be deep cleaned at the end of each day.

MIDWAY RIDE OPERATIONS & CLEANING

Hand sanitizing stations will be available at each ride and throughout the carnival area. Cleaning teams will be assigned to disinfect high traffic areas.

FOOD & GAMES

Food stands will follow the most current CDC and local health department guidelines. Commonly used areas around food stands will be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day. Food stands will have separate payment handling employees and food handling employees. Open access condiments will be eliminated and replaced with single-use packets or portions available upon request. Napkins and cutlery will be available upon request. Game equipment touched by the public will be wiped after each use. Prizes will be sanitized before being placed into service in a game.

SIGNS & PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

We will have ample signage throughout the midway informing guests of health and safety protocols. All hand sanitizing stations will be clearly marked for public use.

August 7, 2021

Frequently Asked Questions about the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair August 13-21, 2021

We will implement restrictions on the Fairgrounds that are dictated by the CDC, Maryland State Health Department and Montgomery County Government. They are subject to change as might be necessary and we will respond in real-time should this occur. The answers below are based on the most current standards that have been established by the governing bodies listed above.

Are you requiring a mask indoors / outdoors?

Outdoors – no masks required.

Indoor face mask policy

Effective August 7, 2021, the Montgomery County Council has instituted an indoor face mask requirement for everyone over 2 years of age regardless of vaccination status. This mandate will be implemented in the following buildings on the Montgomery County Fairgrounds: Farm and Garden, Old Timers, Home Arts, Arts Crafts and Photography, 4-H, Chilly Mall, Big Cheese, Ice Cream Parlor, Heritage, all Restrooms, Birthing Center, Poultry Barn, Souvenir Booth and First Aid. Face masks are also required for those persons who are working in food preparation throughout the Fairgrounds. Face masks will be required upon entry to the free Shuttle Busses that run between Lake Forest Mall and the Fairgrounds.

How are you going to guarantee social distance?

Outdoors – there are no requirements to maintain social distance.

Indoors – there are no requirements to maintain social distance.

Are you providing sanitizing stations?

There will be over 70 sanitizing stations on the Fairgrounds, one at each carnival ride and over 40 sinks in restrooms and outdoors for washing your hands. Clean hands and not touching your face have proven to be excellent methods to avoid the spread of illness.

Are you providing water stations as in previous years, how you clean them?

There will be no public access water fountains on the Fairgrounds. Vendors and concessionaires will have Aquafina bottled water for sale at many locations.

How often are you sanitizing the grounds?

As an open-air environment of over 62 acres, sanitizing the grounds is not possible. Vendors, concessionaires, and carnival ride operators will maintain a regular schedule to sanitize high touch areas throughout the day. Additionally, carnival rides will be deep cleaned each night.

Are you controlling access to the restrooms?

Access to the restrooms is limited as in the past to the number of facilities and stalls at each location.

How often are you sanitizing restrooms?

Professional staff have been contracted at each restroom pod location to provide regular cleaning and sanitation during all hours of Fair operation.

Are you offering cashless payment options?

We are encouraging Fair patrons to visit mcagfair.com, search Buy Tickets to obtain General Admission, Carnival Ride Wristbands and Grandstand Entertainment tickets on-line to use your home printed, or Smartphone for cashless and touchless entry.

What additional measures is the fair taking to protect exhibitors and patrons in 2021?

Go to mcagfair.com to see the Montgomery County Fair Safe Reopening Plan for details.

Will staff at rides, food booths be wearing masks?

CDC, Maryland State and Montgomery County Government will establish standards for when masks are to be worn at the Fair. At this time, unvaccinated persons have been advised to wear masks. Masks are not required for staff at rides and food booths.

Will the occupancy/ number of people in buildings be regulated?

The Gaithersburg Fire Marshall has examined each of our buildings and provided updated limits on occupancy. We will abide by their numbers as well as any other restrictions that are provided by CDC, Maryland State and Montgomery County Government. We are not planning to implement any additional occupancy limits in Fairgrounds building.

Will food handlers in the cheese booth and ice cream parlor be wearing a mask?

CDC, Maryland State and Montgomery County Government will establish standards for when masks are to be worn at the Fair. At this time, unvaccinated persons have been advised to wear masks. Masks are not required for staff at rides and food booths.

Will there be refunds for tickets that were purchased and not used because a buyer or close contact, contracted COVID 19?

It is best not to purchase a ticket until it is certain that it can be used based on the health of each individual who will be attending the Fair. We encourage those who are experiencing COVID 19 symptoms such as high temperature, loss of taste and difficulty breathing, as well as those who have been in contact with a person who is ill, not attend the Fair. We have a no-refund policy which will continue in place for 2021.