



Membership Advisory

AMA Response to Provincial Reopening Plan

On January 29, 2021, the Government of Alberta provided [an updated plan](#) for gradually lifting restrictions and reopening the economy. Under this phased approach, segments of the economy will reopen over the coming months as specific health-related criteria are met. Museums and galleries are included in Phase Three of this plan, which is expected no earlier than the end of March 2021. Until Phase Three has been approved, all museums and galleries must remain closed as per [the public health measures](#) that were implemented December 13, 2020. Refer to [Alberta Health Services](#) and the [Government of Alberta](#) for the most current information relating to COVID-19.

While we recognize that these measures are necessary to safeguard public health and protect museum visitors, staff, volunteers, and their families, the prolonged closure of our sector is having severe and direct impacts on the financial sustainability of museums across the province. After initial closures last March, 34% of museums did not open for the 2020 season, and of those, 60% did not know when they would have the capacity to do so. With museums expected to remain closed to the public into the spring, these new measures will further intensify these impacts, and could ultimately lead to permanent closures and a loss of heritage and community vitality across our province.

The Alberta Museums Association (AMA) is continuing to advocate on behalf of our membership and the sector to ensure the needs of museums are understood. We have been providing information to Minister Leela Aheer and the Department of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women and the Heritage Division regarding the significant pressures on the museum sector and the kinds of support that will be required as we move forward. We are also engaging with provincial representatives to understand the implications for our sector of the Government of Alberta's revised approach in this updated reopening plan, as well as enquiring as to the rationale for including museums in the Phase Three relaunch where we were included in Phase One this past spring.

The AMA Secretariat and Board of Directors encourage all members to join us in these advocacy efforts. Help ensure that museum voices are heard by [registering here](#) for the Government of Alberta's upcoming Telephone Town Hall about the updated restrictions and recovery plan. The Town Hall will take place Wednesday, February 3, from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m., with Premier Jason Kenney; Minister Doug Schweitzer, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation; Martin Long, Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business and Tourism; and Dr. Deena Hinshaw, Chief Medical Officer of Health.

We also encourage you to reach out directly to your local MLAs, Minister Aheer, and Minister Schweitzer, to educate them on the real local impact that closures are having on your institution and your capacity to deliver the cultural experiences that enrich the lives of all Albertans. Continue sharing your museum's experience during the pandemic and showing how vital your museum is to the health and well-being, as well as the economic vitality, of the communities you serve.

The AMA is committed to continuing to work on behalf of Alberta's museum community, and our staff is available to answer any questions you may have. The AMA also has [resources available](#) to help your organization prepare to reopen and operate safely once museums are once again open to the public.

A connected community of museum professionals is all the more important to support each other in responding to the pandemic. By reaching out to your local, provincial, and federal representatives, you will be amplifying the voices of the many members across our sector and helping to ensure that together we are stronger moving forward. Please also continue to reach out to the AMA Board and Secretariat and let us know how we can continue to support you in the times ahead.