

REOPENING GUIDELINES FOR BC MUSEUMS, GALLERIES & CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

Updated June 9, 2020



BC MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION

About These Guidelines

The BC Museums Association (BCMA) has compiled a guide, which has then been reviewed by the Government of British Columbia, to assist museums, galleries, culture centres, and heritage organizations in preparing their sites to be reopened to staff, volunteers, and the public.

This is a living document which will be updated as our understanding of the COVID-19 virus, best practices, government guidelines, and guidance from medical professionals evolves. While BCMA makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information, information provided in this document is “as is” without any warranty of accuracy, reliability, or otherwise, either express or implied. Users of this Plan should not in any manner rely upon or construe the information or resource materials in this Plan as legal, or other

Only your organization can decide the best path forward. The resources provided are intended to empower you to make the best-informed possible decisions as we approach an uncertain future.

Worksafe BC has also posted resources and guidelines that are relevant to the cultural sector. We encourage you to review the following resources when creating your reopening plan:

- [Protocols for returning to operation for arts and cultural facilities](#)
- [A six-step guide to reducing the risk at workplaces](#)
- [A Safety Plan Checklist covering each of the six steps listed in the guide](#)

Worksafe BC updates their [website](#) regularly with new resources and guidelines and is an excellent planning resource.

The BCMA would also like to thank the members of the Reopening Working Group who contributed their time and ideas to this document.

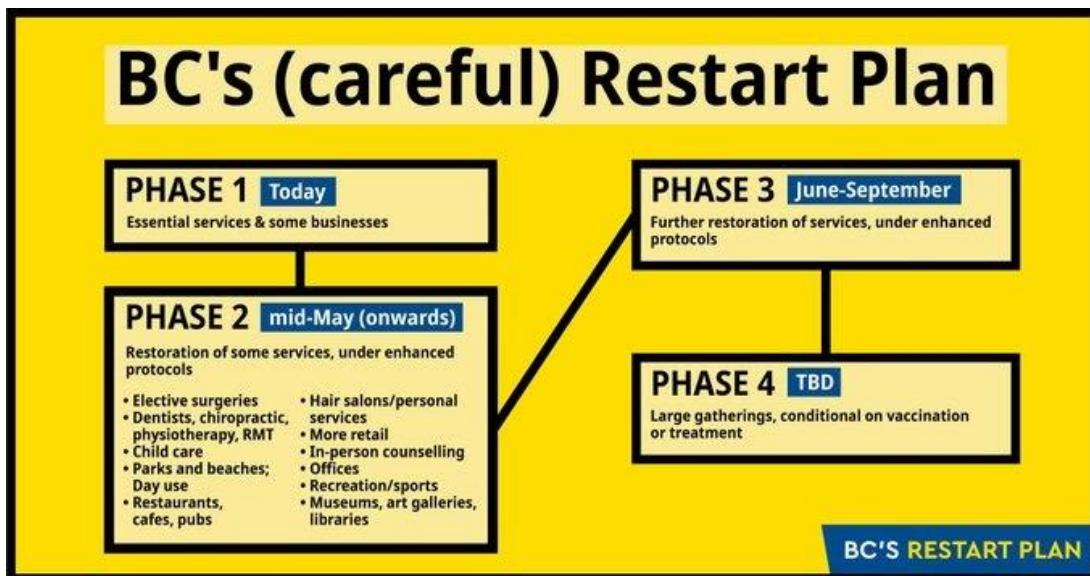
About the BC Museums Association

Founded in 1957, the British Columbia Museums Association (BCMA) creates a bright future for British Columbia’s museum, gallery, and related heritage communities through networking, advocacy, innovation, and professional development. It delivers programs and services to the benefit of its members and the sector at large, acting as the cultural and heritage information hub for British Columbia while providing a unified voice for the institutions, trustees, professional staff and volunteers.

To stay up-to-date with the BCMA and its programs, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), or visit our [website](#).

Making the Decision to Reopen

The Government of British Columbia has announced that museums are included in Phase 2 of [BC's Restart Plan](#). Phase 2 began in mid-May and Phase 3 is currently slated to begin between [June and September 2020](#). This plan indicates steps that we will take together to protect people and ensure that our province can come back from COVID-19 stronger than before.



When preparing your site to reopen, the goal in the first stage of your phased reopening should not be returning to business as usual but rather on developing strategies to adapt sites to meet current conditions and to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, and visitors.

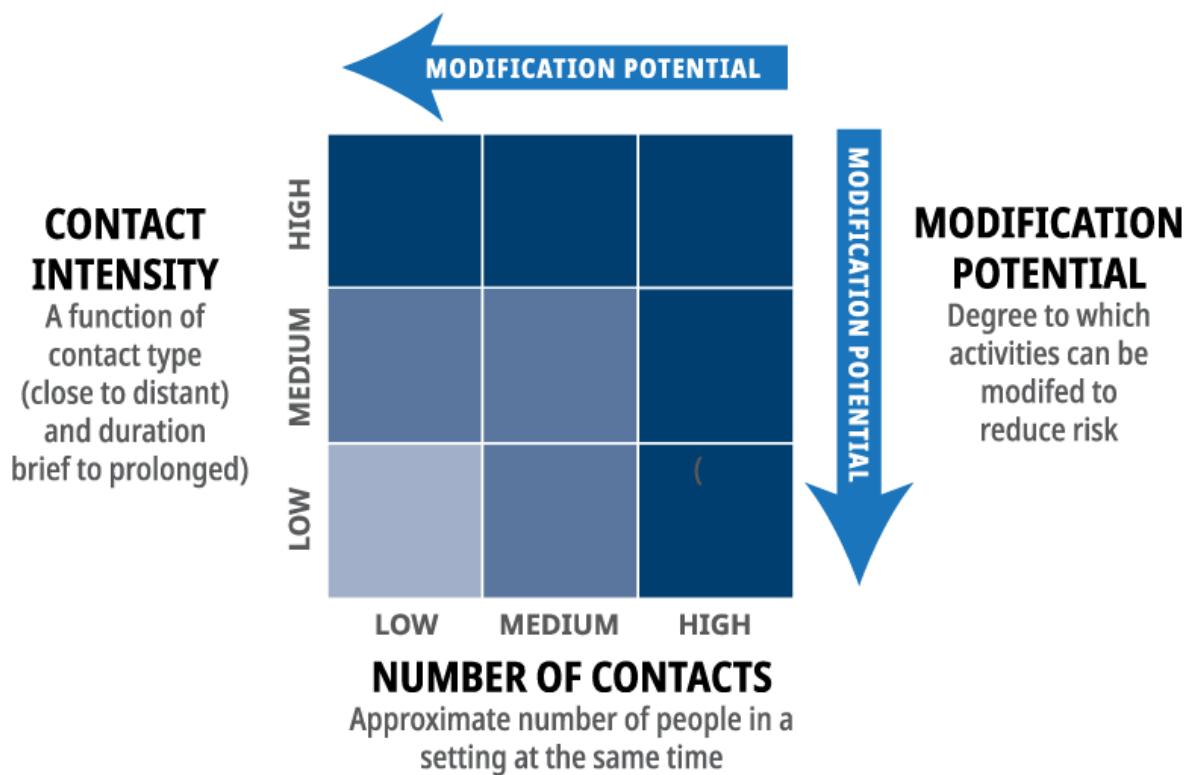
The Government of BC recommends the [following steps and modifications to reduce risk:](#)

- Physical distancing measures – measures to reduce the density of people
- Engineering controls – physical barriers (like plexiglass at checkouts) or increased ventilation
- Administrative controls – clear rules and guidelines
- Personal protective equipment – like the use of non-medical masks

These modifications and controls, combined with the following measures, can reduce the risk of transmission.

- Create clear workplace policies that ensure people with cold or flu symptoms do not come to work

- Implement sick day policies that allow people to be off or work safely from home when they are ill or have symptoms of a cold or flu
- Provide work from home options, when possible, to reduce contact intensity. When it's not an option, consider measures such as staggered shifts and virtual meetings as much as possible
- Implement strategies that reduce the number and intensity of contacts – from greater use of non-medical masks to more checkouts and increased shopping hours
- Clean “high-touch” areas in workplaces and retail outlets frequently and provide hand sanitizer at entrances
- Focus on higher-risk employees including those over the age of 60 and those with underlying medical conditions – from more flexible hours, to work from home options and workspace accommodation

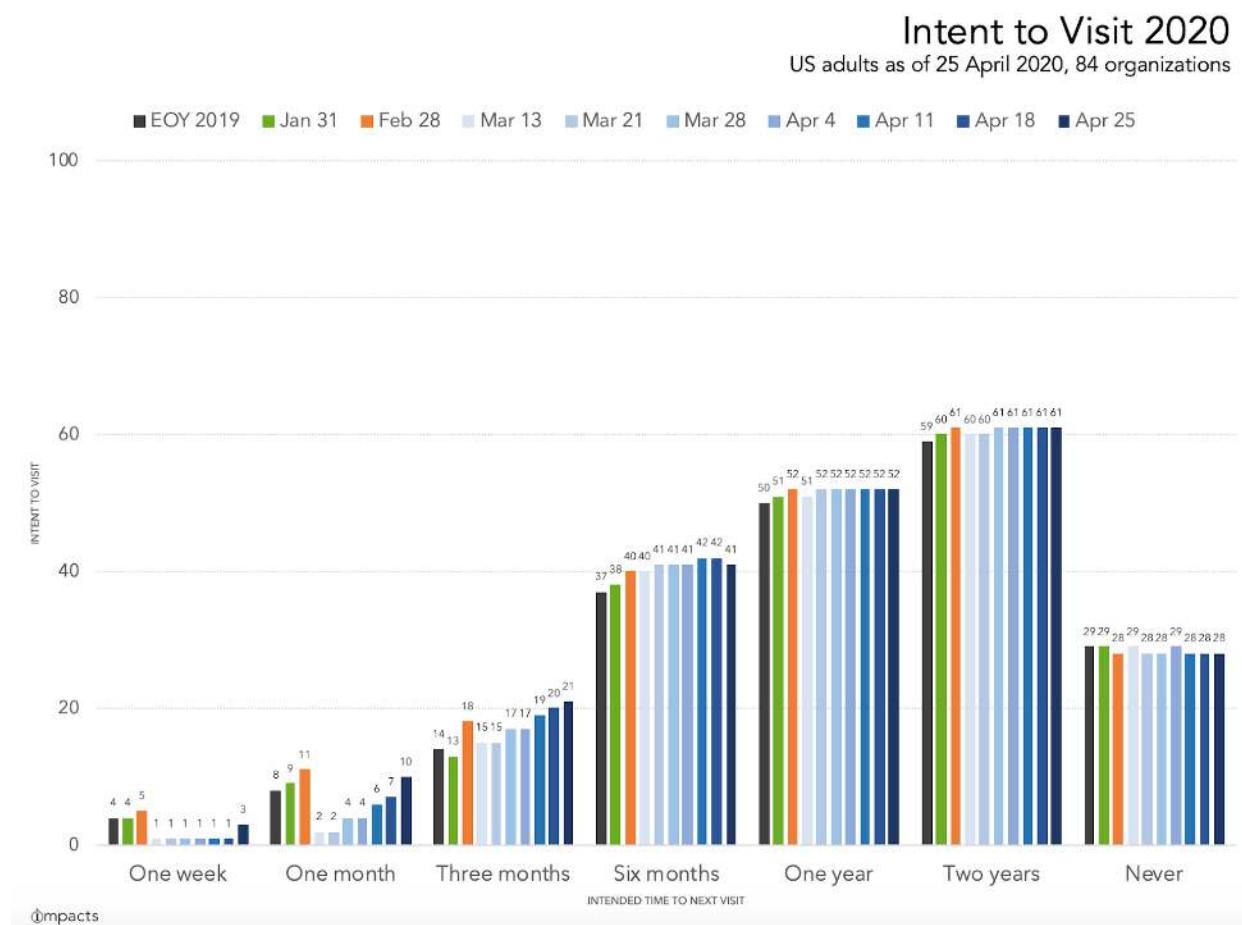


It is important to remember that part of your reopening plan must include strategies to close if conditions deteriorate and become unsafe for staff, volunteers and visitors. **Research suggests** that one-time interventions will be insufficient to maintain COVID-19. Future outbreaks later in the summer or fall may require you to close your site to the public again, therefore, when designing your reopening plan, be mindful this reopening may be temporary. As we've already seen in **Shanghai**, some regions have experienced increased rates of COVID-19 infection leading to second rounds of closures.

If You Reopen, Will People Come?

All indications suggest little-to-no international tourism in 2020, although research suggests that COVID-19 has not dramatically reduced the public's interest in visiting cultural attractions. The most complete survey data currently comes from the United States, but given similarities between the two countries, it is safe to assume this data can be broadly applicable in a Canadian context.

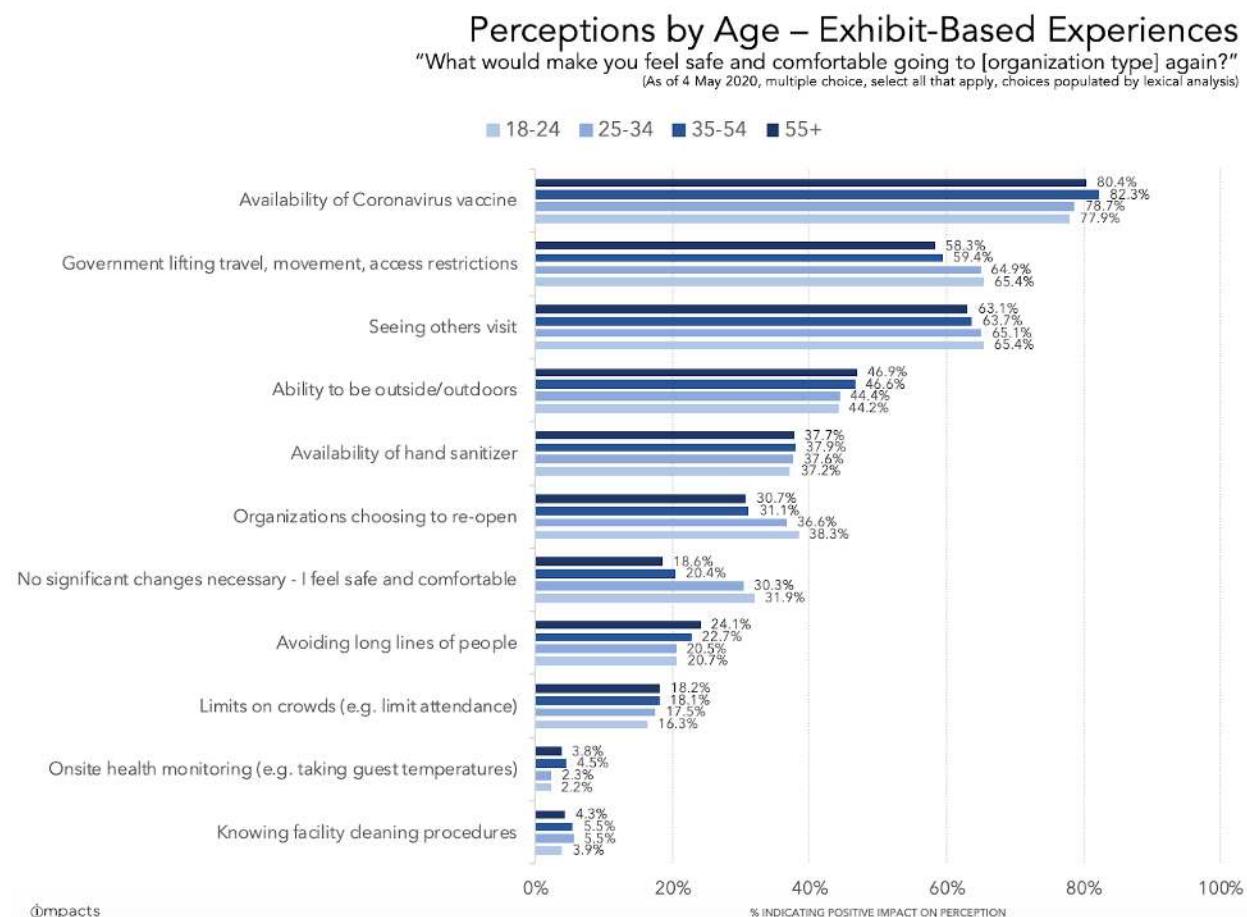
Research by [Colleen Dilenschneider](#) forecasts the public's interest in visiting cultural attractions returning to 2019 rates (aka returning to pre-COVID-19 rates) within the next three months.



While this does not mean your site will return to "normal" rates of visitation within the next three months, it does demonstrate that COVID-19 closures have not dramatically impacted the public's interest in visiting cultural attractions. Visitors are expecting sites to implement new safety

protocols ([source](#)) and if organizations ensure the safety of their visitors, then the community shows an interest in returning once doors reopen.

The American Alliance of Museums has shared a webinar called "[Lessons Learned from SARS](#)," in which panelists from the Ontario Science Centre share their experiences and lessons learned from the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in the early 2000s. The panelists comment on their experiences and strategies for reopening the museum, supporting team members, reassuring visitors and potential visitors, and financial recovery. The panelist noted that visitor demographics changed in the immediate aftermath of SARS. This is reinforced by new data from [Colleen Dilenschneider](#) suggesting that people 55+ will be less interested in visiting cultural organizations in the wake of COVID-19. It is important to understand the composition and nature of visitors returning and its impact on your revenue modelling when planning for the months ahead.



Considerations for the Financial Realities of Reopening

Responses to the [COVID-19 Impact Survey](#) show that recent closures have cost organizations hundreds of thousands of dollars in reduced donations, cancelled fundraisers, and lost admissions. Across the sector, organizations are facing uncertain financial futures, and ensuring sites are safe to reopen to the public will take time and money.

To help your organization plan for different financial scenarios the American Alliance of Museums has created some [online exercises to support museums](#). Preparing your site to reopen to the public will require increased investment and staff/volunteer training. With the looming possibility of future public health order, we encourage organizations to not rush their reopening plans. Be sure to balance the long-term needs of your organization with the short-term prospects of reopening your site.

If your reopening plans require that hand sanitizer stations are readily available and masks be provided to visitors, make sure the costs are sustainable for several months. During the COVID-19 pandemic we have repeatedly seen breakdowns in the supply chain. If your site will require significant volumes of specific in-demand items, consider the impact if these cannot be obtained at an affordable price.

Some cultural organizations are exploring the sale of branded face masks as a fundraising opportunity to support their sites during the COVID-19 closures. The [Vancouver Aquarium has recently partnered with the Vancouver Whitecaps](#) to launch a face mask fundraiser.

Getting Ready to Reopen for Staff/Volunteers

Before your organization can reopen, you must first ensure you create a safe environment for your staff and volunteers. We recommend staff return to the site several days before reopening to the public to ensure sufficient training on new safety protocols and to ensure time for proper thorough cleaning prior to welcoming the public.

Please note: Guidelines for staff/visitors will also be applicable to any contractors or subcontractors working your facility (i.e. if you contract out security, safety, cleaning, etc.).

Mental Health Considerations for Staff and Volunteers

Many staff members and volunteers may approach reopening to the public with trepidation - don't assume you will be returning to business as normal. Staff and volunteers who previously enjoyed

interacting with community members may not immediately feel comfortable returning to these roles. It is important not to push anyone into situations they are not comfortable in.

People need psychological space to reconnect with colleagues and get used to working on site again. Managers will need to respond with empathy and compassion as many staff and volunteers will be returning to work after an extremely challenging time. From people returning to work after being laid off, to parents who have been balancing working from home with home schooling children, to people who have lost loved ones due to the pandemic, it is critical that you give everyone the support and space to reenter the workplace.

It's okay if you don't immediately know what to do. The Canadian Mental Health Association has published resources exploring [COVID-19 and Anxiety](#) - you may find these helpful in supporting your team during this stressful time. The US Center for Disease Control (CDC) has also published [guidelines exploring stress and coping](#) and provides managers with signs to help identify team members who may need additional support.

Also, reach out to peers and colleagues who may be facing similar challenges. If you don't have strong connections to other organizations, we encourage you to reach out to the BCMA (bcma@museumsassn.bc.ca) and we can help connect you with the support you need.

Special Considerations for Higher Risk Staff/Volunteers

The [Government of Canada identifies](#) the following groups of people as facing higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

- People with medical conditions including:
 - Heart disease
 - Hypertension (high blood pressure)
 - Lung disease
 - Diabetes
 - Cancer
 - People with weakened immune systems from a medical condition or treatment, such as chemotherapy
- Older adults

All staff/volunteers need to immediately update and verify personal/emergency contact information upon returning to the workplace. This will ensure that in the event of an emergency or health situation, the most up-to-date information is available.

If staff or volunteers self-identify as being at higher risk or appear to be uncomfortable returning to the roles they previously held, think of ways you may be able to accommodate them in different roles. Could their work be transitioned to an online delivery model? Could they be given a back-of-house role that involves minimal interactions with the public?

Guidelines for Staff/Volunteers

- Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19, must stay home.
 - Symptoms of COVID-19 include:
 - a new cough or a chronic cough that gets worse, or
 - a fever (greater or equal to 38°C or signs of a fever like shivering, flushed skin, excessive sweating), or
 - difficulty breathing
- All staff and volunteers must have access to hand washing stations.
- Limit shared workstations, but where this is not possible, ensure workstations can be sanitized between uses.
- Encourage regular handwashing, especially before and after breaks and each time you leave your workstation.
- Encourage physical distancing within the work environment. This may require moving workstations and rearranging office spaces.
- If your site is unionized, involve union representatives in developing site-specific, or business-specific plans

While some organizations may wish to ask staff to take on additional cleaning duties, some unionized environments may not permit this - it's a good idea to check with relevant unions before assigning new duties.

Getting Ready to Reopen to the Public

Different types of organizations will have different requirements for being ready to reopen to the public. Organizations with sites that are primarily outdoors, like botanical gardens or heritage villages, may have an easier time welcoming the public while maintaining the necessary physical distancing. Sciences centres and sites that primarily focus on hands-on interactives, may experience more challenges to re-opening strategies.

Regardless of your organization's focus, it is critical to remember reopening is not a race - even if other organizations in your community are able to do so. We owe a responsibility to our staff, volunteers and visitors to undertake our reopening plans with the utmost care and consideration for everyone's safety and wellbeing.

Phased Framework for Reopening Sites

A phased framework provides a flexible step-by-step timeline that can be applied to most types of cultural organizations. Each step offers key concepts to consider when developing your reopening strategy.

- **Before reopening, take the time to give your site a deep cleaning:** Now is an excellent opportunity to clean areas of your site that are normally difficult to make time for or access

while open to the public. During the next few months, everyone will be very alert to cleanliness - by presenting a clean site, you will help to reestablish trust with the public.

- **Establish clear cleaning protocols:** Cleaning protocols will be the backbone of most reopening plans. These protocols could include:
 - **How Often Should Different Surfaces Be Cleaned:** The [World Health Organization notes](#) that the COVID-19 virus can live on different surfaces for different amounts of time. Studies have suggested that the COVID-19 virus can survive for up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, less than 4 hours on copper and less than 24 hours on cardboard.
 - While currently the Government of Canada recommends that public restrooms be cleaned “regularly” to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the frequency with which you will need to clean public restrooms will depend on use.
 - The [Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada recommends](#) that washrooms be cleaned twice per shift, ensuring that faucets, plunger handles, soap dispensers, towel dispensers, toilet seats, disposal bin covers & lids, waste receptacles, flush handles, light switches, hand dryer buttons, exit door handles and locks, touch points on washroom stall doors and entrance doors are cleaned.
 - Public Health Ontario [currently recommends](#) that surfaces that have frequent contact with hands should be cleaned and disinfected twice per day and when visibly dirty. Examples include doorknobs, elevator buttons, light switches, counters, handrails, touch screen surfaces and keypads.
- **Managing Your Collection During a Pandemic:** The [American Alliance of Museums](#) has established sound guidelines for managing museum collections during a pandemic.
- **Reviewing Your Food Safety Standards:** While there are no known cases of COVID-19 being transmitted through food, if your site offers food service, you should review your food safety and service standards to ensure they follow the [Government of Canada's current guidelines](#).
- **Ensuring New Cleaning Protocols Are Clearly Communicated with Staff/Volunteers:** Each time you develop a new standard or revise a current practice, you must ensure that all of your staff and volunteers receive sufficient training. Consider displaying posters in volunteer and staff areas that offer guidance on current best practices. The BC Centre for Disease Control offers excellent [workplace posters](#) on topics ranging from hand hygiene, to proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE), to physical distancing. These posters are also available in several different languages

- **Building Consensus with Site Partners:** Many sites may be shared with other organizations (i.e. libraries, art galleries, other not-for-profit organizations). Take the time to ensure that all organizations are on the same page regarding cleaning frequency, location and use of hand sanitizers, and common facilities such as washrooms, seating areas and elevators.
- **Allocating additional resources for cleaning:** Your site will incur additional expenses when reopening to the public. You will likely need to spend more on cleaning supplies and janitorial services than you typically would.
- **When cleaning takes place:** It is important to consider when cleaning takes place – consider moving cleaning to the day, so visitors see this activity to build their assurance that your site is safe. Shifting cleaning and sanitation from an “after hours” chore to something conducted during operational hours both ensures the enhanced cleanliness of your site and reassures visitors throughout the day.
- **Assess existing policies:** Review policies, making sure to include occupational health and safety considerations – ensure first aid protocols address how to manage guests or employees with COVID symptoms. Also, keep in mind the following recommendations:
 - **Review your emergency management plans:** Your site's emergency management plans may need to be updated to reflect the new reality. For example, if a fire alarm sounds, how will you ensure physical distancing is followed while still allowing the public to safely exit your site? Review the Government of BC's [Emergency Evacuee Guidance During COVID-19](#).
 - **Review your organization's sick leave policies:** If a staff member or volunteer displays symptoms associated with COVID-19, it is critical that they remain at home. To encourage staff/volunteers to self-isolate, it is important to review your organization's sick leave policies and ensure that they do not discourage staff from staying home if they are feeling ill. Policies for employee sick leave, remote work, and compensation should be reviewed and updated to protect your staff, provide flexibility, and allow sick employees to stay home.
 - In response to COVID-19, the Government of BC has established a [new unpaid, job-protected leave](#) has been established for British Columbians unable to work for specified reasons relating to COVID-19. Make sure your policies take into consideration the new provincial legislation.
 - **Review your organization's collections policies:** Your site will need to decide whether or not it will accept donations to its collections during this period. If so, what steps will you take to ensure the donated objects are sanitized. The Government of Canada has released [guidelines for caring for heritage collections during COVID-19](#).

- **Review your service agreements:** If your organization has any service agreements with other organizations (either to provide or receive services), you may need to be revised to address the current realities we are all working within.
- **Develop new policies:** The new reality of reopening to the public will likely involve establishing new policies for your organization. If your organization's bylaws require new policies to be approved by a board of directors or policy committee, factor this approval process into your reopening timeline. Remember, if you are unable to develop necessary new policies, or are unsure how best to implement them, you can choose not to reopen your site immediately - take the time needed to prioritize safety.
 - New policies could include:
 - **A code of conduct for your site:** Many organizations have codes of conduct to govern behaviour of guests, volunteers, and staff on site (see [Museum London's Code of Conduct](#), for example). If your site already has a code of conduct, consider updating to reflect new health and safety protocols. If your site doesn't have a code of conduct, now might be a good opportunity to create one. Make sure your code of conduct is visible to guests (consider including it on your online ticket booking page or posting physical copies around your site). This will help to establish and reinforce expectations.
 - **Response plans for staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, and/or guests who become ill while at your site:** It is important to develop and agree to a response plan in case someone at your site becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19 (dry cough, fever, malaise). This plan should include at least:
 - Remind all staff, volunteers, and contractors to stay home if they are feeling unwell.
 - When visitors arrive on site, consider reminding visitors that if they are feeling unwell or are displaying any of the above symptoms, then they should refrain from entering the site.
 - Identify a room or area where someone who is feeling unwell or has symptoms can be safely isolated
 - If your site doesn't have space for a dedicated room, think about how you will respond appropriately in this situation.
 - Have a plan for how they can be safely transferred from there to a health facility.

- SafeWork Australia has developed a helpful [7-point framework](#) for responding to people who display symptoms of COVID-19 in the workplace.
 - Consider having additional personal protective equipment (PPE) on hand in case of an emergency to assist staff if someone starts displaying symptoms of infection.
 - Know what to do if a meeting participant, staff member or service provider tests positive for COVID-19 during or just after the meeting.
 - Consider reviewing the Government of Canada's [Risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) to help format your response plan.
- **Policies for visitors not following health guidelines:** Staff and volunteers should be given clear guidelines for how to respond if visitors are not following health guidelines. Supervisors should also be trained on how to safely approach and communicate with visitors who do not follow safety guidelines.
 - The [Government of Canada has published guidelines](#) for retail when interacting with the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, this resource is also helpful for museums.
 - **Policies for staff/volunteers not following health guidelines:** While clear and open communication with staff and volunteers around your site's new health guidelines should help to establish firm expectations, you should also consider how you will address staff/volunteers who ignore the new guidelines.
 - Matthews, Dinsdale & Clark LLP has published a guide to [COVID-19 and the Workplace](#) that offers HR and workplace safety guidelines for employers.
 - **Policies for holding virtual annual general meetings:** Not-for-profit organizations should consider planning to hold virtual annual general meetings. Heritage BC has created [excellent guidelines](#) to support not-for-profit organizations during this period of disruption.
 - **Create a plan to support physical distancing:** The [Government of Canada states](#) that physical distancing can be one of the most effective ways of reducing the spread of COVID-19. To achieve physical distancing requires making changes in everyday routines in order to minimize close contact with others, including: avoiding crowded places and gatherings; avoiding common greetings, such as handshakes; limiting contact with people at higher risk (e.g. older adults and those in poor health); and keeping a distance of at

least 2 arms lengths (approximately 2 metres) from others, as much as possible. To encourage physical distancing at your site, consider taking the following actions:

- **Provide staff with access to personal protective equipment (PPE):** Staff and volunteers, especially those who interact regularly with the public, should have access to PPE such as non-medical face masks. Use barriers like protective panels to maintain distance between staff and visitors.
 - During the COVID-19 pandemic there has been questions about the effectiveness of non-medical grade/homemade masks to prevent the spread of the virus. Currently, the [Government of Canada encourages the use of non-medical masks](#) or face coverings (i.e., constructed to completely cover the nose and mouth without gaping, and secured to the head by ties or ear loops) for employees and customers in situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained. Please do not purchase medical grade face masks and/or respirators (like N95 masks) as they are needed by health care workers.
 - Please note that masks alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19. You must consistently and strictly adhere to [good hygiene](#) and public health measures, including frequent [hand washing](#) and [physical distancing](#).
 - The World Health Organization (WHO) has [published guidelines for the safe and effective use of masks](#), please review guidelines with staff before instructing them to wear masks.
 - There is debate regarding the effectiveness of disposable gloves. Many consider regular hand washing to be as effective as using disposable gloves. The [World Health Organization \(WHO\) notes](#), “The use of gloves when not indicated represents a waste of resources and does not contribute to a reduction of cross-transmission.” Given recent shortages of PPE, sites may want to consider not using disposable gloves.
- **Create one-way walking paths:** By creating one-way walking paths through your site, you can direct the flow of foot traffic and help to prevent the public from coming into direct contact with each other. Not only do one-way paths help to reduce person-to-person contact, they provide a reassuring path for the public to follow and provide the sense that your site has thoughtfully implemented physical distancing guidelines. This [article in the Prince George Herald](#) discusses different ways outdoor sites have implemented one-way paths and social distancing.
- **Determine how the public will enter your site and how many people can be in your site at one time:** Consider the following:
 - **How many people your site can safely accommodate:**

- Currently the BC Centre for Disease Control **discourages all special in-person gatherings** and event organizers are ordered to limit all indoor and outdoor gatherings to fewer than 50 people. However, the 50-person limit, applies to indoor/outdoor sporting events, conferences, meetings, concerts, religious gatherings and/or other similar events. This means that the number of people who may be in your site at one time will depend on your space and the physical distancing/public health controls you have in place.
 - It is strongly recommended that **retail store operators** have five (5) square metres of unencumbered retail floor space per person, i.e. 5 square metres/person. This metric is also a helpful rule of thumb for museums, galleries, and cultural spaces. Using this calculation for determining your maximum capacity is a helpful approach.
 - This means that, for example, in large indoor spaces and large outdoor sites it may be possible to have more than 50 people, while still following appropriate physical distancing.
 - To reiterate, *the number of people that can safely enter your site, will be specific to your site and to your public health controls* - do not assume that you will automatically be able to welcome the same number of people as neighbouring sites.
- **You will need to track how many people are in your site:** This means you will likely need a staff person or volunteer tracking how many people enter your site and how many people leave. If your entrance and exit are not near each other, you will need to find a way for staff/volunteers to communicate how many people are entering/leaving.
 - **Collaborate with site partners:** If your organization shares space within a larger building, obtain clarification regarding the maximum capacity -- does it relate to the building itself, or to the museum alone? How will you communicate the number of visitors in your site with partner organizations?
 - **You may wish to move to an online ticketing system:** Many sites are moving to online ticketing systems to control the flow of visitors. Through these systems, visitors can purchase a ticket and book a time slot for their visit.
 - **Create physical distance spacing marks wherever the public may line up:** If there are areas of your site where the public is expected to form lines

(i.e. entrances, exits, concessions, etc.), help to enforce physical distancing by marking 2-meter increments on the floor.

- **Regulate interactives:** If your site offers interactive objects (i.e. touchscreens, teaching collections, interactive science displays) you may wish to make them unavailable for the time being by erecting signage or physical barriers to prohibit use. As your plan progresses, you may consider installing hand sanitizing stations near these spaces for safer usage.
- **Elevators:** If your site has elevators, you should post signs reminding visitors of social distancing. It may be a good idea to only permit guests who arrived together (i.e. families, couples, etc.) to ride in an elevator together. Given the enhanced cleaning needed to ensure the safety of your elevator, you may also wish to only offer elevator access to visitors with mobility challenges.
- **Communicate standards and expectations clearly through signage:** Clear signage will help to establish standards and will help the public feel more comfortable in your site by removing uncertainty about what is expected of them. Other indicators, such as floor decals and tape lines, to explain and enforce your policies on physical distancing, hand washing, and other requirements and recommendations are a good idea. The more clearly you communicate to your visitors how you are ensuring their safety, the more comfortable they will feel.
- **Consider how new standards may or may not be inclusive:** Keep in mind when developing new standards that some recommendations may create barriers that prevent the public from engaging with your site. For example, a common recommendation is that sites refrain from accepting cash and move entirely to contactless forms of payment. While this encourages physical distancing and reduces forms of contact, not everyone in your community will have access to contactless payment and may only be able to pay using cash. It's important to make the decision that you think is safest for your staff, volunteers, and community, but keep in mind that some standards may make your site less accessible.
- **Consider altering your site's hours:** Think about whether or not you should alter your site's regular operating hours. Some sites may want to extend their hours to allow extra time for cleaning between visitor groups. Other sites may want to shorten their hours, as part of gradual build-up in your phased opening approach. As we've seen with **grocery stores and pharmacies**, you may wish to consider having special hours to open your site exclusively to those in higher-risk populations.
- **Update your website, social media, and on-site signage to reflect new standards:** It is important to prepare visitors to follow your new standards and guidelines before they even set foot on your site. Make sure that once new standards are established, that those standards are clearly stated on your website, social media channels, and on-site signage. For example, if you are no longer accepting cash payments or if your hours have changed,

clearly state so on your website. By preparing visitors for the new realities of your site, you will save time in the long run and will lay the groundwork for success.

Information About Hand Sanitizers

Offering hand sanitizer to visitors is not a cure-all and not all products are effective. When used properly, some hand sanitizers can be a means to reducing the spread of disease. Please review these guidelines to ensure you are selecting safe and effective hand sanitizers.

How to Identify Effective Hand Sanitizers

How to find out which antiseptic skin cleansers or hand sanitizers meet Health Canada's requirements

1. Locate the Natural Product Number (NPN) or Drug Identification Number (DIN) on the product label
2. Look for that number on the Government of Canada's recommended [hand sanitizers list](#)



Not all hand sanitizers are good at stopping the spread of COVID-19. Washing with warm water and soap remains one of the most effective forms of hand hygiene and preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Washing with warm water (not cold water) and soap removes oils from our hands that can harbour microbes. In many situations, hand sanitizers are more efficient so if possible, provide alcohol-based products (with at least 60% alcohol) as a practical alternative when soap and water aren't available.

To use hand sanitizers correctly you need to cover your hands (including between your knuckles, wrists, palms, back of your hand and your fingernails) fully, rubbing it in for at least 20 seconds, similar to best practices for washing with soap and water.

Information About Cleaning and Sanitizing Your Site

Although research is still emerging on which products best kill the COVID-19 virus, cleaners can help limit the transfer of microorganisms. For high-touch hard surfaces such as door handles and phones, the Government of Canada recommends using regular household cleaners or diluted bleach according to the label directions.

Disinfectants, household cleaners, and bleach are meant to be used to clean surfaces. Never use these products on the skin or internally (e.g. by swallowing or injecting these products) as this could cause serious harm.

Never mix bleach with other products, especially other cleaners that contain ammonia. Toxic gases can be produced, which are very irritating or corrosive to the eyes and lungs. Consult this [Working with Bleach](#) guide from the Government of Canada for best practices and standards for working with bleach.

Bleach should always be used in a well-ventilated area and never mix with other chemical products. To prepare diluted bleach for a solution to disinfect high-touch hard surfaces, do so according to instructions on the label or in a ratio of:

250 mL (1 cup) of water per 5 mL (1 teaspoon) bleach,
or
1 litre of water (4 cups) per 20 mL (4 teaspoons) bleach

The US [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) notes](#) that diluted bleach solution should be an effective disinfectant for up to 24 hours after mixing.

Note: Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection, and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening may not be suitable for disinfection.

Establishing a Cleaning Procedure

When creating a cleaning procedure for your site, begin by identifying frequently-touched surfaces. Areas which are frequently touched with hands are most likely to be contaminated and include doorknobs, handrails, elevator buttons, light switches, cabinet handles, faucet handles, tables, countertops, and electronics.

Currently it is not definitively known how long the COVID-19 virus lives on surfaces, however, early evidence suggests it can live on objects and surfaces from a few hours to days.

The [Government of Canada recommends](#) taking the following into consideration when establishing a cleaning procedure:

- Operators of community settings should develop or review protocols and procedures for cleaning public spaces. This will help determine where improvements or additional cleaning may be needed.
- Read and follow manufacturer's instructions for safe use of cleaning and disinfection products (e.g. wear gloves, use in well-ventilated area, allow enough contact time for disinfectant to kill germs based on the product being used).
- Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after removing gloves.
- Use damp cleaning methods such as damp clean cloths, and/or a wet mop. Do not dust or sweep which can distribute virus droplets into the air.
- Contaminated disposable cleaning items (e.g. mop heads, cloths) should be placed in a lined garbage bin before disposing of them with regular waste. Reusable cleaning items can be washed using regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C). Clean and disinfect surfaces that people touch often.
- In addition to routine cleaning, surfaces that are frequently touched with hands should be cleaned and disinfected more often, as well as when visibly dirty.
- Shared spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms should also be cleaned more often.

Relevant Links

- [COVID-19 Disinfectants, sanitizers, cleaners and soaps - Government of Canada](#)
- [Hard surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\) - Government of Canada](#)
- [Cleaning and disinfecting public spaces during COVID-19 - Government of Canada](#)
- [Working with Household \(Chlorine\) Bleach - Government of Canada](#)
- [Enhanced Cleaning Guidelines during the COVID-19 Pandemic for DFO/CCG Custodial Buildings - Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada](#)
 - There is a good suggested cleaning routine that starts on page 7 of this document.

Case Studies and Examples from Other Jurisdictions

These case studies explore how different museums and cultural attractions from Canada and across the world are approaching reopening to the public. We do not recommend following these examples to the letter, but rather offer them as opportunities to explore several different models based on operations and capacity.

We also recognize many of these case studies come from large organizations with budgets much higher than the average museum. As examples emerge, we will update this section to ensure we provide ideas that are accessible for any museum. If you would like to share your organization's reopening strategy, please email us (bcma@museumsassn.bc.ca).

To see the most up-to-date list of examples from other jurisdictions, please visit our website: <http://museumsassn.bc.ca/how-museums-around-the-world-are-reopening-during-covid-19/>

International Examples

The Brandenburg Museum Association, Germany

Brandenburg was the first of Germany's 16 states to reopen museums to the public. The Brandenburg Museum Association established guidelines which include:

- Constructing plexiglass shields for ticket counters
- Accepting credit cards rather than cash payments
- Supplying all staff with disinfectant materials
- Frequent cleaning of the space
- A limit of one visitor per 15-square meter (or 161-square-foot) area
- Museums cannot offer group tours and should only provide audio guides if they can be carefully disinfected after each use

The full list of recommendations from the Brandenburg Museum Association can be found [here](#), though the document is in German.

Reopening Policies from Museums in China

Shanghai was the first Chinese province to allow museums to reopen to the public. Many Chinese museums are utilizing technology and enhance hygienic measures, which include:

- Requiring all visitors to wear face masks
- Limiting visitors to 50% of the site's pre-COVID capacity
- In China, information about the health and movements of citizens is used to issue a personal QR code. Once "green", people are allowed to move freely. In order to reserve an entry time at a museum, individuals must make a declaration of clean health, i.e. confirm they haven't been to an affected area or in contact with an infected individual over the past 14 days
- The museum QR code system currently being adopted in China asks individuals to give their health status, name, contact information, and national ID number, before selecting visit time. This ensures museums do not become crowded as visits can be distributed evenly
- In China, participating museums are all listed in a centralized ticket booking system

The National Archives (UK)

In the United Kingdoms, the National Archive has posted principles and operational factors that heritage organizations should consider when planning to reopen. Their recommendations largely mirror those put forward by the BCMA.

- Follow the Provincial Health Officer's direction.
- Provide PPE for staff and visitors.
- Deep clean and continue to clean all areas.
- Consider staff working remotely.
- Allow for more staff or volunteers supporting visitor traffic and make them visible.
- Allow visitors to book tickets online if possible, even if the facility is free.
- Allow 'visitor slots' for the vulnerable.
- Introduce new information signage systems.
- Allow set number of visitors and at larger museums at the entrance of each space or room.
- Most suggest: 20 square meters per person.
- If your budget allows, try using an audiovisual in the foyer to inform the public.
- Consider visitor registration and contact tracing measures at the entrances and admission points.
- Consider obtaining visitors' and participants' travel and health declarations and turning away visitors and participants who have been to areas with a widespread outbreak in last 14 days.
- Suspend all venue-hire type events to end of the year.
- Suspend programs and events targeted at senior citizens and other vulnerable groups.
- Suspend all guided tours to end of year.
- Use floor markers (or other forms of barricades) to guide visitors
- In a theatre operation, have visitors sit on alternate seats and on alternate rows, i.e. checker-board seating (for seated events and dining establishments within venues).

- Consider implementing flexible working arrangements.

ICOM Brazil

"The Activities Return Plan should be discussed with the entire team, defining the actions that precede the opening to the public; Based on the WHO guidelines, protocols for the prevention of contagion (such as measuring body temperature and wearing masks), limiting people in closed spaces, cleaning and organizing exhibition, consultation and research spaces should be discussed;

It is important to evaluate the effectiveness of circulation and air renewal in spaces with mechanical ventilation; Act together with the community in the process of opening, disseminating and recomposing institutional routines".

Museum Next

How Might Museums Look Different When They Reopen After Coronavirus? Ideas for ticketed entry, plexiglass dividers, interactives, special hours for vulnerable groups, and more.

Canadian Examples

CAMDO-ODMAC

The Canadian Arts Museums Directors Organization/Organisation des directeurs des musées d'art Canadiens has drafted preliminary guidelines for reopening art museums. Their guidelines provide detailed and actionable recommendations for visitor management, health standards, and communicating with the public.

Association of Manitoba Museums

AAM recommends the following measures:

- High-touch displays must remain closed.
- Online ticket sales are used where possible.
- Staff and patrons use the self-screening tool before attending.
 - <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>
- Employees must stay home if ill with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Organizations must post external signs indicating COVID-19 physical distancing protocols.
- Staff are given information about physical distancing and floor markings are installed where service is offered or lines form.
- Entry into venues including lines are regulated to prevent congestion.
- Organizations must maintain a single point of entry.
- Hand sanitizer must be available at entrances and exits for public and staff use.

- Washrooms must have frequent sanitization and a regime for business sanitization is in place.
- Both staff and patrons may wear non-medical masks.
- Cashless or no-contact payment be used to the greatest extent possible.
- Sites can use outdoor space to allow for physical distancing.
- Sites may adjust to allow for self-guided tours or app-based self-guided tours instead of using shared headsets or live guides.

Appendix

In the appendix of this document, you will find links to official information and guidelines from provincial and federal sources of information. If you find any links in this section that are out-of-date, please email bcma@museumsassn.bc.ca.

[**COVID-19: Industry Information**](#), Work Safe BC

[**BC's Restart Plan**](#), Government of BC

[**BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool**](#), Government of BC

[**Emergency Evacuee Guidance During COVID-19**](#), Government of BC

[**Physical distancing**](#), BC Centre for Disease Control

[**Masks**](#), BC Centre for Disease Control

[**Wildfires**](#), BC Centre for Disease Control

[**Indigenous Communities and Local Governments**](#), BC Centre for Disease Control

[**Physical Distancing Posters**](#), BC Centre for Disease Control

[**Working with Household \(Chlorine\) Bleach**](#), Government of Canada

[**COVID-19 Disinfectants, sanitizers, cleaners and soaps**](#), Government of Canada

[**Hard surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers \(COVID-19\)**](#), Government of Canada

[**Cleaning and disinfecting public spaces during COVID-19**](#), Government of Canada