

Reopening Museums: A Planning Tool

1. PREPARING STAFF

Defining priorities & roles

- Establish re-entry task force—with subgroups as appropriate—to clarify immediate, midrange, and long-range objectives
- Review impact on staffing: e.g., need for site health and safety officers, increased invigilation of high-traffic areas, increased cleaning and temperature testing; survey the impact of partial reopening on front-of-house staffing
- Consider heightened on-site medical provision (e.g., doctor or nurse on call)
- Consider “A” and “B” (and possibly “C”) teams in rotation in the office, with others at home to maintain social-distance protocols
- Develop flexible HR policies that deploy staff optimally, making reasonable accommodations for at-risk employees or those uncomfortable coming back to work
- Review use of docents in light of the above
- Align with public-health guidance and labor policies
- Amend mandatory and voluntary training
- Establish protocols in the event a visitor becomes sick on site, or if an infected visitor is confirmed to have been on site (cleaning; notification of potentially exposed staff and, via social media, visitors; contact tracing)
- Establish protocols for addressing and, as appropriate, de-escalating noncompliance incidents

Securing employee well-being

- Develop badge-in or other identification process to capture who is on site for contact-tracing purposes
- Explore practicability of regular and accessible testing, whether on site or via local health partners
- Consider psychological counseling and tele-health options, including a remote employee assistance program
- Address employee concerns about privacy, vulnerability
- Either close staff canteen or ensure food service via boxed meals
- Limit and define areas where staff can congregate (break rooms, elevators, etc.)
- Suspend use of shared appliances and, where that is impossible, develop appropriate cleaning protocols
- Limit vehicle occupancy, e.g., to one driver and one passenger
- Consider protocols for transport to and from work if people are using public transportation

Orientation about new operating protocols

- Prepare staff for public-facing roles, including responsibilities and protocols for handling nonconforming members of the public
- Establish regular orientations and information sharing
- Provide protective coverings (PPE) and training in their use
- Establish initial deep-cleaning and subsequent enhanced-cleaning strategy: analyze staff and visitor “touchpoints,” such as front desks, computers, phones, handrails, elevator buttons; sanitize touchscreens and bathrooms (stall door latches, hand driers, etc.)
- Minimize staff travel, and consider suspending staff travel for a defined period immediately after reopening

2. PREPARING FACILITIES

Undertaking site & operational planning

- Audit facilities to evaluate implications of distancing
- Conduct risk assessment of visitor and work spaces, per OSHA guidance
- Consider special access points for older and vulnerable visitors
- Establish compliance with leases and local landlord regulations
- Revise hours of operation, including special access times for older and vulnerable visitors, and review designated members’ hours
- Limit hours to ensure adequate time to clean
- Undertake planning to develop one-way flow through galleries
- Consider a phased reopening, expanding the open footprint over time
- Determine which galleries/spaces/elevators will be off-limits to the public
- Determine which artworks/installations will be off-limits to the public
- Identify a “sick room” for visitors taken ill during their visit
- Seek to conform with ADA guidelines when implementing these measures

Installing protections & partitions

- Seek consultation of infectious-disease and occupational-safety experts in re-designing museum spaces
- Reconfigure workspaces to create more distance between employees
- Procure or make plexiglass partitions at welcome desks, office cubicles, museum retail stores
- Procure and provide retractable belt barriers and stanchions for lines
- Mark floors to indicate safe distances, where useful
- Prohibit sharing of devices (e.g., audio guides) as needed
- Review scope for touchless ticketing and limitation of cash transactions

Ramping up hygiene & cleaning

- Implement updated cleaning strategy
- Specify CDC-approved, hospital-grade, and child-safe cleaning supplies that are also non-toxic to artworks
- Install hand sanitizers at entrance points, internal intersections, bathrooms, retail and restaurants/cafés
- Audit and replace or regularly clean plastic and stainless steel surfaces that may retain virus

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Employ germ-killing blue-light equipment where applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Consider antibacterial floor mats <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure adequate supplies of equipment, e.g., wipes, electrostatic sprays, UV-light sterilizers <input type="checkbox"/> Consider increasing the ratio of fresh to recirculated air in offices and public circulation areas
Placing signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly post entry-point rules, orientation signage, and signage on cleaning protocols <input type="checkbox"/> Add floor decals that designate proper distancing <input type="checkbox"/> Place wall orientation signage and distancing reminders throughout public space <input type="checkbox"/> Position distancing-in-line reminder stanchions <input type="checkbox"/> Post external orientation signage at initial access points <input type="checkbox"/> Consider adapting touch screens to voice- or motion-activated devices

3. COMMUNICATING & COORDINATING FOR SAFETY

Coordination with relevant public agencies & organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Address compliance with ADA and OSHA guidelines, including those relating to discriminatory practices <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate reopening policies and language with local/regional cultural organizations to maximize effective communication
Legal & contractual preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish level of indemnification from liability lawsuits, review and amend insurance policies (e.g., with micro-biological-agent coverage) if needed <input type="checkbox"/> Establish coverage for force majeure under insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Develop policies and script for engaging visitors on medical issues and taking medical information
Informing the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Publish and explain new procedures and protocols on all media channels to manage expectations—including data protection and storage protocols <input type="checkbox"/> Establish targeted communications channels (social, newsletter, web micro-site) to pool pandemic-related information and provide updates <input type="checkbox"/> Consider the museum's role more generally as a public-information point vis à vis public health <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly state policy regarding acceptable group size <input type="checkbox"/> Issue alerts to notify the public of changes to pandemic-response status <input type="checkbox"/> Consider a guest tip line for feedback and to instill confidence in institutional response

4. UTILIZING OUTDOOR AREAS

Coordinating external crowd management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Where applicable, limit arrivals at site perimeter<input type="checkbox"/> Employ signs throughout parking lots that make people feel welcome but also remind them of the need for social distance<input type="checkbox"/> If possible, monitor these areas so expectations are managed from the outset<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a weather-protected waiting area for people to stand in line<input type="checkbox"/> Develop socially distant, staggered entry protocol responsive to the site design and existing infrastructure
Offering outdoor art experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Design and facilitate self-guided art tours (where possible)<input type="checkbox"/> Designate picnic and relaxation areas
Adapting parking & parking structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Limit parking capacity to help reduce access (where applicable)<input type="checkbox"/> Reconfigure newly available parking space for visitor processing<input type="checkbox"/> Consider implementing timed parking-reservation system
Erecting temporary structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Establish a visitor orientation and welcome tent<input type="checkbox"/> Erect a sanitizing facility

5. MANAGING ARRIVAL

Mitigating in-flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Consider timed (and time-limited) attendance via online registration, and discouragement or prevention of walk-up attendance<input type="checkbox"/> Set and enforce maximum attendance (e.g., 1 visitor per 150 square feet), keeping in mind that current advice varies<input type="checkbox"/> Consider a “soft opening” for members or other groups to work out kinks in the inflow process<input type="checkbox"/> If your museum charges admission, consider a free soft opening to test management of bottlenecks<input type="checkbox"/> Where useful and possible, funnel visitation evenly to various parts of the museum (e.g. mark entry tickets to start in different locations)<input type="checkbox"/> Consider self-service bag and coat check via lockers
Orienting & informing visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Consider audio announcements<input type="checkbox"/> Erect signs explaining procedures<input type="checkbox"/> Consider cellphone tours or mobile apps for artwork interpretation and information<input type="checkbox"/> Replace paper handouts with screens where possible

Ensuring protective coverings	<input type="checkbox"/> Promulgate face-mask protocol (e.g., required for staff and recommended for visitors six years and above) <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a policy with respect to protective coverings
Taking body temperature	<input type="checkbox"/> Deploy and train thermometer-gun crew <input type="checkbox"/> If possible, deploy remote thermal scanners at public and staff entrances <input type="checkbox"/> Establish medical-triage area (if possible outside the building) to process visitors with elevated temperatures for further screening <input type="checkbox"/> Consider other testing as medical knowledge advances (e.g., pulse oximetry)
Compiling & tracking visitor information	<input type="checkbox"/> Consider the adoption of visitor-registration and contact-tracing measures at admission points, to permit contact tracing if necessary

6. DISTANCING INDOORS

Enforcing physical distancing	<input type="checkbox"/> Institute minimum six-foot distance between non-family members <input type="checkbox"/> Use floor decals in areas where queuing is likely <input type="checkbox"/> Suspend group tours and activities until further notice <input type="checkbox"/> Assess viability of current generation of social-distancing apps
Establishing one-way routing	<input type="checkbox"/> Define and indicate one-way walking paths in corridors and galleries <input type="checkbox"/> Define no-go zones where distancing is not practicable
Distancing in public areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Introduce guidelines for guards to enforce distancing in public circulation areas (where guard staff is contracted, address via contract) <input type="checkbox"/> Position guards in major intersections to steer public to under-trafficked areas
Distancing in the galleries	<input type="checkbox"/> Set and enforce maximum number of visitors per gallery <input type="checkbox"/> Add people-to-people distancing to gallery guard or attendant responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Remove benches; replace with distanced chairs <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure sufficient circulation distance between all artworks and displays <input type="checkbox"/> Disable or cover all touch-activated exhibits/interactives

7. REDUCING BOTTLENECKS

Upgrading washroom sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Employ attendants or other systems to monitor usage and retain possibility of social distance<input type="checkbox"/> Install no-touch taps and towel dispensers<input type="checkbox"/> Deploy automatic hand-driers, where available
Adapting restaurants & cafés	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Close restaurants and cafés unless they can meet the same standards as other food-service providers in state<input type="checkbox"/> Establish and enforce maximum capacity limit (e.g., 30 to 60%)<input type="checkbox"/> Provide boxed lunches instead of served meals<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt cashless payment<input type="checkbox"/> Close all water fountains
Rethinking museum retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Set maximum number of shoppers<input type="checkbox"/> Consider stocking face masks and sanitary and protective equipment for sale<input type="checkbox"/> Create more space between aisles<input type="checkbox"/> Shift to online fulfillment where possible<input type="checkbox"/> Adopt cashless payment
Evaluating elevators & stairways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Restrict small elevators to staff and emergency use only<input type="checkbox"/> Indicate direction of foot traffic on stairways
Limiting use of lecture halls, education spaces, & events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Offer take-home activity kits in lieu of group workshops<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend large galas and rental events until further notice