

## COVID-19 Guidance for Cultural & Heritage Institutions & Attractions

The following recommendations are intended to help operators and staff working at museums, galleries, aquariums, zoos, outdoor heritage institutions (e.g. landmarks, outdoor historic sites, botanical gardens), and other establishments primarily engaged in preserving and exhibiting objects, sites and natural wonders of historical, cultural and educational value to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As every site will be different, it is ultimately the responsibility of facility operators to review their own policies, procedures and site-specific circumstances and assess their ability to operate while ensuring that the appropriate infection prevention and control measures are implemented and maintained.

Updated information about COVID-19 can be found in Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#).

### Provincial Orders

Under the [Reopening Ontario Act – Stage 2 Orders](#), museums, galleries, aquariums, zoos, science centres, landmarks, historic sites, botanical gardens and similar attractions may open with the following restrictions:

- Interactive exhibits or exhibits with a high risk of personal contact must be closed to the public.
  - Remove all interactive displays and activities where possible, including costumes, interactive artifacts, tools, etc.
- Lockers cannot be provided to members of the public.
- Any equipment that is rented or provided to patrons must be cleaned and disinfected between each use.

### Implement measures to ensure physical distancing

- Plan and modify the layout of the facility to ensure enough space is provided for customers and staff to maintain [physical distancing](#) of two metres/six feet.
- Limit the number of customers permitted into the museum or facility at a time:
  - Consider operating by appointment only.
  - Position an employee at the entrance to control customer entry.
  - Monitor the number of people entering and leaving the facility.
  - Encourage customers to pre-purchase tickets online prior to arrival at facility.
  - Stagger scheduling of arrivals and departures to limit contact between customers (e.g. timed entry on tickets).
  - Once the maximum number of customers is reached, allow one person in for every person that leaves.
- To calculate the maximum number of people that should be permitted in the facility at any one time, a good rule of thumb is one person per two metres square (four squared metres) of publicly accessible floor space.

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- Post signage at the entrance indicating the maximum number of customers that can be permitted at any one time.
- Provide visible queues for customers who might be waiting in line outside the facility by placing markers such as tape, safety cones/pylons or painted lines every two metres (six feet).
- Maintain physical distancing between people within the facility:
  - Manage visitor flow for the whole facility (e.g. create one-way aisles with prominent signage and/or floor markings).
  - Use digital apps with maps and audio tour guides for assisting customers though facility.
  - Place tape on the floor two metres (six feet) apart for lining up at service counters (e.g. cashiers) and other areas where customers tend to stand.
  - Assign an employee to direct customers through the various parts of the facility.
  - Space seating and activity stations at least two metres (six feet) apart, if applicable.
  - Lockers must not be provided to members of the public.
- Utilize other measures in areas where physical distancing is difficult to maintain:
  - Set-up portable barriers around employees when managing exhibit areas.
  - Install plexiglass dividers at cashiers or any other service counter where staff are required to be in close contact with customers.
  - Block off every other ticket station.
- Organized events, presentations and demonstrations are limited to a maximum of 10 people or less indoors, with physical distancing.
  - Provide visible queues for customers inside the room by placing markers such as tape, safety cones/pylons or painted lines every two metres (six feet).
  - Post signage at the entrance indicating the maximum number of customers that can be permitted at any one time.
  - Limit the number of customers permitted into the room at a time.
    - Position an employee at the entrance of the room to control customer entry.

### Practice proper use of cloth and non-medical face masks

- The use of non-medical masks or face coverings is required in all indoor public spaces, as per a new City of Toronto [bylaw](#) and [O. Reg 263/20](#). Operators are required to develop a policy and protocols on the wearing of masks. More information is available [here](#).
- Train staff on the [proper use](#) of masks, and how to safely put on and take off a mask.
- Masks do not replace the need for physical distancing, hand washing, and staying home when sick.
- See [Guidance for Employers on Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace](#) for more information.

## Workplace Health and Safety

Review the [Guidance for Employers on Preventing COVID-19 in the Workplace](#) to plan and implement protocols to keep staff and customers safe, including:

- **Health screening for staff and customers**
  - [Actively screen](#) all individuals (staff, patrons, suppliers, etc.) entering the facility. Questions can be answered on paper, online or by asking people directly.
  - Temperature checks are not required or recommended.
- **Mask/face coverings**
- **Cleaning and disinfection**
  - The facility may need to discuss with chemical suppliers in order to identify disinfectants that are gentle on antique surfaces (e.g. railings in century old homes).
  - Any equipment that is rented or provided to patrons must be cleaned and disinfected between each use.
- **Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems**
- **Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette**
- **Managing COVID-19 in the workplace**

## Increase communication with customers and staff

- Post signs at all entrances instructing customers and staff not to enter or visit if they are sick.
- Post educational materials in high visibility areas to encourage behaviours to prevent transmission such as:
  - [Physical Distancing](#)
  - [How to Protect Yourself](#)
  - [Information about COVID-19](#)
  - [Wash your Hands](#)
  - [Cover your Cough](#)
- Encourage staff and customers to download the [COVID Alert app](#) so they can be notified directly if they have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.
- Provide frequent reminders over the public announcement system to customers about physical distancing and any other key messages (e.g. sanitize hands at entrance, stay home if feeling ill, no gathering/crowding in one area, ensure two metres (six feet) apart in line-ups, and that highly interactive exhibits are prohibited).
- Information can also be communicated on the museum or other facility's website, and through automated telephone messages, newsprint and e-mail subscriptions.

## More Information

Please visit our website at [toronto.ca/COVID19](https://toronto.ca/COVID19) for updated information or call us at 416-338-7600.

## References

Government of Canada. (2020). *Hard surface disinfectants and hand sanitizers (COVID-19)*.

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[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_patient\\_screening\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_patient_screening_guidance.pdf)

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<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-environmental-cleaning.pdf?la=en>