



Best Practices for Businesses to Reopen

PERFORMANCES AND THEATERS



OPEN FOR PERFORMANCES AND THEATERS

- Develop a plan or checklist for reopening consistent with [CDC](#) guidance that includes:
 - Employee training.
 - Leave policies, absenteeism plans and employee and performer screenings.
 - Facial covering requirements for guests, performers and employees.
 - Physical facility evaluation for any damage or issues caused by vacancy. Follow [CDC](#) and [Maryland Department of the Environment](#) guidance on reopening buildings, including checking mechanical, air and water/ice systems. Ensure all water lines are flushed, including equipment water lines and connections, according to manufacturer's instructions. Ensure building ventilation meets appropriate standards.
 - Social distancing protocols and procedures for employees, vendors, performers and guests, with special consideration for entrances and exits, queues, bottlenecks, facility layouts and safe capacity limits.
 - Communications and signage.
 - Routine and frequent environmental cleaning and disinfecting, especially high-touch surfaces, in accordance with CDC recommendations.

- Develop a plan for vendors to bring products safely into the business by arranging for deliveries when there are the fewest guests and employees.
- Connect with State and local authorities to ensure that all licenses and inspections are up-to-date prior to opening.
- Facility capacity may be limited based upon [Executive Orders](#) or other local government guidance.
- Evaluate the facility to determine how to socially distance performers from employees and guests such as the distance from the performance space to the guests.
- If the facility also has a restaurant, bar, or retail component, these are subject to additional requirements under Executive Orders and, in some cases, State and local Open for Masks on Maryland.



OPEN FOR MASKS ON MARYLAND

- Face coverings are required for all employees and guests, including children older than five years of age, when indoors. When outdoors, face coverings are required if unable to consistently maintain at least six feet of distance from other non-household individuals and are advisable under all conditions. For exceptions to this requirement, please see the latest [Executive Order](#).
- Customers with disabilities who are unable to wear a face covering must be provided with an opportunity to receive the same goods and services

as customers without disabilities. For more information, please see the [Face Coverings FAQ](#).



OPEN FOR EMPLOYEES

- Employees should be trained in and understand current COVID-19 health and workplace guidelines, such as hand hygiene and cleaning protocol, along with proper PPE use and disposal.
- Implement a daily screening process for employees and performers, which includes [CDC](#) or MDH recommended health questions, and consider temperature testing.
- Direct sick employees to follow [CDC](#) and [state guidelines](#) regarding home isolation for suspected or confirmed COVID-19 infections and returning to work.
- Encourage employees and performers to maintain social distancing, including during breaks, and modify procedures to avoid congregation.
- Train employees on the proper responses to guests who challenge social distancing, facial covering, and other protocols.
- Tools and equipment that are shared should be sanitized prior to being given to another employee and at the beginning or end of each shift, rehearsal, or performance.

[For more information go to open.maryland.gov/backtobusiness](https://open.maryland.gov/backtobusiness)



OPEN FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Minimize congregating in common areas through signage, barriers and employee communications. Consider the elimination of intermission for performances. If intermission is necessary for the comfort of guests, consider lengthening intermission to avoid congregating near restrooms and other facilities. Restrict access to areas where social distancing and social gathering requirements cannot be followed.
- Install a marking system to visually demonstrate the recommended social distancing with special emphasis at all locations where guests congregate.
- Designate and post signage indicating the direction of foot traffic in main circulation paths and stairways; consider one-way circulation routes.
- For admissions, use advance registration and payment, timed entry, staggered performance/movie times for facilities with multiple screens or performance areas, and other methods to maintain social distancing and reduce touch points between guests, performers, and employees.
- Consider implementing a pre-order system for concessions to avoid lines and bottlenecks.
- Where possible, maintain admission records for at least 2 weeks if contact tracing is required.
- If applicable, prepare a parking plan that limits parking to create distance between arriving and departing guests.
- Use reserved seating, designated or roped-off seating, or ushers to maintain at least 6 foot distance between guests and/or groups (both to the sides, and in front and behind), within the performance venue. All audience members must at least 12 feet away from performers.
- Stagger seating to seat guests in the middle of the row first. All guests must be seated, and no more than six people may be seated together.

- Evaluate space and capacity based on Executive Orders and social distancing guidelines. Determine capacity in order to ensure guests and households can properly distance themselves at all times, including in areas that may be prone to congregation, such as in queues, entrances, exits, and inside theater or rehearsal spaces.
- Equipment meant to be used by guests, such as ticket kiosks, should be placed to allow for 6 feet of social distance between guests.
- Modify performances to allow at least 6 foot social distancing between performers where possible, especially when face coverings cannot be worn. Performers should not interact with guests.



OPEN FOR CLEANLINESS AND COMFORT

- Increase cleaning and disinfecting, especially for frequently touched surfaces, in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#). For employees and performers, pay particular attention to those areas in the back of the house. Areas and amenities that cannot be easily cleaned between guests should remain closed.
- Evaluate the need to distribute information through multi-use or single-use materials, such as playbills and programs, and consider technology as an alternative.
- Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available to employees, performers, and guests, particularly at key guest and employee entrances and contact areas such as elevator landings, dressing rooms, restrooms, ticket counters, dressing rooms, changing areas, coat checks, and other areas where guests, performers and employees are likely to congregate.
- If possible, set aside special hours, performances or showings for vulnerable or at-risk guests.
- Where possible, implement and encourage touchless payment and admission, and online ticketing.
- Post signage advising guests to not enter the property if they are sick or symptomatic.

- Plan for additional time to sanitize performance-related equipment used by performers and employees after each use.
- If possible, electronically send guests a self-screening questionnaire based on CDC guidelines to be completed on the day of the performance, and consider refunding tickets for any



OPEN FOR COMMUNICATIONS

- Communicate commitment to cleanliness by posting compliance adherence with the [CDC's guidelines](#), including social distancing, handwashing, cough and sneeze hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, and staying home when ill.
- Show guests care by having signage that details social distancing protocol and COVID-19 prevention. Provide signage in Spanish and other languages prevalent in your community.
- Communicate with employees and guests on the measures taken for their comfort and on the shared responsibility to monitor their health and stay home if not feeling well.
- Prior to the guest's visit, if possible, explain processes in place for their comfort, which includes social distancing, and increased hygiene practices per the [CDC](#) and MDH guidance and that you are open for business.
- Contact your local health department if you are concerned about transmission of COVID-19 in your facility.

All Executive Orders still in effect must be complied with. See most up to date orders here: governor.maryland.gov/covid-19-pandemic-orders-and-guidance.