



Reopening Resources: Ideas from the field for Colorado Arts & Culture

Updated as of May 28, 2020

How to use this guide

Colorado's arts and cultural sector is a complex ecosystem with venues and businesses of various sizes, shapes and missions. The purpose of this guide is to provide examples and recommendations that inform your plan for reopening to the public. These are only examples of strategies that could be employed, not a recommendation or endorsement. Each organization must determine the operational guidelines that work with its unique situation and meet guidance outlined by state and local public health agencies.

This is a living document that will be consistently updated to reflect evolving circumstances and information. For additional resources to support arts & culture during COVID-19 please visit coloradocreativeindustries.org.

Level 2: Safer at Home

Officially, Colorado remains in the **Level 2: Safer at Home** phase, focused on a goal of maintaining 60 percent to 65 percent physical distancing. Coloradans are no longer ordered to stay home, but are **strongly advised** to stay at home. Critical businesses are open and non-critical businesses are operating with restrictions. The Governor is advising Colorado residents to travel no more than 10 miles from home and avoid very popular or crowded locations where social distancing may be difficult. Group activities are limited to 10 people or less.

People should be prepared for state and local public health orders to be extended, amended, or changed as needed to protect public health. This means we may move between the different levels during this pandemic. Full official guidance for the state of Colorado is available here for the current [Colorado Safer at Home phase](#).

Public education & awareness about the new normal

This section focuses on ways to educate the public to maximize health and safety compliance and minimize disruption of events and engagements.

Changing Expectations.

Consistent and widespread messaging by arts organizations can accomplish two essential goals: (1) it will teach patrons that the new rules are for their protection, which will eventually lead to greater compliance; and (2) showing new safety practices will coax nervous patrons back to public places. Arts organizations located in the same community may want to consider coordinating messaging to reinforce the “new normal.”

What to Explain.

The concept of explaining rules to patrons is hardly new. Many events or venues already have codes of conduct with lists of prohibited items and behavior. Before reopening, they must add their new health procedures and expectations, such as longer wait times. There is no exact amount of information that is best. Rather, as with all safety messaging, the goal is to be positive, practical, and proportionate.

Where to Message.

In a word, everywhere. The more prominently new rules and expectations are displayed, the more serious businesses appear to be about enforcing them, which will promote compliance. Here is a list of ways to reach patrons before they arrive:

- Website for the venue, event, or artist(s)
- Social media channels for the venue, event, or artist(s)
- Ticket purchasing sites should link to health and safety rules.
- Emails reminding patrons of health rules and expectations can be sent to patrons at regular intervals between the date of purchase/registration and the date of the event.
- Signage leading to and at the event site can be effective as a further reminder, especially if it is visually attractive and located where patrons are likely to be standing still or moving slowly.

How to Message.

With a goal as broad as normalizing and gaining buy-in for new behavior, any method that works is good. Here are a few suggestions.

- **Marketing staff** can use their creative talent to promote good hygiene and health guidance without being intimidating.
- **Photos and videos** can show patrons having a good time even while following health rules.
- **Storyboards** can depict the process and schedule by which a venue is sanitized so patrons understand the measures and put a face on the workers keeping them safe.
- **Announcements** should be both audible and visual to accommodate people with sensory challenges and different language skills.
- **Artists and performers** can pre-record messages reminding patrons that only their full compliance with these health measures allows arts programming to happen.

Worker health & hygiene

Designated Point Person.

This guide recommends that a member of the arts organization or business's management team be designated as a point person responsible for overseeing the response to COVID-19. The point person will lead a process to develop and implement the agency's safety strategies, including appropriate training for staff and workers

For information on worker health and hygiene, including preventing and responding to cases of COVID-19, please refer to the [CDC's guidance for businesses and workplaces](#).

Sanitizing the venue

For information on proper cleaning protocols, please refer to the [CDC's reopening guidance for cleaning and disinfecting public spaces, workplaces, businesses, schools and homes](#).

Supply chain & acquiring personal protective equipment

Resources for purchasing and acquiring PPE:

- [Colorado Mask Project](#)
- [Energize Colorado PPE and supplies marketplace](#)

Welcoming the public to buildings & spaces

As with worker health, concerns for our patrons' safety should be addressed through hygiene and social distancing. Minimize the number of physical transactions that take place during an audience member's visit: fewer transactions mean fewer opportunities to spread contagions. It's also important to give patrons the resources and opportunities they need to promote safety.

Handwashing Stations. Stations with either soap and water or sanitizer containing at least 60-percent alcohol must be provided at all points of ingress and other well-marked and illuminated locations throughout the venue. These stations should allow no-touch activation, if possible. Supervisors must confirm regularly that supplies are adequate.

Will Call and Box Office windows are generally well-protected by glass partitions already. Social distancing can be preserved by opening fewer windows and marking appropriate queuing spaces.

Space Requirements. Additional space may be required to accommodate longer but less densely packed lines waiting to enter the venue. The line waiting to enter can be managed using common methods such as lines marked on the ground, rope and stanchions, fencing or bike rack, in combination with workers who provide information about the anticipated wait time and ingress procedure and also enforce social distancing. The area where patrons wait should have signage with the event's health rules, including social distancing guidelines and face-covering requirements.

Disability Accommodations. New health screening measures may require new accommodations for people with disabilities. For example, hearing-impaired patrons who read lips may require screening by a worker wearing a clear face covering or one with a see-through window over the wearer's mouth. An event space that reduces points of ingress or egress must ensure continued accessibility. Patrons whose disability makes them unable to wait in a long line may need a more expedited access procedure. In order to remain compliant with applicable disability laws and provide reasonably accessible events for all patrons, consult with a local advocate for people with disabilities.

Restrooms. Workers should limit occupancy of restrooms to ensure social distancing. Unless portable restroom facilities are added, this will likely result in patrons waiting outside the restroom doors. The area where they are waiting will require monitoring to preserve appropriate space between patrons and an easily discernible line marked by physical barriers to avoid confusion about where the line begins.

Food and Beverage/Concessions Service. Appetizers, hors d'oeuvres, other food, and/or all beverages, including water, tea, wine, beer, and/or adult beverages, should not be self-served. All food and beverages should be served by staff who are wearing appropriate PPE to reduce any contamination. Organizations should not provide any buffets, tables with appetizers, and/or any self-serve wine and/or beverages to staff and/or attendees. Pre-packaged foods are preferable and should only be served when concessions staff and patrons can conduct the transaction with social distancing and a minimum of touchpoints. Venues that operate a restaurant on their premises should follow Colorado's [reopening guidelines for restaurants](#).

General strategies for venues, galleries & public spaces

In a social distancing, reduced-capacity environment, organizations will have to examine their operational models to keep patrons, staff, and artists safe. Here are some ideas from the field.

- Redesign seating charts to designate seating areas to accommodate patrons in family groups of two to four within a theater house, spaced according to social distancing guidelines.
- Require or highly recommend that all patrons and staff wear masks in the facility. Make disposable masks available to patrons.
- Time entry and exit to the venue and lobby to prevent crowding. Seat patrons in groups or zones.
- Limit restroom access to reduce capacity and station staff or volunteers to promote touch-free entry and safe spacing. Assign restrooms to patron zones for facilities with more than one restroom location.
- Limit performance length and provide intermission-free performances to reduce restroom traffic.
- Print labels for exhibited artwork in a larger font to allow patrons to see information from a distance rather than crowding to read.
- Limit concession sales to pre-packaged items or close concessions completely.
- Provide contact-free ticketing, playbills, and ticket scanning at the doors.
- Map paths of egress and spacing in the facility. Open entrance and exit doors and/or station a staff member or volunteer to manage each door to prevent multiple points of contamination.
- Create a one-way traffic flow in gallery spaces.
- Explore relocating programming to an outdoor or other nontraditional venue with increased spacing and airflow.

- Enforce new safety guidelines for all events in the venue, including presented and rental events. This may necessitate an increased work or volunteer force specially trained to manage the COVID-19 environment.

Sample policy documents and reopening plans

- [Denver Botanic Gardens phased reopening plan](#)
- [Firehouse Art Center reopening message](#)
- [Foothills Art Center phased reopening plan](#)

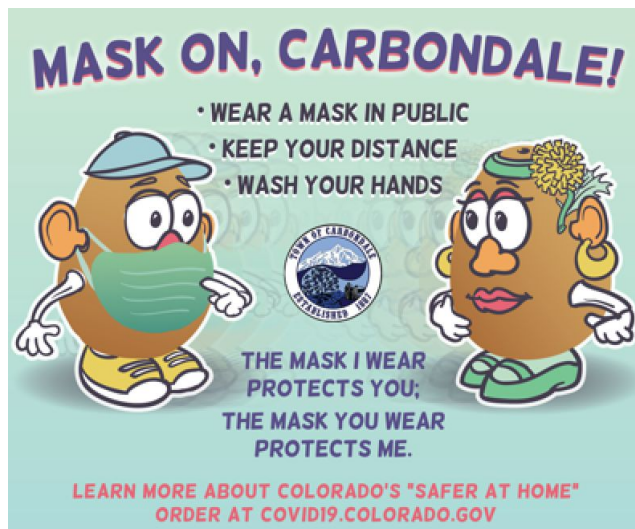
Case studies and innovation

Alternative participation formats

- [APART neighborhood art show](#) - Grand Junction
- [Denver band Wildermis takes show on the road to their fans' front door](#)
- [First Friday with Yard Art Walk](#) - Carbondale
- [Virtual Gift Basket - Denver](#)

Re-opening creativity and innovation examples in Colorado

- City of Boulder [Add Art to Your Outdoor Dining Enclosure](#)
- Town of Carbondale [local artist Brian Colley Illustrates “Mask on, Carbondale” initiative](#)



Webinars

- [Colorado Business Committee for the Arts Webinar Series](#)
- [Colorado Office of Film, Television & Media Webinar Series](#)

- [Downtown Colorado Inc. Webinar Series](#)

Additional Reopening Resources

Cleaning and sanitizing protocols

- [GBAC Star Accreditation](#) (Global Biorisk Advisory Council) the cleaning industry's only outbreak prevention, response and recovery accreditation for facilities
- [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#) (Centers for Disease Control)

Public education, awareness and messaging

- [Arts through it All](#) - Colorado statewide campaign to support arts & culture. This campaign can be used in your own communications and outreach efforts.
- [Colorado Resiliency Office Resources for Local Government](#)
- [Colorado Tourism Office recommended messaging for travelers](#)
- [Employer's Council Coronavirus Resources](#)
- [Reopen your Business](#) (Energize Colorado)
- [Considerations for Museum Reopenings](#) (American Alliance of Museums)
- [Guide to Reopen the Arts](#) (North Carolina Arts Council)
- [Connecticut's Arts & Culture Industry Guidelines for Operating during COVID-19](#)
- [Operating during COVID-19: Considerations for Oklahoma Nonprofit Arts Organizations](#) (Oklahoma Arts Council)
- [Reopening Tennessee Arts & Culture](#) (Tennessee Arts Commission)
- [Reopening Guide](#) (Event Safety Alliance)