

COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN - RESOURCE



Resource updated: 10 August 2020

Introduction

Museums & Galleries Queensland (M&G QLD) has prepared this resource to guide our sector in the process of reopening, with the aim of preventing the spread of COVID-19 and protecting staff, volunteers and visitors against infection.

The Queensland Government's **Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 Restrictions** identifies that our State's public museums and galleries are able to reopen under Stage 2 of these measures from 1 June 2020. With **Stage 3** of the Queensland Government's Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 Restrictions being introduced **from midday on 3 July 2020**, M&G QLD has updated this resource to reflect these changes.

Queensland Government Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 Restrictions:

<https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions>

To reopen, it is recommended that museums and galleries have a COVID-19 Safety Plan. This is an internal document that details how your organisation will reopen responsibly and comply with Government and public health authority guidelines, physical distancing and containment measures. It **does not** have to be submitted to the Queensland Government Chief Health Officer for approval, however it should be made available if requested.

The Queensland Government has also developed a template to document how your organisation can protect its staff, volunteers and visitors during the COVID-19 pandemic: https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/192689/WHS-plan-for-COVID19.pdf

M&G QLD will continue to update this resource as new information becomes available.

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Managing the risk of exposure to COVID-19

Operations

When you reopen your museum or gallery it will not be business as usual. It is important when developing your COVID-19 Safety Plan that you conduct a risk assessment to plan for and mitigate any potential risks for your organisation, staff, volunteers and visitors.

This includes new or changed risks arising from COVID-19 such as visitor impatience or aggression, high-work demand or changes to work practices for vulnerable workers.

Social distancing

You must do everything reasonably practicable to maintain a safe physical distance of at least 1.5 metres between people to minimise the spread of COVID-19.

Limiting visitor numbers to your venue will assist in addressing the safe social distancing measures.

Cleaning and sanitation

Increasing the frequency of cleaning and sanitising of regularly used objects and surfaces is important to safeguard your staff, volunteers and visitors against the spread of COVID-19. This includes:

- frequently touched surfaces such as handrails, bathroom door handles and doors, lift buttons, shelves, counters, bench tops, payment registers, and EFTPOS machines. These should be cleaned regularly using appropriate detergent solutions. Once cleaned, they should be disinfected regularly using appropriate disinfectant solutions.
- workplace amenities including kitchens, staff-room facilities, communal areas, change rooms and toilets.
- personal items used in the workplace such as glasses and phones should be cleansed and disinfected frequently (e.g. by using isopropyl alcohol wipes).

Guidance on how to clean your workplace to minimise the spread of COVID-19 can be accessed from the Safe Work Australia website:

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/how-to-clean-disinfect-your-workplace-covid19.pdf>

Install and monitor alcohol-based hand sanitiser stations at the entrance to your museum or gallery and at other key points within your venue.

Do not disinfect or sanitise your collection items.

Do not use large scale disinfecting methods such as spraying or fogging in your museum or gallery as they may contaminate collection items.

It is critical that you manage dust during your museum or gallery's closure, as dust can attract insects and moisture.

Use HEPA filter vacuums and wear Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for your own safety when removing dust from collection items and follow this recommended order for cleaning:

Step 1: dust objects;

Step 2: dust plinths; then

Step 3: vacuum and mop floors to reduce the spread of dust.

Inspect for mould throughout the building. Get air circulating through the spaces again.

Check insect blunder traps, record any movement, and install new traps to monitor insect and rodent activity.

Seek the advice of a conservator if necessary.

Maintenance

Maintain essential safety inspection, servicing and maintenance schedules for operational equipment including HAVAC systems, exit doors, emergency power supply, smoke alarms, sprinkler systems and fire-isolated stairs.

Prior to reopening, check and replace light bulbs that may have blown during your museum or gallery's closure.

Ensure soap dispensers in change rooms and toilets are full and functional. If possible, provide single-use paper towels or air dryers for visitor usage.

Provide contractors with advance notice of your reopening in case you need their services or assistance.

Ask contractors or work-related visitors to complete a COVID-19 Visitor Declaration Form prior to entering your venue. This form should contain the visitor's name and contact details, and a series of questions such as:

- 'Do you have any symptoms of cold, flu or other illness?'
- 'Have you had contact with anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 in the past 14 days?'
- 'Have you recently returned from overseas?'

Responses to these types of questions will help you to determine if it is safe for the contractor or work-related visitor to enter your museum or gallery.

Communication

Creating a welcoming space and communicating a culture of 'safety first' will help to grow the confidence of visitors, staff and volunteers returning to your venue.

Develop a communications plan. This will assist with communicating your organisation's reopening as well as advising your community, stakeholders and audiences of changes to your operations.

Be creative in how you communicate your museum or gallery's reopening. Also use this as an opportunity to communicate the value of your organisation.

Clearly display your gallery or museum's COVID-19 health and safety protocols and conditions of entry on your website, online ticketing platform, social media platforms and at the entrance to your museum or gallery. If applicable, also email this information to your organisation's mailing lists and members/friends.

Travel **new**

Any person entering Queensland **must** observe the current Queensland Border Restrictions and **must** complete a Queensland Border Declaration Pass. This includes committing to undertake a COVID-19 test if they develop symptoms within 14 days of arriving in Queensland.

Details of Border Restrictions:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/public-health-directions/border-restrictions>

Even if you are a Queensland resident, you will need to complete a Queensland Border Declaration Pass prior to re-entering the State. Border passes remain **valid for 7 days** from the day the declaration is made. If circumstances change, a new declaration will be required.

Apply for a Queensland Border Declaration Pass:

<https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/border-closing>

Anyone that has been in a declared COVID-19 'hotspot' during the last 14 days is **not allowed** to enter Queensland. A 'hotspot' is a high-risk area that has been identified as having a large number of people with COVID-19.

These high-risk areas are listed on the Queensland Government's website:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts>

How many visitors can you have and what are the requirements?

Number of visitors

From midday on 3 July 2020 the number of visitors permitted in your museum or gallery has increased to one person per 4 square metres regardless of the size of the venue.

Record keeping

You are required to keep contact information for all visitors, workers and contractors, including name, email address (residential address if email is not available) and mobile phone number for a period of at least 56 days.

This information is captured for the purpose of tracing COVID-19 infection and should be disclosed to Queensland health authorities if requested.

You must ensure that these records are stored confidentially and securely in accordance with the relevant privacy law requirements.

You should destroy this information once you are no longer required to keep it.

A visitor/customer having installed the COVIDSafe app does not discharge them from this requirement of providing their contact information.

Other requirements

- If practical, implement a booking or ticketing system with timed entry so that you can limit the number of people in your museum or gallery at any given time. This can apply to venues that charge a fee and those that are free to enter. To further reduce contact, you could consider electronic ticketing.
- As mentioned above, clearly display your gallery or museum's COVID-19 health and safety protocols and conditions of entry on your website, online ticketing platform, social media platforms and at the entrance to your museum or gallery. If applicable, also email this information to your organisation's mailing lists and members/friends.
- Display signage, instructing visitors on appropriate distancing and sanitation measures. Ensure that the signage is clear and easy to read, using an appropriate font size. This may also include arrows to direct the flow of visitors; printed graphics indicating the 1.5 metre distancing measures; or non-slip markers on the floor to indicate appropriate distancing measures.

For example:



COVID-19 signage and safety posters can be downloaded from the Safe Work Australia website: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/signage-and-posters-covid-19>

- If possible, use separate doors for entry and exit. If this is not possible, use tape, bollards or other markers to clearly delineate the pathways to enter and exit.
- Provide facemasks to visitors upon request or, depending on your location and level of risk, wearing a facemask may be a condition of entry.
- Respectfully request anyone who is sick to leave your venue immediately. If the visitor objects, remind the visitor of your museum or gallery's conditions of entry. If someone enters your venue that is unwell, seek appropriate advice to determine if you need to temporarily close to the public, or if staff coming into contact with this person need to self-quarantine.
- If your venue has drinking fountains, block off access to and usage of these facilities.
- Remove seating or rearrange single seating to space at least 1.5 metres apart.
- Block or regulate access to exhibition interactives such as touch screens. If possible, apply a clear protective screen to devices, which can be wiped down regularly and prevent damage to the device. This may mean having a staff member or volunteer to supervise usage of the interactive and ensure that visitors apply hand sanitiser before and after use, and to clean the device between uses.
- Remove printed museum and gallery guides. These could be replaced with downloadable guides or audio guides that can be accessed via a visitor's personal device; or if offering take-away room brochures, have a dedicated staff member or volunteer distribute these as the visitor exits the exhibition.
- Consider offering special, allocated times for people in high-risk categories to visit (e.g. over 70 years).
- Regularly monitor and review your physical distancing measures to ensure that they remain effective.

Implement a phased strategy

As the COVID-19 restrictions are gradually eased, you may need to prepare a staggered approach to visitation to comply with Government and public health authority guidelines, physical distancing and containment measures.

For example:

Phase 1 - limit your visitors to a small, manageable number that is appropriate for your venue size.

Phase 2 - allow a slightly larger number of visitors.

Phase 3 - group tours and small public programs may start again.

Managing egress and emergency evacuation

Update your emergency plans and evacuation procedures to comply with the precautions around COVID-19.

This may include:

- identifying and documenting safe evacuation procedures for staff working from home.
- identifying and communicating additional evacuation routes to accommodate social distancing measures.

When can your museum or gallery resume delivery of events, public programs and workshops?

Guided tours and artist/curator talks

Under Stage 3 of the Queensland Government's Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 Restrictions, guided tours and artist/curator talks can be conducted provided social distancing is observed (i.e. people must stand 1.5 metres apart).

Opening events

Opening events can occur provided you adhere to the following restrictions:

- Social distancing requirements are observed
- Buffet/self-serve food service is **not** allowed
- Food prepared by community members **cannot** be served/is not allowed
- Any food or beverages must be served to seated guests in accordance with the QLD Government's COVID Safe Checklist: Seated dining and drinking in venues:
https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0020/127235/COVID-Safe-Checklist-RestCafes.pdf

School groups **new**

Within a school or pre-school venue, the 'venue density rule' of one person per 4 square metres does not apply to students or children attending Early Childhood and Learning Centres. However, **when students leave their school** venue/go offsite as a part of an approved excursion, they are required to observe the relevant Public Health Directions and social distancing requirements. This means the number of children/students able to safely visit your museum or gallery is determined by the Queensland Government's Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 Stage 3 Restrictions (see page 8).

Workshops/hands-on public programs

To date, there is no information available regarding when the delivery of these types of activities can resume.

If you are able, continue to provide online activities, tours, or talks to visitors who may choose to stay at home for a longer period.

What to do if your museum or gallery has a retail space or café?

If your museum or gallery operates a café or food business, you are required to have a **COVID Safe Checklist: Dining and drinking**.

Download a COVID Safe Checklist:

https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0020/127235/COVID-Safe-Checklist-RestCafes.pdf

It is important that your customers feel comfortable and safe in your retail or café space. Below are further suggestions on how you might manage these retail operations:

- Refer to Stage 3 of the Queensland Government’s Roadmap to Easing COVID-19 Restrictions to determine the number of people that can enter your retail space or café at any given time.
- It is recommended that signage saying “please don’t touch the merchandise” or “please only touch merchandise that you intend to buy” is displayed to prevent the potential risk of COVID-19 contamination.
- Encourage shoppers to ask for assistance and have a staff member show them an item rather than handling it themselves.
- Promote the use of contactless payment transactions such as ‘Tap-and-Go’, EFTPOS, or credit card facilities to reduce cash handling, or you may decide not to accept cash payments during this period. If moving to a cashless payment system during this period, it is recommended that you display signage to inform your customers.
- Ensure that staff have access to and regularly use hand sanitiser before and after every transaction, or provide staff with disposable gloves.
- Install plexiglass barriers at tills and counters as an additional measure to protect workers.
- Place non-slip markers on the floor to indicate appropriate distancing measures between the counter/your workers and customers queuing to make a transaction.
- Install and monitor hand sanitiser stations in the retail space.
- Clean and sanitise surfaces regularly.

Please also refer to the Food Standards Australia New Zealand website for advice for food businesses:

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au>

Printable business safety resources to display in your retail space can be downloaded from the Queensland Government's website:

<https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/coronavirus-covid-19-business-safety-resources>

And from the Safe Work Australia website:

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/signage-and-posters-covid-19>

To access information about fast-tracked, fee free (or low cost) infection control training to support the reopening of customer-facing businesses, including retail, see the Australian Government's Department of Education Skills and Employment website:

<https://www.dese.gov.au/news/subsidised-infection-control-training-fast-tracked-re-opening-businesses>

It is recommended that you contact the Department for details.

Supporting your staff and volunteers [workers]

It is important that your workers feel safe in their workplace and are protected from potential contact with COVID-19.

It is recommended that you establish a workplace policy for pandemics. If you already have one, employee leave and working from home arrangements should be reviewed and updated to protect staff, provide flexibility, and encourage sick employees to stay home.

It is also important to assess the risks to any vulnerable workers. A vulnerable worker is a person who is at greater risk to COVID-19 including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- People 65 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- People 70 years and older
- People with compromised immune systems

For information on supporting vulnerable workers, refer to the Safe Work Australia website:

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/general-industry-information/vulnerable>

Additional measures to support your workers:

- Provide your workers with appropriate training, information and resources.
- If applicable, encourage, but do not mandate your workers to download the Australian Government's COVIDSafe app.
- Implement good hygiene practices including:
 - a. Avoid touching your mouth, eyes and nose with unwashed (or gloved) hands.
 - b. Regularly clean your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds using soap and water, or with alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
 - c. Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze with a tissue or a flexed elbow. Put used tissues in the bin and wash your hands immediately.
- Practice safe distancing measures in all areas of the workplace including back of house, collection stores and preparation areas. This includes limiting the number of people in vehicles if staff must travel together.
- If space is limited, consider staggering your staffs' work hours or schedule your staff to work on-site on alternate days.
- Tell staff and volunteers not to come to work if they have a temperature or if they are feeling unwell. If one of your staff or volunteers becomes ill, they must self-quarantine

for 14 days before returning to work. If there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 infection at your workplace, Queensland Health will be notified by the medical professional that confirms the diagnosis.

- Establish clear protocols and increase scheduling for cleaning and sanitising your venue. Cleaning staff are at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19 and to the chemicals contained in cleaning products. It is essential that these personnel are provided with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Provide all staff and volunteers with access to facemasks and hand sanitiser.
- If possible, reduce the sharing of equipment and tools.
- Regularly check in with your staff and volunteers. This includes monitoring their wellbeing and their observations of visitor behaviour to ensure staff and volunteers are being treated respectfully – abusive and violent behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Provide clear guidelines on how to respond to someone who does not adhere to your gallery or museum's COVID-19 health and safety protocols and conditions of entry. This may include reporting it to a supervisor or staff member in higher authority.

Volunteer programs

In addition to the above, it is recommended that museums and galleries reinstating their volunteer programs seek independent advice to ensure that their volunteer measures comply with their organisation's insurance policies, public health authority guidelines and Workplace Health & Safety legislation.

It is also recommended that you:

- Prepare written guidelines for your volunteers so that they are aware of all of your organisation's COVID-19 precautions and measures.
- Provide your volunteers with a copy of these guidelines and prominently display them in their work areas.
- Discuss the guidelines and your volunteer return to work strategies with your volunteers to ease any issues, concerns or anxieties they may have.

Volunteer-run organisations

If your museum or gallery is entirely volunteer-run, it is strongly recommended that you comply with public health authority guidelines and Workplace Health & Safety legislation. The Queensland Government's June 2020 reopening date was provided as a guide. In the interests of your volunteers' health and wellbeing, your organisation may choose to delay reopening to the public or implement a staged 'return to work'.

You may consider establishing a COVID-19 committee or working group to develop, monitor and review the effectiveness of the measures put in place by your organisation.

Volunteer resources

For information to assist community, not-for-profit organisations affected by the pandemic, see Justice Connect's website:

<https://www.nfplaw.org.au/covid19>

For further information on supporting your volunteers in the workplace, see Volunteering Australia's **COVID-19: Information for Volunteer Involving Organisations** resource:

<https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/volunteer-involving-organisations-and-covid-19/#/>

Additional resources

M&G QLD COVID-19: Information, Resources and Support

<http://magsq.com.au/cms/page.asp?ID=10606>

Safe Work Australia COVID-19 resource kit

<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/collection/covid-19-resource-kit>

Queensland Government Framework for COVID-19 Safe Businesses Framework

https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/127647/Framework-for-COVID-SAFE-Businesses.pdf

Queensland Government COVID-19 FAQs

https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/127653/COVID-Safe-FAQ.pdf

Work health and safety during COVID-19: Guide to keeping your workplace safe, clean and healthy

https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/191678/covid-19-overview-and-guide.pdf



Disclaimer

This resource has been prepared by Museums & Galleries Queensland to support the sector during COVID-19. It has been developed using the best available information at the time of publication. Users of this resource are encouraged to adhere to the advice and recommendations of Local, State and Federal Government, public health authority guidelines and their various stakeholders.

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