NOVA SCOTIA
NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

OVERVIEW

These guidelines have been prepared to provide a framework to help arts, events and culture organizations and businesses develop plans to safely reopen. All businesses, organizations and employees need to follow the Health Protection Act Order and public health directives to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Each organization, event or business is responsible for creating a plan that outlines what they're doing to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Your plan needs to be customized for your organization. Consider how your organization can effectively control the spread of COVID-19. You may need to change workflows or how you interact with customers, artists, performers, suppliers and clients.

This document is designed to help you create a COVID-19 prevention plan and begin to offer services to the public.

This document includes examples of the types of information you should include but may not capture everything that applies to your situation. You know your venue, event and organization best. The safety of your staff and customers is the most important consideration for reopening. Everyone must do their part to keep workplaces safe as we adapt to the new normal.

BUILDING A PLAN

 When creating a reopening plan, you should consider:

1. Creating a workplace COVID-19 team
2. Addressing workflow to restrict numbers of people and face-to-face interactions
3. Addressing social distancing requirements
4. Cleaning and hygiene protocols
5. Equipment usage
6. Staffing and training plan
7. Communications plan

We'll explain each point in detail below.

Identify your workplace COVID-19 team

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it is especially important to take steps to stay safe at your facility, venue or event. Having a dedicated team, if resources allow, makes it easier to develop a robust plan, monitor its effectiveness, and implement any necessary changes.

The COVID-19 team could help:

- develop your reopening/prevention plan
- implement and enforce your plan
- keep up to date with best practices and public health guidance
- communicate the plan and any updates to public health guidance

Create workflow and site-specific plans

Think about the activity that happens in your venue, facility or at your event. Now think about how you adjust that workflow to adhere to public health measures like social distancing and social gathering limitations.

Your plan should consider all areas of work which may include: public areas, washrooms, dressing areas, green rooms, production areas, food and beverage service, kitchen, waste disposal, cleaning, ticketing/box office, entry/exits, merchandise sales, security, seating, parking, performers/artists protocols, backstage, stage doors, lobby, intermissions or end of performance, tech and production, loading docks, stages, rehearsals, wardrobe and staff areas.

Some considerations for reducing the risk of exposure at your venue, facility or event could include:

- Looking at your floor plan and determine how you'll maintain a 6ft/2m social distance between individuals
- Placing shields or other physical barriers between employees and the public at key areas to help maintain social distance
- Ensuring signage and other notices related to hygiene procedures are posted
- Providing barriers and/or using floor markings to minimize interaction and encourage one-way traffic flow
- Closing buildings/galleries if social distancing not possible
- Making disinfectant wipes/sanitizer available to guests/customers at touch points
- Altering transaction procedures involving food, products, and sales to contactless wherever possible
- Consider a single point of entry and a separate exit with appropriate spacing between them
- Event attendance should be limited or staggered to minimize overlap and reduce crowd size within social gathering and distancing limits

- Implement a quarantine procedure for items for sale that are exposed to large numbers of people
- Plan for the possibility that you may need space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become ill
- Develop and implement a symptom-free staffing policy that supports staying home when sick
- Reposition art studios to increase physical distances or install barriers and partitions
- Remove non-essential items like magazines, brochures, playbills, and other items that can't be easily cleaned from public areas

Social distancing

Social distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak. How do you plan to ensure social distancing at your venue, facility or event? What workflows will need to change to ensure social distancing is maintained?

Some considerations to maintain social distancing may include:

- Considering ways to reduce the number of attendees in a facility or at an event based on current public health directives
- Reviewing seating arrangements to account for social distancing
- Providing barriers and/or utilize floor markings to minimize interaction and encourage one-way traffic flow
- Discouraging unnecessary physical contact between employees and customers
- Encouraging guests to pick up tickets in advance of a performance or implement e-ticketing.
- For pickups, establish pickup time slots to control traffic
- Establishing and enforce washroom occupancy limits and entry controls
- Making use of non-medical masks or face coverings in situations where social distancing cannot be maintained
- Preparing to adhere to and/or enforce any isolation measures. For example, anyone currently travelling to NS from out of province, must self isolate for 14 days

Cleaning and hygiene

Cleaning and disinfecting help prevent the spread of COVID-19. This part of your plan is essential to keep staff, attendees and customers safe.

Some things to think about when developing this section of your plan are:

- What cleaning and disinfecting processes will be put in place?
- Will you need to change workflow to ensure frequent cleaning?
- This section would detail cleaning frequency and who is responsible for cleaning. Cleaning guidelines can be found on www.novascotia.ca/coronavirus
- Consider your high-touch surfaces and prioritize cleaning and disinfection. Can you reduce the number of high-touch surfaces that are used?
- If you have equipment shared by multiple people, consider whether you can limit who uses it
- Provide handwashing and hand sanitizer stations at the entrance and at key areas throughout to encourage regular hand-washing
- Ensure handwashing and sanitizing stations are frequently cleaned
- Display hand-washing posters to help staff and customers follow proper hygiene protocols
- Follow instructions from local health authority on grades of cleaner acceptable to kill the virus, you can find guidance for workplaces here
- Clean and disinfect workspaces/studio spaces after each use
- Disinfect phones, remote controls, computers, mics and other handheld devices with 70% alcohol or wipes
- Provide training to employees on hygiene and sanitation practices
- Increase environmental cleaning and ventilation of public spaces and facilities
- Ensure single use disposable gloves are worn while performing cleaning and disinfection/sanitizing duties

Equipment

Your plan should consider how to manage equipment to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Equipment may include computers, cash registers, personal protective equipment (PPE), technical and production equipment, musical instruments, artists supplies and studio equipment, and props. Can you limit the use of equipment so fewer people are touching it? How are you going to ensure equipment is cleaned or maintained? How can you minimize the number of people using the equipment? What if any PPE will be required for employees?

Some other considerations or measures could include:

- Placing shields or other physical barriers between employees and the public at key areas to assist in maintaining 6ft/2m social distance
- Ensuring high customer contact areas, shared technical and production equipment (including heavy equipment) and high touch surfaces are a part of frequent cleaning protocols
- Procuring, storing, and maintaining necessary cleaning supplies, PPE, and other critical supplies
- Providing safe disposal receptacles for used PPE

Preparing to reopen

Welcoming back employees

Consider how employees will prepare to return to work. Outline their duties and responsibilities for understanding, implementing, and enforcing your COVID-19 prevention and reopening plan.

Some things to think about when developing this part of your plan include:

- How will you screen employees for symptoms?
- What information will you give them to make sure they're self monitoring?
- How will you support staff to stay home if they're sick?
- If an employee is required to self-isolate, how will they be assessed before or after returning to work?
- How will you make it easier for employees to keep their hands clean?
- How will you communicate this plan with your staff?

It's especially important to take steps to stay safe at work. Make sure to include what actions employees need to take for:

- Self-assessment
- Training

- Understanding duties and responsibilities under your prevention plan
- Monitoring and enforcing the plan
- Address non-compliance
- Personal protective equipment
- This has been a difficult time for many, so keeping in mind everyone's mental health is key too. Let staff know the steps you are taking to keep them safe and what is expected of them to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone

Some considerations for this section could include:

- Developing a communication strategy for employees that explains the actions your organization is taking to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19
- Assessing how your facility or event will be affected if one of your employees is ill
- Maintaining up-to-date important medical contact information (e.g., medical officer, health department, health clinics, etc.)
- If essential travel is required for employees or artists/performers, documenting how they can travel safely and in compliance with public health directives for self-isolation upon returning to Nova Scotia
- Revising work schedules to reduce the number of employees assigned at a given time
- Creating plans to address an outbreak or respond if public health measures are tightened again
- Designating a platform where employees can expect updates
- Training staff on what is expected of them (including hand hygiene, how to correctly wear and maintain PPE, etc.)
- Training staff on how to enforce non-compliance with customers
- Training staff to answer questions about new policies and procedures
- Creating incident reporting guidelines should a customer or guest report having COVID-19
- Increasing staff breaks to create opportunities for more frequent hand-washing

Welcoming customers or clients

Staff, customers, outside cultural workers and suppliers need to be aware of safety precautions they must follow. Outline these precautions and how you will communicate your COVID-19 practices with them. Make sure visiting artists, suppliers, facility rentals, production and technical service providers know what actions they need to take in working with your facility or event venue.

- How will you communicate your plan to your clients and customers?
- How does your plan impact the customer/client/guest experience and what must they do to comply?

- Will you limit the number of customers at your facility or event? If so, how will you enforce that limit?

Some additional considerations for this section of your plan could include:

- Developing a communication strategy for customers that explains the actions your organization is taking to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19
- Identifying and addressing potential language, cultural and accessibility barriers associated with communicating COVID-19 information to employees, customers and spectators
- Developing flexible refund policies for customers
- Identifying actions to take if you need to postpone or cancel an event
- Facility rental programs: creating capacity, managing guidelines in spaces, cancelling rental programs
- Making sure customers know how to get around your facility or event venue
- Establishing ticket pick-up time slots to control peak traffic
- Ensuring guests are familiar with ticket pick-up policies in advance of performance or event

Communication

It is critical to maintain and adapt your plan as the situation changes. You should communicate your plan and ensure people understand it. If possible, depending on your business, maintaining a participant or client registry (names, dates, time, and contact info) is a good way to facilitate potential public health contact tracing.

Some considerations when building your communication plan:

- Develop communication protocols to determine how artists/performers, volunteers, spectators and others are notified of a case of COVID-19
- Ensure employees and customers receive new and important public health information in a timely and efficient way
- Actively promote messages that discourage people who are sick from visiting your facility or attending events. Make sure policies are clearly posted on site, particularly any changes to existing policies (ie: more flexible refunds). Social media and other communication channels should continue to be used regularly by the organization

COVID-19 PREVENTION PLAN CHECKLIST	
Create a workplace COVID-19 team	
Assess workflow to restrict number of people/interactions	
Address social distancing requirements	
Cleaning and hygiene protocols	
Equipment usage	
Preparing and training staff	
Preparing for customers and clients	
Overall external communication plan	