



# Guidance for Alberta Museums during the Pandemic: Reopening and Operating Safely

December 2020



# Alberta Museums Association COVID-19 Response Guidance for Alberta Museums during the Pandemic: Reopening and Operating Safely

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This project has been made possible through the generous support  
of Travel Alberta through the Cooperative Investment Grant.

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# Acknowledgements

In the months since the COVID-19 Global Pandemic came to Alberta, all levels of government, community organizations, NGOs and professional associations from every sector have been generating resources to help our communities cope with the impact of this unprecedented crisis. This Guide brings many of those resources together for use in the Alberta museum environment.

The overall guidance presented here draws heavily on the Government of Alberta's [General Relaunch Guidance](#)<sup>1</sup> document for businesses reopening or continuing operations, updated in September 2020, as well as discussions with members of the AMA and reviews of the recommendations and procedures put in place in other jurisdictions.

Many Alberta museum professionals shared information about their pandemic responses, supplier contacts, and their advice about what worked, and what did not, in their spaces and with their visitors. The AMA held a series of networking sessions over the spring and summer of 2020 as museums dealt first with a sudden closure and then with the challenges of reopening in a drastically different operating environment. We are grateful to those who shared their experience in those sessions as well as to the museum staff from the Royal Tyrrell Museum, the Red Deer Museum + Art Gallery, and the Wetaskiwin and District Heritage Museum who participated in interviews in the planning of this Guide and the corresponding Health and Safety Signage Kit project undertaken as part of this project. Museums shared examples of signage and policy and frank discussion about the impact of the pandemic on their staff and stakeholders. Thank you to the entire Alberta museum community for their spirit of sharing, their never-ceasing willingness to assist a colleague, and their thoughtful and dedicated service to Albertans under incredibly challenging circumstances.

As we face a pandemic with far-reaching consequences for our communities and sector, know that you are a member of an Alberta museum community that digs in deeply, gives freely, and moves boldly in tough times. These efforts have built organizations that endure and that with creativity and passion will continue to do so for generations.

<sup>1</sup> Alberta, "General Relaunch Guidance," <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-general-relaunch-guidance.pdf>.

# The Pandemic Authorizing Environment

Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging exercise across society. For those who manage and govern museums, like those who lead in all sectors, it can be difficult to understand which advice to heed and how to make decisions that balance the resources available and the sustainability of our institutions with the legal requirements and professional recommendations. It helps to break down the role and impact of each of those authorities or advisors as you consider all of the information available to you and make decisions.

## FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL, AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES / PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES

On April 30, 2020, the Government of Alberta released *Opening Soon: Alberta's Relaunch Strategy*. Museums and art galleries were included in Stage One of the **relaunch**, eligible to reopen as early as May 14. This stage allowed some businesses and services to resume operations on or after May 14 "with two metre physical distancing requirements and other public health measures in place."<sup>2</sup> Since then, the restrictions and recommendations have changed several times, and will continue to do so. Museums were once again required to close in December 2020.

The public health orders issued by the federal or provincial public health officers are binding on all citizens and organizations in that jurisdiction. Pay attention to the language used in the material that comes from these levels of government, as some of the requirements are mandatory and enforceable with fines and other penalties, while other advice is recommended or voluntary. Recommendations or voluntary limitations are often very important to the safe operation of your museum and may carry their own liabilities beyond fines or penalties and should still be abided by as much as possible. You may have more flexibility in how these voluntary restrictions are implemented at your museum.

The province has jurisdiction over most employer obligations, although the federal government has offered several aid programs that impact employers.

Municipal Authorities have the ability to make bylaw and local state of emergency limitations that will also have implications on museum operations. Some common implications are around matters such as access to public facilities, local school board rules (education is a provincial jurisdiction, but local school boards often make policy beyond that of Alberta Education), and local considerations about whether masks are mandatory. Of course, many Alberta museums are run by municipalities, have significant municipal funding or are housed in municipal buildings, and for those museums internal policy will add another layer to the mix.

## LANDLORDS AND INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES

If you do not own your building, you may have restrictions from your landlord that will need to be followed, including restrictions around access, building capacity and other facility-related items. Museum associations, large museums in leadership roles, and tourism and public sector organizations are all releasing best practice guidelines to assist museums in making decisions. These are not mandatory, though they may reflect legal requirements, but are designed to safeguard visitor and staff safety while performing museum work. They often focus on mitigating risk and liability. Following the minimum restrictions identified by federal, provincial and municipal authorities may not be sufficient to offer a safe experience for your visitors and to protect the museum from the impact of everything from bad press or public mistrust to a safety incident or legal consequences. The museum's leadership needs to consider the very unique circumstances of their site, organization and local environment, and make decisions in that context.

<sup>2</sup> Alberta, "Opening Soon: Alberta's Relaunch Strategy," 9, accessed July 31, 2020, <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/61f54c09-d6d7-4a12-a5be-0bc663a02c31/resource/e158ff14-eab7-4f24-94f4-b67c3639d0d5/download/covid-19-alberta-relaunch-strategy-2020-06.pdf>.

# Disclaimer and Limitations

This advisory resource is intended to serve as a guide to considerations for museums and related institutions as they plan to reopen sites to staff, volunteers and the visiting public, and to restart programmatic activities. It will also be useful in considering how operations may change as the pandemic response evolves, and new restrictions are put in place or old ones are lifted or changed. It includes information specific to the museum sector compiled and developed from documents released by the Government of Alberta, including noting legal requirements where applicable.

This advisory resource is not meant to supersede any regulations, requirements, or advice given by the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta or additional municipal bylaws and requirements. Should any additional regulations, requirements, or guidelines from a relevant public health authority conflict with this document, that guidance should be followed over the advice contained here. Additionally, when making decisions about staffing, and in particular layoffs or termination, consulting legal counsel is always advisable.

Museums are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the current legislation and advice from all levels of government and to seek legal and other expert advice on their specific circumstances as needed. For full information, including public health orders currently in place as well as the latest information on restrictions or relaunch stages, please visit the Government of Alberta's COVID-19 website ([www.alberta.ca/covid19](https://www.alberta.ca/covid19)).

In addition to a distillation of public health advice as it applies to museums, this document also provides best practice information compiled from AMA resources and learning opportunities, as well as from other associations, organizations, or museums around the world, that specifically addresses common needs and areas within museum work. The examples, suggestions, and samples are presented as-is, without any guarantee or warranty of any kind, expressed or implied. Museums should not rely wholly or substantially on the contents of samples provided here other than as a basis for their original work, and should develop original materials based on their unique circumstances.

This is a living document. It was last updated on **December 9, 2020**.

## Using *HELP! An Emergency Preparedness Manual for Museums* in your Pandemic Response<sup>3</sup>

*HELP!* does not have a dedicated section for pandemic response but deals generally with preparing for and responding to emergencies in museum settings, from floods to fires to community emergencies. It will be a helpful resource to your museum in support of many aspects of your pandemic response, including crisis communication, mental health, business continuity, and many other topics. This resource draws on *HELP!* for tools and templates, and contains extensive information on Emergency Response Teams. It is strongly recommended that museums deploy an Emergency Response Team model to manage their pandemic response. This team may have different members, or even a different name, due to the nature of the response, but having a dedicated team to consider the impact and manage the response to the pandemic is an important step in reassuring your staff and volunteers, as well as your community, that your response will be well-managed and strategic.

*HELP!* can be purchased here: <https://www.museums.ab.ca/book-store.aspx>

Tools and Templates are available free at <https://www.museums.ab.ca/what-we-do/emergency-preparedness/help!-online-resources.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Crystal Willie, ed., *HELP! An Emergency Preparedness Manual for Museums*, 2nd ed. (Edmonton: Alberta Museums Association, 2018).

# Deciding to Reopen

In reviewing the Government of Alberta legal requirements and business guidance, as well as the museum-specific considerations below, **museums should strongly consider if, how, and when they should reopen to the public.** The reopening of sites and renewed offering of services must ensure minimal risk to the safety of staff, volunteers, and visitors and may require modifying plans, staggering relaunch activities, or even postponing opening or launch dates entirely as circumstances evolve. Museums must ensure they are considering all the factors when making the decision to reopen.

It is important to recognize that while many businesses and staff may desire to return to normal pre-COVID-19 routines and operations, museums and cultural sites will require adaptations. **A return to normal is not the goal.** Museums are also encouraged to consider new methods of operation and to continue successful engagement programs that were started during closure.

Ensuring the safety of museum staff, volunteers, visitors, and members of the larger community is of utmost importance when evaluating options for reopening and plans for renewed operations. This includes:

- preventing the risk of transmission of infection by screening for symptoms,
- maintaining high levels of hygiene,
- regularly cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and workspaces,
- using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as necessary, and
- following physical distancing requirements.

For a full list of requirements and suggestions on how to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 (including screening protocols, hygiene guidance, cleaning and disinfecting, the use of PPE, human resources implications and other procedures), please see the Government of Alberta's [General Relaunch Guidance](#) document.<sup>4</sup>

4 Alberta, "General Relaunch Guidance."



# Reopening Considerations for Museums

The Government of Alberta has provided planning tools for businesses that are reopening to the public in order to assist them in developing and implementing policies and procedures to address COVID-19, including developing plans to reduce the risk of transmission among staff and visitors. A voluntary planning template is available to assist in outlining relaunch considerations and actions to be taken to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. This resource is available through the [Alberta Biz Connect website](#),<sup>5</sup> and you can [download it directly here](#).

The AMA recommends using the Government of Alberta's [General Relaunch Guidance](#) document,<sup>6</sup> the [Guidance for Interpretive Attractions](#)<sup>7</sup> document, and the additional considerations presented in this document to complete the Relaunch Plan template. Depending on the services, programs and events that your museum offers, you may also need to consult:

- [Guidance for Retail Businesses](#)<sup>8</sup> (for museum shops)
- [Guidance for Day Camps](#)<sup>9</sup> (for day camps / other drop-off programs)
- [Guidance for Food Catering](#)<sup>10</sup> or [Guidance for Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs and Bars](#)<sup>11</sup> (for food service)
- [Guidance for Indoor Events](#)<sup>12</sup> (for indoor events including if you offer event rentals)
- [Guidance for Outdoor Events](#)<sup>13</sup> (for outdoor events)

From time to time, the advice in these different types of Guidelines conflict with one another. When this is the case, call 811 for advice. There are also Guidance documents on other relevant topics, from hand sanitizer use to libraries to live performances and many other topics that may apply to your activities, which may be found on the Government of Alberta's website under [Relaunch Guidance Documents](#).

## WHAT ARE THE MINIMUMS?

Every business / public facility with public access and employees must (or are strongly recommended to, in order to ensure compliance):

- ✓ Have hand sanitizer available for employees, volunteers, and visitors;
- ✓ Develop and implement increased cleaning protocols;
- ✓ Display signs encouraging handwashing, respiratory etiquette and "Do not enter if ill" (use "[Help Prevent the Spread](#)" posters to cover key health and safety messages);
- ✓ Keep a log of staff and volunteers, and ideally also visitors, who spend time in the building (including name and contact information) that is in alignment with privacy regulations and that can be used for contact tracing;
- ✓ Pre-screen visitors and program participants;

5 Alberta, *Alberta Biz Connect*, <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>.

6 Alberta, "General Relaunch Guidance."

7 Alberta, "Guidance for Interpretive Attractions," accessed June 30, 2020, <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-interpretive-attractions.pdf>.

8 Alberta, "Guidance for Retail Businesses," <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-information-guidance-for-retail-businesses>.

9 Alberta, "Guidance for Day Camps," accessed September 15, 2020, <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-day-camps.pdf>.

10 Alberta, "Guidance for Food Catering," <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-food-catering.pdf>.

11 Alberta, "Guidance for Restaurants, Cafes, Pubs and Bars," <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/covid-19-information-guidance-for-restaurants-cafes-pubs-and-bars>.

12 Alberta, "Guidance for Indoor Events," <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-indoor-events.pdf>.

13 Alberta, "Guidance for Outdoor Events," <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-outdoor-events.pdf>.

- ✓ Require that staff and volunteers who need to be within 2 metres of visitors or other staff wear masks or an alternative face covering;
- ✓ Ensure that visitors are able to maintain 2 metres distance from others not in their household / cohort;
- ✓ Direct traffic flow;
- ✓ Ensure that restrictions to the number of visitors allowed in the museum, or particular spaces within the museum, are in place to allow for physical distancing;
- ✓ Have a space available to isolate visitors or staff and volunteers who become ill while at the museum;
- ✓ Insist that staff and volunteers do not attend work while sick, or if they have been in contact with a person who has COVID-19;
- ✓ Provide mandated sick leave to accommodate self-isolation requirements;
- ✓ Consider contact-free alternatives to services, programs or meetings whenever possible;
- ✓ Rearrange furniture;
- ✓ Close or space seating, tables, and other spaces where people gather;
- ✓ Increase ventilation and air exchange according to advice;
- ✓ Remove (or clean between users) high-touch hazards;
- ✓ Install barriers and use other appropriate engineering controls;
- ✓ Develop policies and procedures to address attendees who do not comply with guidelines;
- ✓ Implement other restrictions and regulations as needs for them emerge over time or that apply to your context as this list is not to be considered comprehensive in all cases.

The following sections contain considerations for museum-specific functions and areas of operation, or suggestions for adopting the Government of Alberta Guidelines for use in museum spaces. In addition to the considerations below, tools to help respond to these considerations can be found through the Government of Alberta's COVID-19 website ([www.alberta.ca/covid19](http://www.alberta.ca/covid19)) and through AMA resources such as *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition<sup>14</sup> as well as *HELP! An Emergency Preparedness Manual for Museums*, 2nd Edition<sup>15</sup> (which has associated online tear-out pages and templates available on the AMA website at [www.museums.ab.ca](http://www.museums.ab.ca)).

In considering and planning for the guidelines below, museums should maintain and regularly review their Emergency Response Team (ERT) structures and processes in case of an outbreak or a non-COVID-19 emergency. This team may also serve (in total or in part) as your museum's Re-entry or Reopening Team, if you choose to create one.

14 Crystal Willie, ed., *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums*, 3rd ed. (Edmonton: Alberta Museums Association, 2014).

15 Willie, *HELP!*

## REVIEW AND PREPARE MUSEUM SPACE – HAZARD ASSESSMENTS

Conduct a review of your space, including performing a full [Occupational Health and Safety \(OHS\) hazard assessment](#)<sup>16</sup> in light of [OHS changes due to COVID-19](#).<sup>17</sup> The AMA also has [museum-specific resources](#) available for hazard assessment and other response solutions.

**HELP! An Emergency Preparedness Manual for Museums, 2nd Ed.,<sup>18</sup> has a chapter on response (Chapter 3) that includes sections on identifying hazards (3.5) and re-entering the museum (3.4), as well as a tear-out resource for an [Emergency Preparedness Team Contact Form \(Tear-Out 1.2\)](#).**

The goal of the hazard assessment is to determine:

- How staff and visitor use of the space might create risks for increased transmission,
- Where PPE is required or community protective equipment (e.g., non-medical masks) should be used,
- Where additional supplies are needed,
- Where engineering controls are needed, and
- Where signage is required.

### Facility Maintenance

Follow [Guidance for Flushing Water Systems](#) when reopening. Also institute checks for leaks and flooding risk due to inactivity or broad changes in the use of the building.<sup>19</sup> Increase use of outside air ventilation if possible, using windows or air exchange systems. Remember that pests and weather are particularly harmful in museum settings, and changes made in this regard should be done in ways that protect collections.

Consult available resources / expertise to ensure HVAC is running optimally.

If buildings are going to remain closed for extended periods, consult the Canadian Conservation Institute's [Closing a Museum for the Winter](#) (which is not a resource created for pandemic response but includes relevant advice on closing a museum space and on security, protecting collections, and monitoring buildings that are not occupied).<sup>20</sup> Review your building insurance or check with your insurance provider as to what is required either to prevent the building from being considered vacant or to add a rider to your policy allowing this. Be aware that having vacant buildings can cause a substantial increase in premiums.

### Cleaning and Sanitizing Supplies

Ensure that an adequate supply of hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol and approved by [Health Canada](#)<sup>21</sup>) is available on-site for museum staff, volunteers, and visitors. Hand sanitizer should be supplied for visitor use at facility entrances and exits and throughout the venue.<sup>22</sup>

Ensure the cleaning agents you use are compliant with provincial and federal guidelines, and use the "wipe twice" method – wiping once with a cleaning agent to remove soil and wiping again with a disinfectant.

16 Alberta, *A Handbook for Alberta Employers and Workers: Hazard Assessment and Control*, <https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/bp018>.

17 Alberta, *OHS Act, Regulation and Code*, <https://www.alberta.ca/ohs-act-regulation-code.aspx>.

18 Willie, *HELP!*

19 Alberta, "Guidance for Flushing Water Systems," 1, accessed October 1, 2020, <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-flushing-water-systems.pdf>.

20 CCI, "Closing a Museum for the Winter," accessed August 15, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/conservation-institute/services/conservation-preservation-publications/canadian-conservation-institute-notes/closing-museum-winter.html>.

21 Canada, "Hard-surface Disinfectants and Hand Sanitizers (COVID-19): List of Hand Sanitizers Authorized by Health Canada," <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/hand-sanitizer.html>.

22 Alberta, "Guidance for Interpretive Attractions," 5.

## Engineering Controls

At points of regular contact between visitors and staff, Plexiglas shields or guards should be considered. Key locations may include admissions, retail, and interpretive areas as well as back-of-house spaces between employee / volunteer workspaces.<sup>23</sup>

Make use of stanchions, pylons and furniture to direct traffic flow.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS

Museum spaces, both workspaces and those spaces that are accessible to the public, must meet conditions that allow for physical distancing requirements: unless otherwise mitigated, a **minimum physical distance of 2 metres** must be maintained in all interactions, whether among staff, among visitors, or between staff and visitors. Spaces where lines can form or where people gather should be regulated to ensure this minimum physical distancing is maintained. When establishing your facility and gallery capacity limits, best practice as communicated by major museums around the world is to allow for 10 to 15 square metres of space per person. This calculation works in larger open spaces but may not be the appropriate measure for smaller museums or historic buildings. Confirm what the public health regulations are and monitor these for changes that impact your region and organization. Remember that your museum must create a visitor experience and work environment that meets both the physical distancing requirements and the mandated occupancy limits; this generally means setting your occupancy limit at whatever number is lower. Whatever measure you use, there should be ample space for visitors to remain 2 metres from others not in their family or cohort, including while moving around and between spaces.

Do a walkthrough of gallery and public spaces and consider spaces where visitors may naturally congregate, such as seating areas or feedback stations. At a minimum, limit the potential for congregating by marking off areas to allow for appropriate physical distancing. Alternatively, consider restricting access to these spaces altogether.

## SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Clear and prominent signage outlining the steps your museum is taking to limit the risk of transmission should be visible to the public and staff at points of entry, in common spaces, and in high traffic areas such as washrooms. Transparency in what steps your museum is taking will help visitors feel more comfortable with what is expected of them and with the ways you are working to keep them safe. Tourism industry leaders are finding that feeling safe, and understanding whether an experience will be safe, is the key determinant in making visiting decisions in 2020 thus far. Put this information on your website as well as on-site.

When applicable, use signs with a graphic component for the sake of those who do not read English. Also consider the use of signs in other high-use languages if applicable to your visitorship.

Informational signage, instructional signage, and wayfinding signage should be used throughout your space.

<sup>23</sup> Alberta, "Guidance for Interpretive Attractions."

**Examples of Informational Signage:**

- Signs outlining the steps staff are taking to clean and disinfect spaces
- Signs outlining changes to museum areas or programming to help limit the risk of transmission
- Signs with self-screening instructions to ensure visitors or staff do not enter if feeling unwell

Sample:

**COVID-19 INFORMATION**

# HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD

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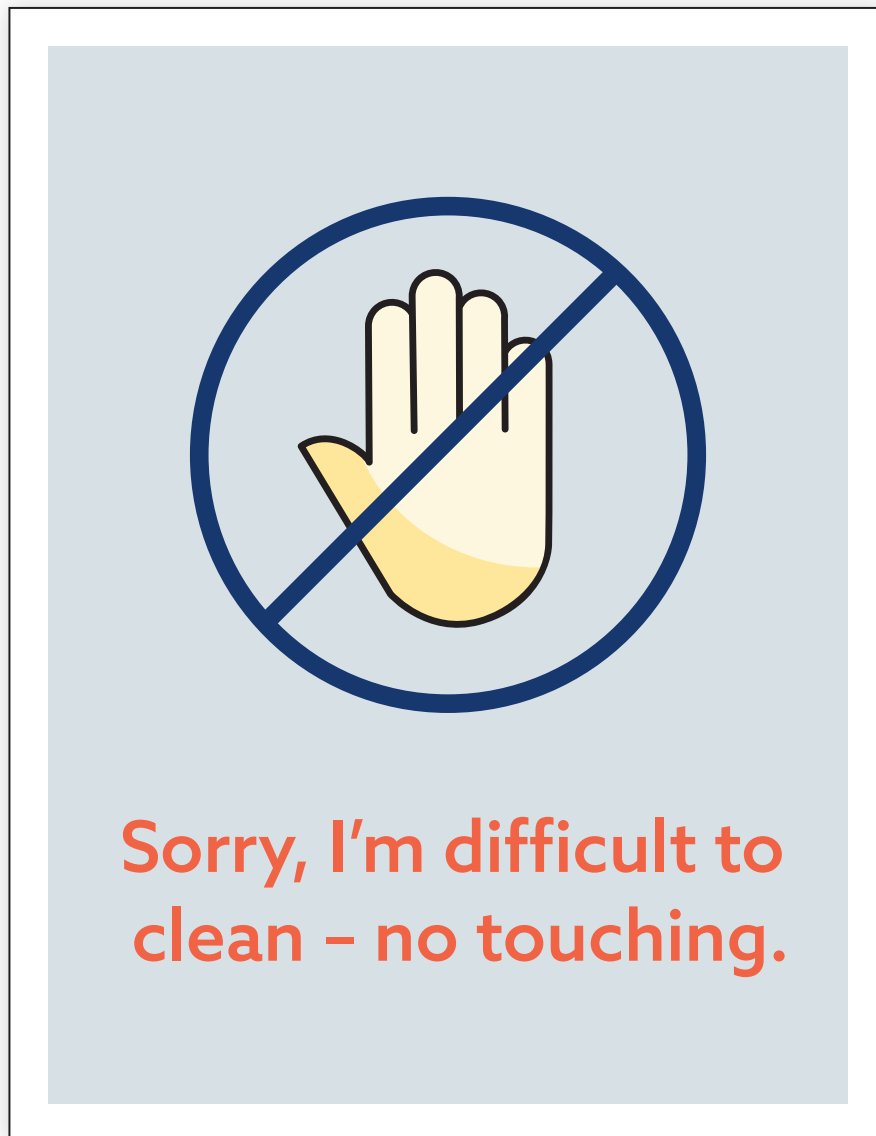
**Prevention starts with awareness. Be informed on how you can protect yourself and others from COVID-19.**

- Now mandatory to self-isolate for 10 days if you're feeling sick
- Now mandatory to self-isolate for 14 days if you're returning from international travel, or in close contact with people confirmed to have COVID-19
- When you leave home, maintain physical distancing of 2 metres
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds
- Cover your coughs and sneezes and avoid touching your face

**Examples of Instructional Signage:**

- Signs outlining physical distancing requirements
- Signs outlining health and safety requirements
- Instructions for timed ticketing (made available both online and on-site)
- “Do Not Enter” or “Closed” signs on areas or interactive displays that cannot be disinfected or where physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Codes of conduct for behaviour in museum spaces or for museum program activities:
  - Signage instructing visitors to ask before passing in narrow areas where a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained
  - “Do Not Touch” reminders throughout the museum space
  - Information stating that visitors will be asked to leave the museum space if they do not comply with new processes

Sample:



### Examples of Wayfinding Signage:

- Taped arrows or vinyl signage directing visitor flow through museum spaces
- Floor signs demarcating 2-metre distance in line-up areas or high traffic spaces
- Diagrams of flow through one-way areas or narrow corridors / spaces
- Instructions in narrow or confined spaces to wait until a person has exited
- Information on queuing process for gift shop or program areas

Sample:



### RESOURCES

- Alberta, "COVID-19: Help Prevent the Spread" information posters, <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-information-help-prevent-the-spread-poster>
- Alberta Health Services, "Signage and Posters, Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)," <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17000.aspx> (hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, etc.)
- Alberta Museums Association free museum signage kits (while supplies last, shipping charges apply), *COVID-19 Health and Safety Toolkits*, <https://www.museums.ab.ca/book-store/details.aspx?ID=6eed9d30-722d-47c0-a38d-7da8c8d2a575>

## VISITOR EXPERIENCE CONSIDERATIONS

### Admission

Maintain a Visitor Log, including the name and contact information of each visitor.

- The log should be kept only long enough to allow for contact tracing (i.e., 21 days).
- You must tell visitors why you are collecting this information.
- Visitors are not obligated to provide their information; they have the right to refuse.

### Payment Methods

Museums are encouraged to develop robust and secure online payment options, particularly for use with advance ticketing options where possible. These systems also allow museums to accept payment or to provide online or pick-up programming. If advance ticketing is not available, museums are encouraged to offer contactless payment options on-site for visitors in order to limit the amount of cash handling required.



**Debit machine PIN pads are difficult to clean thoroughly. One practice to assist with cleaning is to wrap PIN pads in cling film and use heavy duty cleaning products on the film after each use. The film should be replaced multiple times per day.**

Donation bins should be cleaned and sanitized regularly. Money collected from donation bins should be handled following proper hand hygiene protocols. Museums are encouraged to check with their financial institutions on proper cash handling and deposit processes for each institution. If financial institutions are not allowing deposits or if money cannot be stored securely on-site, museums are encouraged to find alternative donation methods or to remove cash donation bins entirely.

### Attendance Limits: Advance Ticketing, Timed Entry, and Crowd Control

Attendance limits should be implemented to ensure that your museum can maintain conditions that allow for physical distancing and meet capacity or occupancy limits. The requirement in Alberta is that **the space must allow all occupants to maintain physical distancing of 2 metres** between them and others not part of their household or cohort. Depending on the level of public health restrictions in place, there may or may not be a mandated occupancy level for your space or building. It is up to the museum to determine what mandated capacity limits may apply and how they relate to other considerations like the layout of your space, the breakdown between back- and front-of-house spaces, the type of activity in the space, and the ability to physical distance. Some museums have successfully used the criteria of allowing a minimum of **10 square metres of public space per person**. This means calculating the total public space including galleries, entries, bathrooms, cafeterias and retail areas and using that number to determine your overall occupancy. Within each distinct space, you may need to also set other limitations – for example, restricting a small gallery or video-viewing nook to one family / cohort unit at a time. Bathrooms might be limited to one or two people (or one family) if that is all the space allows. What is appropriate for your museum will be very dependent on the nature and layout of your spaces.

Procedures and products that can assist with managing visitor attendance and distancing in museum spaces include advance ticketing options, timed entry, and crowd control.



**Advance ticketing** allows for limits to the total number of guests attending your site in a day. Ticketing platforms may already be available through municipal governments, and a variety of low-cost options – from online ticketing platforms to customizable software providers – may be sourced. The total numbers of tickets sold per day should reflect your museum's space and occupancy capacity. Additional considerations to help you determine ticketing include visitors' regular length of stay, space requirements for modified directional flow through exhibit areas, and the ability to maintain a minimum of 2 metres of distance between visitors / cohorts at all times. Advance ticketing will most often require online purchasing, though some platforms may allow visitors to pay upon arrival. It has the added advantage of creating a log of visitors (for contact tracing) and allowing the museum to communicate expectations around pre-screening for symptoms (either by having purchasers acknowledge the absence of a list of symptoms / circumstances or by linking to an Alberta Health Services screening list or tool).

**Timed entry**, which can usually be applied within most advance ticketing options, allows you to prearrange when guests arrive on-site and enter your space. This may help limit the number of people congregating in entryways, stagger movement throughout the space, and allow for regularly timed cleaning processes by staff and volunteers. Timed entry does not, however, guarantee visitors will arrive on time or move through the space at the same speed.

Dealing with **walk ups**: If you are implementing an advance ticket information system, decide if you will also accept walk ups if the available slots are not all filled. Implement an alternative system or work within your ticketing system to ensure you are able to gather contact information and pre-screen visitors to ensure they are not feeling unwell.



**One mid-sized community museum reported using rocks and "In" and "Out" bowls to manage the museum's maximum occupancy. For example, if your occupancy limit is 20 people, have 20 rocks in an "Out" bowl; as people arrive, move the corresponding number of rocks from the "Out" bowl into the "In" bowl, and as they leave, move a rock back to the "Out" bowl. If at any point the "Out" bowl is empty, then the museum is full and new visitors can be permitted entry only as others leave.**

Additional methods of **crowd control** may be used to limit people in museum spaces or to direct traffic flow. These include the following:

- Limit visitors to a set number within a space that has a common entrance and exit.
- Modify visitor flow by creating one-way movement from a dedicated entrance to a dedicated exit.
- Use wayfinding signage, especially in confined spaces and high traffic areas.
- Remove seating or restrict access to other areas where visitors may congregate or dwell for extended periods of time.
- If you have seating that can be easily cleaned and you have the capacity to do so on a regular schedule, consider leaving some seating for the elderly or mobility impaired, ideally in single-seat configurations or closing adjoining seats to maintain a 2-metre physical distance.

These methods of crowd control may require additional staff or volunteers to supervise or manage, such as having one person assigned to counting visitor entries and opening doors at set times. Additional personnel may also be required to supervise visitors within museum spaces, including monitoring for consistent 2-metre physical distancing between individuals or small groups.

## Museum Tours

Museum programming activities should only be conducted after a thorough [hazard review process](#), and with adequate staff training.

Museum tours are discouraged as they generally require distinct groups of visitors to congregate together. If your museum conducts tours, limit attendees to one family group or an appropriate number of attendees for your space. Maintain at least 2 metres of physical distance and adhere to gathering restrictions at all times for visitors and staff / volunteers. Guides must be trained in distancing policies and have comfort addressing other visitors attempting to join the tour in progress. It may be more practical to conduct outdoor tours.

Group tours may be replaced by self-guided tours or audio guides. If your museum provides handheld audio guides, staff should be trained in cleaning and disinfecting the guides immediately upon return and before they are placed in charging stations — and preferably, before the guides are placed on a counter or in a return bin. Use clean and dirty bins to keep uncleaned items separate.

If your museum provides or is transitioning to app-based or online audio tours, consider your public Wi-Fi capabilities. There are a variety of free, low-cost and high-cost audio guide platforms and providers available.

If your museum does continue with in-person tours and normally provides seating aids (small stools, chairs, or wheelchairs for people who cannot stand for the duration of the tour), ensure these are included within your altered cleaning procedures or consider not providing them.

## Educational Programming

Docents and gallery attendants remain a good option for in-person programming and interpretation in museum spaces; however adequate steps must be taken to ensure both their safety and that of the visitors. Using barriers or tape markings may assist in keeping visitors and attendants separate in set areas. Removing or modifying education stations to be “look-only” and not “touch” activities may also be applicable.



**If your museum has circulating education kits that remained in the community during your museum closure, CCI recommends ensuring items such as these are isolated for a week to nine days and / or thoroughly cleaned and disinfected upon their return.**<sup>24</sup>

**In-person educational programming**, such as for schools or community groups, is not currently feasible or permitted on-site. Although schools have reopened in [Alberta's Relaunch Strategy](#), large gatherings are discouraged. Day cares are operating with limits on occupancy and currently must not participate in field trips or related activities.<sup>25</sup> Monitor updated Guidelines for information on whether field trips are permitted in your region.

<sup>24</sup> CCI, “Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Version 2,” accessed August 15, 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/conservation-institute/services/conservation-preservation-publications/canadian-conservation-institute-notes/caring-heritage-collections-covid19.html>. CCI recommends isolating incoming materials for a week to nine days for heritage collections items and materials that cannot be easily cleaned or disinfected (Question 19). Materials that are non-historic or that do not contact collections surfaces may be cleaned and disinfected according to proper guidelines and Health Canada product recommendations (Question 7).

<sup>25</sup> Alberta, “Guidance for Day Care / Out of School Care (Child Care),” 7, accessed September 15, 2020, <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-relaunch-guidance-daycare-out-of-school-care.pdf>.

## Day Camps

While day camps are permitted under Stage One of the Government of Alberta's [Relaunch Strategy](#)<sup>26</sup>, specific and strict requirements are in place which may significantly limit options for camp activities. Official guidelines include regular screening requirements, contact logs, isolation requirements, and closure instructions to mitigate the risk of exposure. Please review the [Guidance for Day Camps](#) information published by the Government of Alberta for the full guidelines, along with the information below, in order to determine if holding day camps is feasible for your museum.

**Day camp capacities have been limited, including staff and children.** When determining if a camp can operate with a limited cohort (consult current Guidelines for the number of people allowed to attend), consider activity spaces (including washroom availability), activity types, and staff capacity for regular cleaning and disinfecting. If running multiple camps, you must be able to ensure there is absolutely no crossover between cohorts and the equipment or spaces they use. If your camp program is part of a school program, be aware that in most school districts, field trips and group transportation are currently prohibited.<sup>27</sup>

The [Guidance for Day Camps](#) also includes strict cleaning requirements for shared spaces used by the camp. The requirements state that "programs that utilize a space that has other user groups ... should ensure the space is cleaned before and after using the space. It is recommended that cleaning be done by one person within the cohort directly before the group enters the space and after it exits the space. A cleaning log must be posted and used to track cleaning."<sup>28</sup> Therefore, publicly accessible museum areas such as gallery spaces or food areas **must be cleaned before and after camp use.**

**One camp staff member from the cohort should be responsible for cleaning before the camp, and no public entrance is permitted until a second cleaning is conducted after the camp.**

Camp activities must account for requirements to maintain physical distancing and limit contact with frequently used or shared items. Suggestions for activities that limit shared materials or spaces include:

- Individual material kits unique to each camper that are provided at the start of each week and that contain all the supplies required. Kits should be left on-site and sanitized at the end of each day;
- Activities that do not require touching, shared objects, or congregating around one object;
- Individual desks for each camper instead of shared activity tables in order to allow for a minimum of 2 metres of distance;
- Meals outside on personal picnic blankets.

Contingency and response plans must be in place in case a camper or staff member displays symptoms of COVID-19 at any point in the day. This includes protocols for immediate isolation, child supervision – both for the child(ren) requiring isolation or if a staff member must leave immediately – and the emergency contact information of the parent / guardian.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Alberta, "Opening Soon: Alberta's Relaunch Strategy."

<sup>27</sup> Alberta, "Guidance for Day Camps," 5.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

## Facility Rentals

Facility rental programs, such as for weddings, conferences and parties, should be suspended if the delivery of and attendance at events cannot adhere to distancing and gathering restrictions.<sup>30</sup> If your space and staffing capacity allows you to operate within the Guidelines, and it is still a revenue-generating activity when gathering restriction and capacity numbers are considered, you also need a plan to ensure your visitors follow the rules. Increased communication, help with set-up, and contract document changes may all be required.

## Alternative Programming

The museum sector is expected to continue seeing very reduced visitorship and associated revenues for some time. Reduced revenues may necessitate a rescaling of services offered and a reimagining of programming in particular. Online programming, pick-up programming and outside programming have all been successfully implemented by Alberta museums. In-school field trips or virtual school programming are also being explored.

Sector advisors believe the demand for in-school programming may increase as the school year progresses and the initial administrative challenges of managing the pandemic are better understood. Keep it easy for teachers, as the demands on classroom and online teachers in this environment are considerably elevated and resources are overextended. If you offer online or kit-based programming, it should be easy to administer and it will be wise to verify there is a demand for the programming and / or any parameters from your local teachers, in advance of developing it.

## CLEANING AND SANITIZING MUSEUM SPACES AND INTERACTIVES

The Government of Alberta recommends that museums “develop and implement procedures for increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting of high traffic areas, common areas, public washrooms and showering facilities.”<sup>31</sup>

“Frequently clean and disinfect high-touch/shared surfaces such as:

- doorknobs and light switches, toilet handles, faucets and taps, elevator buttons, railings
- phones, computers, remote controls, keyboards, desktops, conference room equipment, cash registers, touch screens, debit/credit machines, surface counters, customer service counters, menus
- equipment handles, hand tools, machinery control panels, seat belt buckles, joysticks, steering wheels and controls on powered mobile equipment
- items that are loaned, rented, or made freely available for use by multiple individuals, such as shopping carts and baskets, wheelchairs, and pushcarts.”<sup>32</sup>

If needed, it is okay to reduce hours of operations to provide enough time for the necessary cleaning.

Consider developing a procedure for visitors to be able to report when and where cleaning is needed.

Ensure paper towels and disinfectants, or disinfectant wipes, are available so that employees, volunteers and (as needed) visitors can regularly clean surfaces that are used often.

30 Alberta, “Guidance for Interpretive Attractions.”

31 Ibid., 4.

32 Alberta, “General Relaunch Guidance,” 12.

Regularly cleaning and disinfecting objects, surfaces, and workspaces is necessary to minimize the risk of transmission of infection. General requirements and suggestions on cleaning and disinfecting procedures can be found in the Government of Alberta's *General Relaunch Guidance* document. However, museums face unique challenges in following these protocols and must take additional considerations into account.

When applying the guidance in this document, consider the frequency of use of objects, surfaces and spaces, as well as your staff and volunteer capacity for regular cleaning. The risk of transmission may be offset by requiring the use of hand sanitizer before and after use; however, **this is only practical if such protocols are enforced**. Ensure that altered cleaning procedures are included in your museum's collections management and emergency response and procedure documents.

If there are areas of your museum where physical distancing or regular cleaning is not practical or cannot be maintained with the guidance in this document or from the Government of Alberta, those spaces should be closed. This may include theatre spaces, children's play or discovery areas, small display areas or rooms, and areas accessible only by opening doors. This may also include seating areas and soft surfaces.

Interactive features should be removed or covered if they cannot be cleaned and disinfected after each use. Examples of interactive features may include touchscreens, video play buttons, answer-reveal tabs or covers, drawers, toys, headsets, and touchable models or reproductions. Video and film stations normally triggered by touch may be played on a loop, if possible, with the touch buttons covered.

Museums should also consider whether Braille panels or other accessibility features for visitors with limited vision should be cleaned or covered. If they continue to be available, these features should be included in highest frequency cleaning procedures. If covered, they should be replaced with other accessible options, such as interpreters trained in low-vision tour practices.<sup>33</sup>

**Collections objects or heritage materials should NOT be cleaned or disinfected.**

**Please see the next section for considerations specific to the care of collections and heritage materials.**

33 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility," <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>.

# Care of Collections and Heritage Materials

## **Do not clean your collections or heritage materials. Isolate them instead.**

The Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI) has created a detailed [reference document](#)<sup>34</sup> specific to the care of heritage collections during the pandemic. The CCI document outlines the risk of spread of infection on collections surfaces, steps for mitigating risk, guidelines for object quarantine if necessary, and instructions for cleaning and disinfecting collections spaces.

## **USING ISOLATION TO PREVENT CONTAMINATION**

CCI recommends using isolation to prevent or deal with contamination of collection spaces and objects whenever possible. The following provides an overview of CCI guidance:

- A minimum **isolation period of at least seven days** is recommended for collections, objects, or heritage spaces that may have been exposed to COVID-19.
- The isolation period is longer for collections with significantly drier or colder conditions. (See Questions 2 and 3 of the CCI document, "[Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)")
- If you must close and isolate your building(s), ensure that nobody enters the building(s) once isolation has started.
  - If faster access is required, maintain isolation for 24 hours to allow aerosols to settle, followed by cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch, non-heritage surfaces, using well-controlled methods. See Questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the CCI document, "[Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)" for more detailed information.
- If it has been more than seven days since the infected person was in the building, further cleaning and disinfecting is not required.
- After the isolation period of spaces with collections objects or heritage finishes, follow with a thorough regular cleaning to control viral spread.<sup>35</sup>
- If your museum remains closed with no staff on-site, minimize risk to collections by ensuring items are stored correctly, security systems are in place, pest management protocols and materials are up to date, and staff are following regular collections storage practices similar to CCI guidelines for [seasonal museum closures](#).<sup>36</sup>

34 CCI, "[Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)"

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid; and CCI, "[Closing a Museum for Winter.](#)"

## PRECAUTIONS WHEN HANDLING COLLECTIONS OBJECTS AND HERITAGE MATERIALS

As collections cannot be cleaned, special care must be taken when handling objects to minimize the risk of contamination due to exposure to COVID-19. The following provides an overview of CCI guidance:

- **Again, as disinfecting collection objects or heritage materials is NOT recommended, isolate materials instead.**
- Use appropriate PPE (such as gloves and masks) when handling materials. Where gloves may not be appropriate, ensure staff follow proper handwashing protocols (using soap and water) as an alternative prior to handling objects and records.
  - If handling materials, handwashing or use of disposable gloves is preferred over the use of hand sanitizers. Heritage conservation and best practice considerations note that hand sanitizers may leave residues on objects or records that could lead to damage.
- Maintain a collections interaction log where staff track every item they work with. This will facilitate isolation and contact tracing should a staff member develop symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Incorporate into this log a tracking method for determining when objects can be removed from isolation.
- Unless they pose a human safety risk, do not remove or relocate objects due to COVID-19 concerns as this may increase the risk of damage. Also, objects themselves may be contaminated and could potentially increase the risk of spread.
- For incoming materials such as donations or loans, isolate materials for a week to nine days in a dedicated isolation room or space (see [below](#)). Clean and disinfect carts each time they are used to transport potentially contaminated material.<sup>37</sup>

## RESPONDING TO COVID-19 EXPOSURE

If a person infected with COVID-19 has been in collection spaces and there is a concern of exposure to COVID-19, first ensure that you follow current public health guidelines for people who were in close contact with the infected person or who shared workspaces.

CCI has provided [steps for heritage protection](#) in addition to official public health [guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting](#) when someone with COVID-19 has been working in collection spaces. Much of the CCI guidance provided for this situation mirrors the guidance for the two previous sections (“Using Isolation to Prevent Contamination” and “Precautions When Handling Collections Objects and Heritage Materials”):

- **ONLY isolate collection objects or heritage materials. Collections workspaces and non-heritage surfaces may be safely disinfected using careful and tested methods.**
- Close off areas used by the infected person and increase air circulation.
- Isolate spaces with collections objects or heritage finishes **for a week to nine days**.
  - For collections with significantly drier or colder conditions, the isolation period is longer. (See Questions 2 and 3 of the CCI document, [“Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic.”](#))

<sup>37</sup> CCI, “Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic.”

- Collections workspaces and non-heritage surfaces, such as tables, desks, shelves and carts that are used for work with collection artifacts or archival records, may be safely disinfected using well-controlled methods.
  - Test first and consider the effects of overspray or dripping on any nearby collection items.
  - See Questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the CCI document, [“Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic.”](#) For more detailed information on safely disinfecting non-historic surfaces and collection workspaces.
- Wait at least 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting all areas accessed by the infected person to allow aerosols to settle.
- Do not remove or relocate objects due to COVID-19 concerns as this may increase risk of damage. In addition, objects themselves may be contaminated and could potentially increase the risk of spread.
- Ensure appropriate PPE (such as gloves and masks) is used when handling materials. Where gloves are not appropriate, ensure staff follow proper handwashing protocols (using soap and water) instead prior to handling objects and records.
  - When handling materials, handwashing or using disposable gloves is preferred over the use of hand sanitizers. Heritage conservation and best practice considerations note that hand sanitizers may leave residues on objects or records that could lead to damage.
- Should it be necessary to close and isolate your building(s), ensure that nobody enters the building(s) once isolation has begun.
- If your museum remains closed or is closed with no staff on-site, ensure that:
  - items are stored correctly,
  - security systems are in place,
  - pest management protocols and materials are up to date, and
  - staff are following regular collections storage practices similar to [seasonal museum closures](#).
- Follow isolation with a thorough regular cleaning to control viral spread.
- If it has been more than seven days since the infected person was in the building, further cleaning and disinfecting is not required.<sup>38</sup>
- Museums should continue best practices of keeping a collections interaction log where staff track the items they work with to facilitate isolation (and subsequent removal from isolation) as well as contact tracing should a staff member develop symptoms of COVID-19.
- If your collections space must be isolated, ensure staff have all materials or tools required in order to work remotely for nine days when possible.

38 CCI, “Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic.” Additionally, follow Public Health Authority advice in this case.



## COLLECTING AND ACCEPTING DONATIONS

Some museums are continuing to accept donations or have actively requested items for their collections while closed. Review your collecting policies and procedures to ensure this activity can continue while meeting staff capacity and physical distancing guidelines. Modify procedures or temporarily suspend activities as needed.

If your museum has actively sought from your community donations relating to COVID-19 (such as artwork, journals, social media posts or photographs), ensure you review your collecting and acquisition policies and procedures to determine how and what you will collect, and provide clear communication to potential donors about how and when your museum will collect items safely.

Some considerations for collecting include the following:

- Ensure you have the proper collections and usage rights for digital content.<sup>39</sup>
- Ensure you have the ability and capacity to store digital content, including metadata.
- Ensure staff have the capacity and ability to review and receive donations, given that other work duties may have expanded as a result of pandemic protocols.
- Clearly communicate that your museum does not and will not accept unsolicited items dropped off outside of your collecting structure.
- Consider accepting donations on a day when your museum is not open to the public in order to limit the number of people on-site.
- Consider traffic flow and limiting donors from having access to staff areas or collections areas.

When handling donated materials, apply the following guidance from CCI:

- **Do not use cleaning supplies on heritage materials.**
- Isolate incoming materials for a week to nine days. Create a dedicated temporary isolation room or space to ensure you have adequate room to quarantine accepted items for a minimum of nine days.
- Use PPE (such as gloves and masks) when handling incoming materials.
- Continue best practices of keeping a collections interaction log where staff track the donated items they work with in order to facilitate isolation and contact tracing if a staff member develops symptoms of COVID-19.
  - Develop and implement a tracking method for determining when donated objects can be removed from isolation.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> The Copyright Office at the University of Alberta has a Canadian Copyright Term and Public Domain Flowchart for easy reference available here: <https://www.ualberta.ca/media-library/ualberta/faculty-and-staff/copyright-office/can-pd-flowchart-14jan2020.pdf>. The Canadian Intellectual Property Office has a Guide to Copyright available here: [https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h\\_wr02281.html](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr02281.html). Usage of social media posts are governed by the platform's terms of reference and are generally free to use; however, this may result in perception issues if museums do not ask permission to use content first. A born-digital work's copyright is dependent on what copyright is implemented by its creator and generally falls under regulations guiding physical artifacts. Museums should continue abiding by the *Canadian Copyright Act* (RSC 1985 C-42, as amended) and Alberta Personal Information Protection Act (SA 2003, c P-6.5).

<sup>40</sup> CCI, "Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic."

# Communications

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Have at-home contact information for all employees and volunteers in case you are sent home quickly due to an outbreak and in order to stay in contact with remote working staff.
- Communicate often and ensure staff and volunteers know how to keep in touch.
- Be respectful of the unique considerations of communicating with staff in their homes and of video fatigue, but also encourage the use of video when it is reasonable. The museum may need to work with staff to ensure they have a tech set-up that will support their work.

Internal communications are especially important when considering reopening your museum. Museum leaders should communicate regularly with their staff and volunteers in order to outline new requirements, changes to the museum space and operations, and plans for reopening. For a full list of communications considerations relating to COVID-19, see page 7 of the Government of Alberta's [General Relaunch Guidance](#) document.<sup>41</sup>

Internal communications may also include staff-wide progress reports from your Reopening or Re-entry Team (if applicable). Staff should be updated regularly about the reopening plan, including timelines associated with reopening and new procedures when back on-site.

Be mindful of including those who should receive updates but who may not otherwise be receiving regular internal communications. Depending on your communications practices, this may include volunteers or those who have been temporarily laid off.

Thank all staff and volunteers who have continued to provide valuable service under unique circumstances while the museum is closed and as you move to reopen or alter operations. Acknowledging the challenges you have endured and recognizing the contributions of all members of your team will help to ensure there is a culture in the museum that focuses on strong staff morale, team-building, and the health and well-being of all.

## EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

External communications are also an important element of reopening your museum or altering operations. Sharing the ways you are working to ensure the health and safety of all who enter your museum will allow you to reassure the visiting public and to establish clear codes of conduct. As Albertans learn more about reopening plans across all sectors, museums should communicate their individual reopening plans, changes to operations, and expectations for visitors.

Examples of potential communications include:

- Outlining of steps taken to ensure visitor safety (cleaning, physical distancing, signage, staff protocols, temporary closure of spaces, etc.)
- Opening hours (whether different from pre-closure hours or the same)

<sup>41</sup> Alberta, "General Relaunch Guidance."

- Changes at the museum, particularly as they affect the visitor experience, in order to provide visitors with an understanding of what to expect when they arrive
  - Changes to payment options
  - Crowd-control measures
  - Changes to amenities or accessibility
- Code of conduct or expectations for visitors attending the site, provided in advance of the visit if possible (e.g., in an email and / or on the museum's website)
  - Presence of hand sanitizer
  - Required advance ticketing, if applicable
  - No large groups or gatherings permitted

External communications may also provide opportunities to determine your visitors' interest or comfort in returning to your museum given the current restrictions on movement or perceived risk of transmission. Sourcing this information on a sector level or within your unique community will help you to determine business case scenarios for reopening.

Museums are encouraged to continue the transparent and personable communications initiatives and styles seen during closure. Communications about reopening provide opportunities to let visitors see "behind the curtain" as they learn how their favourite museum operates, how it needs support, how it is a vital contributor to the community, and how it is working to keep the community safe.

**The Government of Alberta recommends that businesses [post information about their relaunch considerations within 14 days of reopening to the public](#). The Relaunch Considerations plan outlines the policies and procedures implemented by the museum to reduce the risk of transmission among staff and customers. Using the Government of Alberta template is optional, but recommended. You can access the template through the [Alberta Biz Connect site](#)<sup>42</sup> or [download it directly here](#).**

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

The impact that COVID-19 has already had on business operations and revenue is significant, but the impact of reduced visitation and altered operations once a museum has reopened should also be considered.

Museums are encouraged to conduct their own business continuity scenario simulations, including best-case, worst-case, and probable-case assessments of revenue based on the restrictions and considerations above. For example, conduct revenue scenario simulations for your museum from potential reopening dates but operating at 50% or 25% visitation from the same period last year, having no large group visits or programs, having reduced membership renewals, and other metrics. Models should also include the risk of additional extended closures or closure for a full season. These forecasts should be weighed against the increased operational costs associated with staffing, purchases of PPE and disinfectant supplies and other costs related to your COVID-19 response.<sup>43</sup>

It is likely that some museums may be faced with one of two situations: having too many visitors as people seek a return to regular life, or having too few visitors to justify regular operations. Ensure that your planning, as well as relevant policy and procedure documents, reflect these potential scenarios.

<sup>42</sup> Alberta, *Alberta Biz Connect*, <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>.

<sup>43</sup> Angie Judge, Pip Gilbert, and Diana Pan, "Scenario simulation – planning for an uncertain future," Webinars: Leading in Crisis, New Zealand / United States of America, May 8, 2020.

## OPENING HOURS AND TICKETING RATES

Scenario simulations should also **consider changes in ticketing prices or donation revenue** based on lower offerings or price sensitivity. Ensure that your ticketing models reflect any changes to gallery availability, temporary exhibitions, visitor programs, or children's areas. Review if changes to operations and availability of museum spaces, programs and experiences justify lowering ticket prices.

Opening hours may also be affected by staff availability, increased cleaning requirements, and changes to museum operations. Some galleries may need to be closed at different times based on staff availability; museums may choose to open only for peak visitation days; or some may wish to offer extended hours or special hours specifically for high-risk groups. Review any external influences, such as changes to public transit hours, in this decision-making process.

# The Museum as an Employer

## COMMUNICATION

Staff and volunteers should have a clear understanding of new requirements, changes to the museum space and operations, and plans for reopening before they return on-site when your museum reopens. Retraining sessions are also likely to be necessary once staff and volunteers are back on-site. Depending on the size of your organization, you may need to stagger training schedules to maintain physical distancing conditions that accommodate the number of staff you need to retrain before reopening.

In your communication and training, consider the following:

- Staff need to understand what has changed about their job and how they work with other staff and volunteers, as changes to positions and practice are likely to continue as museums adapt their practices in response to the pandemic.
- Staff should be offered the opportunity to participate in the assessment of hazards as an OHS requirement. As hazards are identified, they must be documented and shared with those who are affected, and training may be required to address the mitigation of hazards.
- Ensure staff understand the resources available to them — financial supports, mental health supports, and other workplace supports.
- Staff need to understand the policies for working with visitors and be able to explain museum positions and policies. They should also know who to call or what to say if they encounter a difficult or aggressive person.

## STAFF AVAILABILITY

Consider that the capacity for some staff or volunteers to return to work on-site may be impacted. Some may be in vulnerable categories and therefore may be unable to return to work or may not feel safe doing so. For example, if a staff person has an immune system vulnerability, it is possible they will need to be accommodated by pulling them off of a front-line position or by providing a remote work option. The extent to which you are legally required to accommodate an employee who does not wish to return to the workplace depends very much on the circumstances. Other factors impacting capacity to work on-site at the museum may include the suitability of current work environments, availability of public transit, cohabitation with high-risk individuals, or responsibilities caring for others. When considering what accommodations can be made, consult the Government of Alberta's [Temporary Workplace Rule Changes](#),<sup>44</sup> as well as the Occupational Health and Safety resources [specific to COVID-19](#).<sup>45</sup>

The shifting circumstances of the pandemic may require your museum to close again or to accommodate staff working remotely for an extended period. Ensuring staff can continue their work off-site if required is vital to the continued operation of museums. It will also be important to communicate with volunteers who can work remotely to develop new ways for them to contribute to the museum. If you have not already done so, develop policies and procedures for work-from-home situations, and ensure that training is provided for all staff and volunteers. When developing plans, consult the Government of Alberta's resource outlining best practice guidelines for [working from home during a pandemic](#).<sup>46</sup>

44 Alberta, "Alberta Employment Standards Rules," <https://www.alberta.ca/temporary-workplace-rule-changes.aspx>.

45 Alberta, COVID-19 Resources on the Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Resource Portal, <https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/covid-19>.

46 Alberta, "Working from Home During a Pandemic," in COVID-19 Resources on the Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Resource Portal, <https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/covid19-02>.

Consider the policies and procedures that must be implemented at your museum should an individual member of your team need to self-isolate for a period of ten days or more. Such plans should consider how integral an individual is to day-to-day operations or program offerings; if a particular staff member needs to stay home and isolated, are there programs or museum functions that would not be able to go ahead? Are there contingencies that could be put in place? Is there proactive cross-training that should be undertaken? These considerations may have a larger impact on the ability of small museums to provide programming or maintain regular open hours.

In addition, contingency plans should be in place to account for any sudden operational changes associated with staff or volunteers showing symptoms of COVID-19. If there is a concern that a person with COVID-19 has been in the museum, please see the section “Responding to COVID-19 Exposure” [above](#). Be aware that it is possible the museum will need to close for a period of time, or that some or all of your staff may be sent home to isolate on a moment’s notice.

## WHAT IF AN EMPLOYEE OR VOLUNTEER BECOMES SICK?

- Ask staff to self-screen every morning with the [Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#)<sup>47</sup> or screen staff upon arrival at work. Send home staff and volunteers who are feeling unwell.
- Maintain an up-to-date staff and volunteer list so you can share the information if requested for contact tracing, and get in touch quickly with your staff if you need to close the facility.
- Alberta Health Services suggests that employers should be able to provide “names, addresses, phone numbers, roles and positions of staff, workers and volunteers who were potentially exposed to a case while they were infectious at that location.”<sup>48</sup>
- Have a plan to isolate staff who begin feeling unwell at work. Encourage staff to have a plan for getting home if they become unwell. Assist them, following public health advice, if required.
- Communicate with staff who are unwell as to what Alberta Health Services has recommended regarding their isolation, testing, or return to work.
- In the case of a positive test for an employee who has attended work during the period they may have been contagious, you might be contacted by Alberta Health Services regarding the isolation or testing recommendations for other staff. You may hear more quickly about expectations from the affected employee. It might be wise to contact 811 proactively and work with public health authorities, your staff, and within your policy to determine as best you can who should self-isolate for their safety and that of others. Depending on the role of the affected employee or volunteer and their exposure, this may include notifying visitors or program participants as well. If you have questions, call 811.
- Impacted spaces or the entire museum facility may need to be thoroughly disinfected.

## STAFF SPACES

As employers, it is highly likely that museums will need to make adjustments to staff spaces. If staff spaces are permitted to be open:

- Handwashing stations and hand sanitizer should be readily available.
- If COVID-19 protocols cannot be accommodated, some workplaces will have to close staff rooms or lounges.
- If provided, agree on and post a protocol for use of shared coffee and beverage stations. Ensure that high-touch surfaces can be disinfected between uses and that hand sanitizer is readily available.

<sup>47</sup> Alberta, “COVID-19 Alberta Health Daily Checklist (for Adults 18 Years and Older)”, <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/56c020ed-1782-4c6c-bfdd-5af36754471f/resource/6607784e-b42e-46c2-ba76-031c3b0217c5/download/covid-19-relaunch-daily-checklist.pdf>.

<sup>48</sup> Alberta, “General Relaunch Guidance,” 9.

- Barriers between workstations should be installed if at all possible.
- Identify where masks are required in light of distancing requirements, barriers, and local mask bylaw requirements. Generally speaking, masks should be worn in shared spaces.
- Workstations may need to be rearranged to account for distancing requirements.

Many workplace outbreaks have occurred due to relaxed behaviours in shared staff spaces. Be respectful of the risks at all times, including when staff are back-of-house.

## SICK TIME

When it comes to sick time, experts are suggesting that it is important that organizations are prepared for considerably more absenteeism due to sick time. People are being required, and advisably so, to spend far more time recovering at home when they fall ill for any reason. They are also being asked to isolate (or are making prudent choices to do so) when family members are ill or when they contract or are exposed to others with COVID-19.

Alberta workplace guidance suggests that you may need to update your sick policies so that they allow for staff to take the time they need and so that they contain “no disincentive or penalties for workers or volunteers to stay home while sick or isolating.”<sup>49</sup> Additionally, your policy must conform to COVID-19-related [Alberta Employment Standards Code changes](#).<sup>50</sup> Employers do need to provide up to 14 days unpaid leave, and employees do not need to provide a note to access the leave but should provide written notice as soon as is reasonable. All employees are eligible, and they can take this leave more than once. Employers do not need to pay sick days and can request that employees use available vacation pay or banked overtime. These are some of the minimum requirements under the Code. Some employers may offer other compensation or terms as long as the minimums are met. These should be defined in the museum’s sick leave policy or a COVID-19 statement or amendment to that policy. Additionally, if medically able to and if it is conducive to the job – or to other modified duties – staff members who are isolating may work at home instead of taking unpaid leave.

## MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health impacts of the COVID-19 response and the associated stress, isolation, loss and disruption are only beginning to be understood but are certainly widespread. As an employer, you have a role to play in the mental health of employees. If you have benefit programs that can provide employees access to the health resources they need, ensure staff know how to access them. Being sensitive to additional pressures and allowing flexibility to employees can go a long way. Focus too on encouraging staff to take breaks, eat well, exercise, and safely connect with others, including outdoors and virtually. See section 3.5.6 Mental Health and Emotional Stress in the *HELP!* Manual for more information.

Also visit the Canadian Mental Health Association ([COVID-19 Outbreak – Protecting Your Mental Health](#)<sup>51</sup>) and Alberta Health Services ([Help in Tough Times](#)<sup>52</sup>) for additional resources.

49 Alberta, “General Relaunch Guidance,” 8.

50 Alberta, “New Workplace Rules: Information for Employers,” <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/li-fact-sheet-for-employers-New-Workplace-Rules.pdf>.

51 Canadian Mental Health Association, “COVID-19 Outbreak – Protecting Your Mental Health,” <https://alberta.cmha.ca/news/covid-19-outbreak-protecting-your-mental-health/>.

52 Alberta Health Services, “Help in Tough Times,” [https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=sem&utm\\_campaign=Covid19&utm\\_term=MentalHealth&utm\\_content=v3&gclid=CjwKCAiAnIT9BRAMeIwANaoE1WjdFd2FAYh4RuEpeDgKFzJgoEt6cax3KnSR3iEyk-qRm84zYZb6gBoCA9MQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page16759.aspx?utm_source=google&utm_medium=sem&utm_campaign=Covid19&utm_term=MentalHealth&utm_content=v3&gclid=CjwKCAiAnIT9BRAMeIwANaoE1WjdFd2FAYh4RuEpeDgKFzJgoEt6cax3KnSR3iEyk-qRm84zYZb6gBoCA9MQAvD_BwE).

## LAYOFFS

Many organizations laid off staff in the weeks and months following the COVID-19 lockdowns. The province responded with changes to how temporary layoffs are managed with new provisions in the Employment Standard Code. Effective on June 26, 2020, the maximum allowable period for temporary layoffs was increased from 60 days; it is now 180 days for those who have been laid off due to COVID-19. This term and the related provisions could continue to change.

Should you find that you need to lay off staff, remember that you will have responsibilities to properly pay out earnings, to meet contract obligations, and to provide proper notice. If you are not familiar with your obligations, talk with an accountant or lawyer and create a plan that addresses the financial and legal needs of the organization and respects your employees and the positive employment relationships that your organization needs in the long term in order to be successful.

See [Employment standards rules – Temporary layoffs](#)<sup>53</sup> for more information.

## TERMINATIONS

*The following does not constitute legal advice. If terminations are required at your museum, you are advised to consult with legal counsel.*

If your museum is facing the termination of employees, either at the end of a layoff period or otherwise, the same rules for terminating employees apply during the pandemic. That includes requirements for notice and pay in lieu of notice in accordance with years of service. The Employment Code identifies the statutory minimums and the expectation that additional severance is paid as per the usual expectations set out in employment agreements and in common law. These consider factors such as type of position, length of employment, an employee's age, and their likelihood of finding similar employment in a timely way. This assumes a non-union environment; in a union environment, there will be additional or different considerations.

It is **STRONGLY** recommended that you consult your legal counsel if you are planning to terminate employees for any reason. Note that terminating an employee during a 14-day isolation period or during an absence due to a family care may be a breach of the *Employment Standards Code*, which has put in place special protected leaves to deal with the pandemic, or the *Human Rights Act*, which sets out accommodation expectations. Museums should not do so without advice of legal counsel.<sup>54</sup>

## EMPLOYER AID / ORGANIZATIONAL AID

There are many employer and organizational aid programs available as part of the COVID-19 pandemic response at the provincial and federal levels of government. There may also be local or regional programs you know about. It is difficult to make a blanket statement about which programs apply to museums and which do not because it may depend on very particular circumstances related to how and when expenses were incurred.

A few things to remember:

- Non-profits have been included in the category of "business" aid in most cases; if there is an aid program offered, read the fine print and do not assume it either does not or does apply to you.
- Talk to your bank and your accountant. They may have insight into what is available that you might not have thought about.

<sup>53</sup> Alberta, "Employment Standards Rules – Temporary Layoffs," <https://www.alberta.ca/temporary-layoffs.aspx>.

<sup>54</sup> Tara L. Hamelin and Kerry Lynn Okita, "Bishop & McKenzie LLP, "COVID-19 Employer Information Update," March 17, 2020.



- Monitor sector newsletters and social media for new announcements.
- Apply. Apply. Apply. Pay attention to the criteria, and be careful that the information you provide is accurate and verifiable. In some cases though, programs are being built as they are rolled out, and you may eventually qualify even if it is initially unclear. Many of these application processes are much more straightforward and simple to navigate than what museums are generally used to in the granting world.
- Be very cautious to act in good faith and follow the guidelines provided if funding is received. Follow the advice of your bank or accountant. It is expected that there will be select audits of the use of proceeds of these relief programs.

Some programs that may still apply to you are:

[Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy \(CEWS\)](#)<sup>55</sup>

[Work-Sharing Program COVID-19](#)<sup>56</sup>

[Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant](#)<sup>57</sup>

[Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy \(CERS\)](#)<sup>58</sup>

[Alberta Civil Society Fund](#)<sup>59</sup>

[Canada Emergency Business Account \(CEBA\)](#)<sup>60</sup> - Loan program with a forgivable component.

Check websites for eligibility requirements and application dates. In addition, monitor these pages for new program announcements that are likely to emerge in the next tax and fiscal year:

[Alberta Biz Connect](#)<sup>61</sup>

[Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)<sup>62</sup>

55 Canada, "Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)," <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-wage-subsidy.html>.

56 Canada, "Work-Sharing Program – COVID-19," <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/work-sharing/notice-covid-19.html>.

57 Alberta, "Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant," <https://www.alberta.ca/sme-relaunch-grant.aspx>.

58 Canada, "Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS)," <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/subsidy/emergency-rent-subsidy.html>.

59 Alberta, "Civil Society Fund," <https://www.alberta.ca/civil-society-fund.aspx>.

60 Canada, Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA), <https://ceba-cuec.ca/>.

61 Alberta, *Alberta Biz Connect*, <https://www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx>.

62 Canada, "Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan," <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>.

## Conclusion

There are many requirements to be met and museum-specific elements to be considered when planning for reopening or altered operations. In addition to the guidelines above, reopening may be further impacted by regional or local guidelines and requirements, changes to the scheduled timelines for lifting restrictions, or the introduction of revised guidance.

Stay up to date on the current legislation and advice from all levels of government, including public health orders currently in place as well as the latest information on restrictions or relaunch stages. For current information, see the Government of Alberta's COVID-19 website ([www.alberta.ca/covid19](https://www.alberta.ca/covid19)).

**Reopening will look different for every museum.** Museums are encouraged to approach reopening by emphasizing safety and minimizing risk rather than focusing on visitor numbers or attempting to return to normal operations and revenue.

The reopening of museum spaces, buildings and offerings in stages where possible may ease the transition to public operations. Some museums may decide to remain closed, either for some weeks until more restrictions are lifted or for the season until regular operations can resume.

Staying closed or having an incremental reopening plan can allow more time to plan operations, train staff, and build stockpiles of supplies to ensure your site does not need to roll back services unnecessarily in the future.

If your museum chooses to remain closed or keep some areas closed, ensure collections remain safe and secure by following CCI guidelines for [caring for collections during COVID-19](#)<sup>63</sup> and for [closing a seasonal museum](#).<sup>64</sup>

## Contact Information

If you have questions about this document or further reopening guidelines, please contact the Alberta Museums Association by emailing the AMA Advisory Team at [advisory@museums.ab.ca](mailto:advisory@museums.ab.ca).

<sup>63</sup> CCI, "Caring for Heritage Collections During the COVID-19 Pandemic."

<sup>64</sup> CCI, "Closing a Museum for the Winter."

## Appendix A: Sample Plan for Reopening

Reopening your museum with the considerations presented earlier in this document requires significant planning. The COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing and evolving situation, with a longer immediate presence than most other natural disasters that museums in Alberta may have dealt with in the past. Given the continued risk of transmission of infection, the way in which precautionary measures affect all areas of museum operation, and the changing nature of government requirements and public health restrictions, your plans should be detailed, adaptable, and clearly communicated to all employees.

The following sample plan template is adapted from the AMA's natural disaster recovery tools, as well as from plans shared by a group of [Quebec art museums](#)<sup>65</sup> (via the Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization), the [Government of Connecticut](#),<sup>66</sup> [The National Archives \(UK\)](#),<sup>67</sup> the [American Association for State and Local History](#),<sup>68</sup> and the [American Alliance of Museums](#).<sup>69</sup> Museums are encouraged to adapt the tool for use in their local circumstances and for their size of staff. Additional sample plans are available through the [American Association for State and Local History](#)<sup>70</sup> and the [American Alliance of Museums](#).<sup>71</sup>

### MUSEUM COVID-19 REOPENING PLAN

**Date:** [The final date or most recent revision date]

#### Emergency Response or Re-Entry Team

[Use this section to outline your Emergency Response Team and / or your Re-Entry Team if you have created one. These staff and their designated roles on the team represent the museum's main contacts in case of a COVID-19 outbreak or other emergency such as flooding or fire.<sup>72</sup>]

#### Current Museum Status

[Use this section to outline your museum's current operational status, noting steps taken to close the museum. For example:]

*As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with direction provided by public health experts and government officials, The Example Museum and its grounds closed on December 12, 2020. All public areas and staff areas have been closed, with access available only to the Executive Director to maintain basic business functions. The grounds have been accessed daily by a security guard for the purpose of reviewing the security and integrity of the buildings and grounds. The Example Museum and its grounds will remain closed to the public until further notice.*

[This section may also outline the general purpose of your re-entry or reopening plan, though you may wish to provide this as its own section.]

65 Quebec Art Museums via the Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mFwc1SLKOrO8qaJTb5zXf7a4h4YP42W/view>.

66 Connecticut, "Museums and Zoos – Outdoor Only," [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid\\_Business\\_Recovery/CTReopens\\_MuseumsZoos\\_C4\\_V2.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DECD/Covid_Business_Recovery/CTReopens_MuseumsZoos_C4_V2.pdf?la=en).

67 The National Archives (UK), "Making Plans for Re-opening," <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/our-archives-sector-role/coronavirus-update/making-plans-for-re-opening/>.

68 American Association for State and Local History, "COVID-19 Resources," <https://aaslh.org/covid19/>.

69 American Alliance of Museums, "Preparing to Reopen – COVID-19/Coronavirus: Resources & Information for the Museum Field," <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/about-museums/preparing-to-reopen/#Sample%20reopening%20plans>.

70 American Association for State and Local History, "COVID-19 Resources."

71 American Alliance of Museums, "Preparing to Reopen – COVID-19/Coronavirus: Resources & Information for the Museum Field."

72 The Alberta Museums Association has a variety of emergency response tear-out resources from *HELP! An Emergency Preparedness Manual for Museums*, 2nd ed. available on our website, including the Tear-Out 1.2 Emergency Response Team Contact Form template. You can also access [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) of a Membership Advisory resource for managing your museum's pandemic response.

## Current Priorities

[Use this section to outline the main priorities of the Board of Directors and senior leadership staff. This includes steps taken to ensure the protection of your museum. For example:]

*The Board of Directors shall take steps to ensure:*

- *The protection of The Example Museum's physical assets, artifact collections, and intellectual property.*
- *The financial and economic viability of The Example Museum until such time as the museum can reopen.*
- *That strategic direction is provided to ensure the Senior Leadership Team can reopen the museum. Effective crisis response will require prompt and decisive action, effective communication, and teamwork between the Board and Senior Leadership Team in order for the Board to fulfill its oversight role.*

*The Senior Leadership Team shall take steps to ensure:*

- *The development of specific steps to be undertaken to maintain the safety and well-being of our guests, employees, and volunteers upon and after reopening the museum to the public.*
- *Continuity of operations and customer engagement in the near-term until the museum reopens.*
- *The development of training programs as necessary to implement new policies and procedures. Training should be provided as necessary to contractors and subcontractors.*

## Timeframe to Reopen

[Use this section to outline the timeframe decided upon by the Board and senior leadership staff for the stages of the reopening plan and the estimated date for reopening the museum to the public. Make note that the earliest reopening date shall be solely dependent on provincial and local government orders and guidelines put in place to limit and mitigate the risk of transmission and the effects of the COVID-19 virus.]

[You may also wish to use this section to outline in more detail your museum's position within the Government of Alberta's staged Reopening Plan, and link to relevant municipal, regional, or provincial reopening initiatives or task forces.]

[Ensure this section notes that the museum may not reopen at the earliest date allowable (as set by the Government of Alberta) but that the determination of the actual reopening date remains with the Board of Directors and senior leadership staff. This determination should consider the unique operating circumstances and availability of staff and volunteers prior to the Board of Directors voting on when to reopen public operations.]

## Board and Staff Priority Actions PRIOR to Reopening

[If you have a set re-entry team or committee, list them prior to this section. Ultimately, it is the Executive Director with the guidance from the Board of Directors who is responsible for making decisions on when to reopen and when to allow staff to work in museum areas. Some museum boards may be more active in day-to-day operations or operate only with volunteer staff, so listing decision makers is important.]

[Use this section to outline priorities for the time your museum remains closed to the public through to your reopening date, as well as how these priorities will be accomplished. This may include time before any actions are taken to reopen the museum or before staff are regularly accessing the site.]

[Priorities for the time prior to reopening may include:

- Protection of physical assets (buildings, grounds, collections, etc.)
- Protection of financial posture
- Continuity of operations
- Continuity of customer engagement
- Development of strategic staff actions (including for reopening or for changed operations after reopening)
- Development of specific steps to maintain the safety of staff, volunteers and visitors (see above for considerations)
- Development of signage or materials for use in the museum after reopening]

[You may choose to list items in a general list or narrative structure but may find that a table such as the example below allows more detail and can be more easily adapted to internal communications or team structures.]

Objective and Tasks	Responsible Supervisory Staff	Effective Date	Status at Revised Date

**Board and Staff Priority Actions When Reopened**

[Use this section to outline ongoing priorities for your museum after the reopening date but while COVID-19 restrictions remain in place, as well as how these priorities will be accomplished. This section may include ongoing actions with no final date as well as items for staggered reopening activities.]

Objective and Tasks	Responsible Supervisory Staff	Effective Date	Status at Revised Date

## General Guidelines

[Outline general guidelines for staff, volunteers, and contractors in this section. Where applicable, note that more detailed guidelines for specific staff roles, museum areas, or operations are available as well as where they can be found.]

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## COVID-19, Associated Symptoms, and Potential Transmission

[Use this section to outline your response to a potential transmission event or outbreak at your museum. This includes listing the symptoms of COVID-19 or linking to Government of Alberta health documents that contain this information. Outline the steps taken to ensure that all staff are aware of symptoms and of the methods of transmission for their own ongoing personal screening or for correctly monitoring visitors.]

[Include the steps of your response, including notifying Alberta Health Services and immediately disinfecting areas of concern.]

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## PPE and Hand Hygiene

[Use this section to outline specific steps taken or procedures implemented surrounding the use of PPE, hand hygiene, or engineering controls for staff and within the museum space. This may include plastic guards, face coverings, gloves, and general hand hygiene.]

[If there is specific training required for products or cleaning procedures, they should be outlined here.]

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## Cleaning and Disinfecting

[Use this section to outline specific procedures, requirements, and instructions for cleaning and disinfecting museum spaces. This should include sub-sections on general cleaning, on cleaning both non-historic assets and historic assets, as well as general definitions for clarity.]

[You may wish to detail how procedures have changed, but be wary of creating confusion by listing both old and new sets of instructions.]

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## Operating Guidelines

[Use this section to detail any changes to operational guidelines, including general operations within the museum and specific public-facing roles and tasks (ticketing, retail, programming, food service, etc.).]

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## Communications Procedures and Reopening Plan Updates

[Use this section to detail how this plan will be distributed, how staff and volunteers will access this and additional information (including required training), and how updates to this plan will be communicated.]

[Use this section to also detail how the reopening of the museum will be communicated to the public, including changes to planned operations or reopening dates.]

[List on-site communications information, including the primary contact for emergencies or potential transmission outbreaks, local Alberta Health Services contact information, and signage inventories.]

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## Attachments

[This section may include pictorial instructions for PPE use, floor / site plans, or signage examples.]

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## Appendix B: Ticketing Service Providers

As Alberta museums begin reopening to the public, many are considering the use of online ticketing platforms to limit the amount of person-to-person contact at admissions desks and to help schedule visitor entry as a means of crowd control.

The following service providers or platforms will facilitate online purchasing and / or timed entry. The Alberta Museums Association does not endorse or recommend any product but is providing this list as a resource to help you determine available options and choose the right platform for your museum's circumstances. Availability and cost of features should be verified with the platform provider.

This list is not exhaustive. If your museum uses a platform and you would recommend it to the Alberta museum community, please email the AMA Advisory Team at [advisory@museums.ab.ca](mailto:advisory@museums.ab.ca).

Click the platform name to view the website for further details. Full options and costs are available by directly contacting the platform provider.

Platform Name	Online Ticket	Timed Entry	Price	Other Features	Comments
<a href="#">Aluvii</a>	✓	✓	Inquire directly with provider	All-in-one cloud-based platform for bookings, analytics, mobile access, POS, and payments. Hardware options for POS and payment	Marketed at zoos and aquariums within broader amusement and leisure sectors
<a href="#">AudienceView</a>	✓	Inquire directly with provider	Inquire directly with provider	-	Live events-focused platform
<a href="#">Blackbaud Altru</a>	✓	Inquire directly with provider	Inquire directly with provider	Cloud-based platform including options for gift shop POS, grant management, membership management, and event management tools	-
<a href="#">CanadaHelps</a>	✓	Can arrange times as different tickets	5% transaction fee, including credit card processing costs	-	Live events-focused platform part of CanadaHelps' full fundraising account
<a href="#">Doubleknot</a>	✓	✓	Inquire directly with provider	Includes options for event management, membership, and fundraising databases, and full customer relationship management options	Capacity feature allows scheduling cleaning and disinfecting times between visitors
<a href="#">Eventbee</a>	✓	Tickets can be structured through venue seating options	Flat fee structure dependent on platform, range: \$1.50 - \$4.50. \$0.25/ticket discount for non-profit events using Business, Advanced, or Pro levels	-	Similar to Eventbrite, but aimed at live events; supports all major credit card processing companies in Canada

Platform Name	Online Ticket	Timed Entry	Price	Other Features	Comments
Eventbrite	✓	Tickets can be structured by entry time	Free for free tickets; packages for Essentials and Professional levels have fees applied to each ticket	-	Connects to PayPal accounts or has built-in payment processing; primarily aimed at live events
FocusPoint360	✓	✓	Inquire directly with platform provider	Integrated software for museums, including options for ticketing, membership, education, group sales, field trip reservations, eCommerce, retail and inventory, and food service management tools	-
Gatemaster	✓	✓	Starts at \$59.99 USD/month/user	Full platform suite with multiple add-ons at an enterprise level. Starting level includes options for gift shop POS and membership management tools	-
Korona	✓	✓	Starts at \$49.00 USD /month/ POS terminal	POS platform that includes options for collections management, exhibit management, membership management, event management tools	Aimed at the retail market but provides scalable ticketing and other museum-specific features
Maxim	✓	✓	Inquire directly with platform provider	Cloud-based platform including options for gift shop POS, collections, event, and membership management tools	UK-based platform
RocketRez	✓	✓	Starts at \$15,000/year	Includes options for mobile ticketing, membership management, event management, and gift shop POS tools	Located in Canada; for museums and attractions with annual revenues above \$1 million
Veevart	✓	✓	Customized. Inquire directly with platform provider	Full platform suite including options for customer relationship management, collection management, gift shop POS, and visitor engagement tools	-
Versai	-	✓	Starts at \$199 USD/month	Includes options for grant management, membership management, event management, and gift shop POS tools	This platform is for on-site sales only