

Arts Sector – DRAFT Performing Arts Venues & Producing Organizations

Safeguarding Guidance:

The Governor’s Economic Re-Opening Task Force recommends protocols for safeguarding all New Hampshire businesses during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. This industry-specific guidance is based on what is currently known about COVID-19 and is intended to protect the public’s health and allow New Hampshire to remain open for business.

The intent of these recommendations is to reduce transmission of COVID-19 among employees and customers; support healthy business operations; and maintain a healthy work environment.

The Performing Arts Work Group recommends that all venues and production companies review, and adopt as appropriate, the mitigations outlined in the Event Safety Alliance Reopening Guide and the Performing Arts Center Consortium Guide to Reopening Theatrical Venues.

In addition to strict adherence to [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#) and [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\) guidance](#), and [US Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), the State of New Hampshire recommends policies and procedures to protect consumers and employees, including:

I. Protective Face Mask Use:

1. For the protection of other guests and employees, customers are encouraged to bring and wear a protective face mask, especially when:
 - a. arriving and departing the venue;
 - b. a customer is within 6 feet of anyone else in the venue;
 - c. seated at the performance.
2. It is encouraged that venues have onsite protective face masks available for patron purchase.
3. Employees shall wear protective face masks over their nose and mouth when at work and around others in settings where social distancing may be difficult. Employee protective face masks should be kept clean in accordance with CDC guidance.
4. Due to the nature of live performance, and that face mask use may not be practical during rehearsals and performances, it is strongly recommended that staff/independent contractor testing be considered for use by each producing organization. If adopted, a written policy must be developed and communicated to those contracted for the company. All staff and independent contractors should be screened in accordance with New Hampshire’s Universal Guidance for Employers.
5. While not on stage all performers, musicians, creative teams, and production crew should wear cloth face masks and practice social distancing to the extent possible.

II. Employee and Volunteer Protection Guidelines:

1. Follow Universal Guidelines for All New Hampshire Employers and Employees.
2. Follow CDC [guidance for Businesses and Workplaces](#).
3. Follow CDC guidelines for [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Businesses](#).

4. Follow [ServSafe COVID-19](#) training guidelines if applicable.
5. Conduct employee health screening as outlined in the Universal Guidelines for All New Hampshire Employers and Employees.
6. Train all employees on the importance of frequent hand washing and the use of appropriate hand sanitizers.
7. Provide COVID-specific safety training for venue staff who manage or oversee event volunteers, occasional part-time front of house employees, and production and security crews.

III. Consumer Protection Guidelines:

1. Facilitate 6 foot social distancing within the audience areas (allowing for cohabiting parties to be seated together).
2. Where possible, move to advanced reservations and cashless transactions, no paper receipts.
3. Frequent cleaning/disinfecting of high touch surfaces in common areas. This means before each performance, after the audience is seated, and after the audience leaves.
4. Signage must be prominently posted at any entrance to the venue and customer screening prior to entry asking if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, including:
 - a. Fever
 - b. Respiratory symptoms such as sore throat, cough, or shortness of breath
 - c. Flu-like symptoms such as muscle aches, chills, and severe fatigue
 - d. Changes in a person's sense of taste or smell
 - e. If you answered yes to any of these questions, please do not put our employees and other guests at risk and come back another day when you feel better.

IV. Business Process Adaptation Guidelines:

1. Organizations that have the flexibility to rehearse and perform in outdoor spaces will be encouraged to do so, following all appropriate guidance (see Drive-In and Streaming Media Guidelines for additional pertinent details).
2. Organizations will designate a staff member to ensure compliance with standards and guidelines.
3. Hand sanitizer stations shall be made available in accessible high-traffic areas such as entry points to facilities, restrooms, and point of sale stations.
4. If serving retail (ex. ticket sales, artist merchandise etc.) operations, follow current Retail Guidelines.
5. Restrooms should be monitored, routinely cleaned, and soap dispensers regularly filled.
6. Disinfect all front-of-house surfaces including door handles, screens, phones, pens, keyboards and other areas of hand contact every two hours while the venue is open to the public or is staffed, at a minimum.
7. Restroom occupancy should be limited for group restrooms to incorporate social distancing, waiting lines outside of restrooms should be socially distanced with guidance
8. Where practical, offer touch-free payment options at all point of sale locations. Use plastic shields or barriers between customers and staff at service counters.
9. Avoid crowding in common areas, i.e. lobbies, by opening doors to seating areas earlier. Encourage staggered arrival times and immediate seating where practical.

10. Common areas for staff such as green rooms, dressing rooms, rehearsal rooms, orchestra pits, restrooms shall follow the guidance regarding cleaning, sanitizing, and social distancing. Appropriate precautions will be taken in close contact situations.
11. The use of Atmospheric Hazers or Fog Machines during performances is discouraged at this time.

V. Additional Process Adaptations - Presenting Venues

1. At least two weeks prior to, and again upon arrival, local staff shall inform tour personnel of local policies and protocols to protect the health and safety of venue staff and guests. Standard screening questions shall be asked to ensure tours coming into the local venue are healthy and have adopted health protocols that conform to local ones.
2. In backstage areas, post clear signage to promote distance and hygiene protocols.
3. Touring personnel (artists and support crew) shall limit interactions with local staff and patrons. Appropriate social distancing and use of PPE shall be observed.
4. Meet and Greet of touring artists to the patrons shall be prohibited unless six foot social distancing can be maintained.
5. Touring personnel shall be restricted to the backstage and onstage area to the extent possible. Contact with patrons shall be minimized with appropriate PPE worn when social distancing cannot be maintained.

VI. Additional Process Adaptations - Producing Organizations

1. Auditions and rehearsals should be kept to a minimum and held with only necessary staff and artists. Social distancing will be maintained and, where not practical, cloth face masks shall be worn. Acrylic shields should be installed where appropriate for musicians who, due to the nature of their instruments, cannot wear face coverings when playing. Staggered scheduling is encouraged, as well as use of videoconferencing.
2. Producing organizations that employ staff and independent contractors from outside New Hampshire should abide by current New Hampshire guidance on quarantine for those coming to the state to stay for a period of time.
3. All staging, including choreography, stage combat and personal contact, should only be conducted by screened staff and independent contractors. Special consideration and extra precautions should be taken for performances involving close or intimate contact between performers and creative teams, including testing, stricter isolation, or other preventative measures.