

North Carolina Folk Festival

COVID-19 Safety Guidelines and Protocols

(as of August 22, 2021)

Overview

The North Carolina Folk Festival is working closely with local officials, including the City of Greensboro and the [Guilford County Health Department](#), to plan COVID safety protocols that are in compliance with state guidance as directed by Governor Roy Cooper and the [North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services \(NCDHHS\)](#).

Our priority is and has always been planning for the safety of our performers, staff, volunteers, vendors, sponsors, and audiences while also creating a fun, family-friendly event in downtown Greensboro.

The latest data shows that we are dealing with a more contagious version of the original COVID-19 virus - the Delta Variant. Health officials around the world are strongly recommending vaccinations as the primary way to get control of the spread of this virus. **The North Carolina Folk Festival strongly encourages everyone to get vaccinated to protect you, your loved ones, and others you come into contact with.**

The rules and regulations regarding masking and distancing are evolving as we learn more about the spread of COVID-19 through data collection across the globe and within our home community. We will follow guidelines and directives from our state and local health officials, and will communicate updates regarding our festival-time policies and protocols through our website, email newsletters, and social media.

We ask for your patience, support, and understanding as we update and communicate our COVID-19 safety protocols that protect you AND all festival participants.

The festival relies on the public to be “good neighbors” to one another, by following good health practices and treating one another with kindness. **Spread Kindness, Not Illness.**

Recent Data/News Informing Current Safety Guidelines:

On July 27, 2021, the [CDC](#) updated its guidance to recommend that all persons, including those who are vaccinated, wear masks in indoor public settings in locales with substantial or high community transmission of COVID-19.

On July 29, 2021, [NCDHHS](#) presented data showing a dramatic increase in new COVID-19 cases due to the Delta variant and recommended that unvaccinated individuals should wear masks and practice social distancing at all times in public and that everyone, regardless of vaccine status, should wear masks when gathering in large numbers at indoor venues.

Effective August 13, 2021, [The Guilford County Board of Health Issued County Wide COVID-19 Indoor Mask Rule](#)

As of August 17, 2021, [Guilford County, North Carolina categorized as a “High” community transmission region of COVID-19.](#)

Per CDC guidelines regarding mass gatherings, there is an inherent risk of contracting COVID-19 at any location where people are gathered. The North Carolina Folk Festival is designed so that all public activities take place outdoors. Since the event will not bring the public into confined places together, the individual exposure for COVID-19 should remain low.

Festival Safety Protocols:

- Hand Washing / Sanitizing** Hand sanitizer (touchless and pumps) will be available for Audience use near portable restrooms and at key locations around the site (e.g. first aid tents, information booths, food and beer sales, etc.).
- Masks** **All Audience members and Participants are strongly encouraged to wear masks at the festival and especially in areas of high concentrations of people.** We strongly encourage people who have not been vaccinated to wear masks. All Volunteers are required to wear masks while serving in their Volunteer capacities at the Festival. Additional masking requirements will be determined by state and local health authorities at the time of the festival.
- Vaccinations** **All Audience members and Participants are strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated prior to attending the festival. Those who choose not to vaccinate are strongly encouraged to mask at all times for their safety and the safety of others.** Free COVID-19 vaccinations will be available on the festival site, provided by [Cone Health](#), at the intersection of North Elm Street and Friendly Avenue. Unvaccinated Participants and eligible Audience members will have access to this service during afternoon hours on Saturday (9/11/21) and Sunday (9/12/21).
- Family Activities Area: CANCELLED** Due to the high touch and interactive nature of family programming that is designed specifically for younger children, we have decided not to host a designated Family Activities Area in 2021. Look for the return of the Family Area in 2022!
- Distancing** **Spread Kindness, Not Illness.** Currently, state mandates have been lifted on all social distancing requirements. The NC Folk Festival is located in downtown Greensboro with stages and activities in streets (closed to vehicular traffic), parks, and in other open spaces. Stage performances will be amplified through professional sound systems for accessible listening at a distance. Audience members are strongly encouraged to BYOC (bring your own chair), so that you can take advantage of the available space to enjoy performances AND keep a distance from others.
- Seating at Stages** Audience seating will not be permitted within 6 feet of each stage front for distancing from Performers. The Festival will provide a limited number of

folding chairs at the Lawn Stage, the Old Courthouse Stage, and the Lee Wrangler Stage, but we **strongly encourage Audience members to BYOC (bring your own chair)**.

Participant Health Self Assessment Festival Participants (volunteers, staff, vendors, etc) will be required to conduct a health self-assessment prior to beginning their shift each day. Anyone who is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or has been recently exposed to someone with COVID-19 will not be allowed to participate.

Food Vendors and Food Courts In addition to following Guilford County Health Department rules and regulations, food vendors will be required to provide audiences with pre-wrapped utensils and pre-packaged, single use packets of condiments.

Enhanced Volunteer Requirements and Guidelines Due to the nature of select Volunteer roles that puts them (1) in close contact with other Participants such as performing artists and crew, vaccination may be a condition of participation. Learn more at www.ncfolkfestival.com/volunteer.

Safety Support Representatives from Guilford County EMS, Greensboro Fire Department, and local law enforcement will be onsite throughout the festival to handle health and safety needs.

Regular Cleaning Festival staff will clean and sanitize high touch areas regularly throughout the weekend, and City of Greensboro waste management teams will dispose of trash regularly.

Festival Enhancements and Changes for 2021:

Outdoors Public festival activities will take place outdoors with stage areas and public spaces designed to be well ventilated. The only official indoor space being used by the festival is the Greensboro Cultural Center where masks are currently required.

Festival Hours Official festival hours will remain similar to years past:

- Friday, September 10: 6pm - 10:15pm
- Saturday, September 11: 12pm - 10:15pm
 - Note "Special Programs" below
- Sunday, September 12: 12pm - 6pm

Special Programs Two (2) new programs will be included in the Festival in 2021 to commemorate, remember, and honor 9/11

- **9-11 Remembrance Stairclimb** - presented in partnership with the Greensboro Fire Department, this fundraising event will take place the morning of Saturday, September 11 in Center City Park and the Bellemeade

Parking Deck. More information available at www.facebook.com/GreensboroStairClimb

- **#DGSO Stage** - presented in partnership with the City of Greensboro and Downtown Greensboro, Inc., this special stage of performances will take place on Saturday, September 11 from 5pm - 8pm at the 9-11 Sculpture in at the intersection of South Elm and MLK Drive. More information will be posted at www.ncfolkfestival.com.