



## **MATSU EVENTS STATEMENT REGARDING COVID-19 AND PUBLIC GATHERINGS**

The State of Alaska is open for business. However, small businesses, particularly those involved in hospitality, tourism, retail, and food service, have been hit particularly hard by closures and restrictions. During the summer of 2020, after the Alaska State Fair closure was announced, we received countless requests from businesses and others to hold an event for the benefit of these small businesses and for the benefit of the Alaskan public that was hungry for safe interaction with these businesses. To meet this need, the Mat-Su Fall Festival was organized and held at Alaska Raceway Park in August. The Raceway is a large, outdoor venue, sprawling over more than 20 acres, and the event proved to be successful for the participating vendors. There were nearly 10,000 visitors over the course of the 3-day weekend, folks maintained personal distancing common sense, and the festival was an enjoyable and safe event for everyone involved. By popular demand, the festival, rebranded as the Mat-Su "Summer" Festival, is returning to Alaska Raceway Park in 2021, but this year in June rather than August. We will be holding the Mat-Su Summer Festival the weekend of June 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, & 27<sup>th</sup>.

We recognize that COVID is real and that it can be a serious disease. Many of us have already had it, and others will get it. Most certainly, everyone in Alaska either has been, or will be, exposed to the virus at some point. We are reminded of the virus 24/7 by the media, by the internet, by various government agencies, and by healthcare professionals. Everyone is aware of recommendations for personal safety. Of course, the ultimate responsibility for health safety rests on every individual. After nearly a year of constant daily reminders of the importance of personal responsibility, we are putting our faith in the willingness of all festival participants, vendors and visitors alike, to use common sense and to exercise personal responsibility. If people are sick, or if they have reason to believe that they have recently been exposed to the virus, we expect them to stay home. If someone has concern for their own health, or for the health of those they live with, we expect them to stay home as well. We are asking folks to maintain respectful distancing between themselves and others while attending the festival. Face coverings will be available free of charge for anyone wanting one, and hand sanitizing stations will be available throughout the Raceway Park. However, MATSU Events will not be mandating personal behavior.

All systems are "GO," and the festival is scheduled to proceed as promised. The only reasons the festival would conceivably be cancelled is if:

- 1) There is a marked increase in public health concern to the point that it causes too many vendors to cancel,
- 2) It becomes obvious that the general public would be unwilling to attend the event due to perceived health concerns, or
- 3) The venue is closed by the Raceway Park owners, by government mandate, or for any other reason beyond our control.

MATSU Events is assuming all risk of festival advertising, promotion, and preparation. Rest assured that should it become necessary to cancel prior to the festival dates, all vendor fees will be promptly returned. If you, as a vendor, find you are unable to attend the festival due to COVID or COVID exposure, booth fees will, of course, be refunded in full.

In the meantime, stay safe, and we look forward to seeing you in June!