

AFM Local 802

Covid-19 Health & Safety Recommendations

for Live Performance

Update (Aug. 6, 2021): Local 802 recommends that all musicians be "fully vaccinated" with the exception of those members who fall into legal exemptions for health or religious reasons. According to CDC guidance, an individual is not considered "fully vaccinated" until at least two weeks have passed since the receipt of: (1) a one-dose vaccine (e.g., Johnson & Johnson) or (2) the second dose in a two-dose vaccine series (e.g., Moderna, Pfizer). This is the fastest and safest way to create the proper working environment musicians will need to go back to work.

*Update (July 28, 2021): The [AFM health & safety manual](#) that covers **theatrical touring** states the following: musicians who travel outside their homes to undergo a COVID test on a day in which the musicians do not work for their producer shall receive a stipend of \$250.*

Local 802 AFM recommends the following measures to ensure that all musicians remain safe and healthy while returning to work. This document is intended only to enhance, and not replace, the minimum standards issued by city, state, and federal agencies. The orchestra committees along with Local 802 staff must negotiate side letters to address concerns specific to their rehearsal and performance venues. Musicians should never sign a document that releases employers, producers, venue owners, or contractors from legal liability. Employers, Producers, Contractors, and venue owners are legally obligated to provide a healthy and safe workplace. Every employer or venue shall have a list of standardized protocols that they will follow. Musicians shall receive these protocols before returning to the workplace.

1. Facilities – (See Appendix A)

- a. Safety/Health practices to be maintained onsite:
 - i. The Employer assumes responsibility for ensuring the observation of all local, state, and federal mandates on workplace reopening.
- b. Safety/Health Officer: A workplace COVID-19 Compliance Officer (C19CO) should be designated at every service. The C19CO must be onsite throughout each service. The C19CO should be made known to all musicians/staff prior to the start of services. The C19CO is responsible for establishing and enforcing COVID-19 safety protocols, training staff in protocols, and monitoring compliance. If possible, the C19CO should have neutral oversight with responsibility to public health. A goal is to obtain city and state funding to cover the cost of hiring the C19CO compliance officer.
- c. Facilities to be required to provide:

- i. Hand sanitizer, masks, gloves, paper bags (for masks when not in use) for all musicians/employees
 - ii. Adequate air circulation following city and state guidelines of fully replenished air every 4-5 minutes where possible
 - iii. Bathrooms must provide paper towels. Use of electric hand dryers will not be permitted because it has the potential of spreading COVID 19.
 - d. Adjustments to existing entrance/exit, bathroom, and catering protocols:
 - i. Assess adequate time allotments and number of employees permitted for entrance and exit to and from rehearsal and performance sites as well as for bathroom breaks in the context of both large ensemble and small chamber groups.
 - ii. Assess catering practices to ensure that
 - 1. Beverages are either in single-use containers or brought from home and in either case, promptly removed at the end of a rehearsal or performance.
 - 2. Catering is either individually boxed, brought from home or prohibited.
 - e. All musician workspaces including, but not limited to the orchestra pit, the stage, locker rooms, and dressing rooms must be cleaned and sanitized prior to each work call.
 - i. Full-site sanitizing after each rehearsal or performance
 - ii. Sanitizing of all equipment
 - iii. No trash to be left on site.
 - f. Equipment
 - i. Outside Equipment (i.e. brought in by the Employer and installed by other personnel) to be restricted or sanitized.
 - ii. Equipment and instruments provided by the Employer or installed by other personnel must be sanitized, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Headphones
 - 2. Chairs/baffles/plexiglass/music stands
 - 3. Pianos, keyboards, and other large instruments, e.g., organs; mallet, symphonic and hand percussion; guitar/bass/keyboard amplifiers
 - 4. Computer screens and other equipment surfaces commonly operated by hand.
 - iii. Cartage companies to ensure sanitary handling and delivery of encased instruments
- 2. Social Distancing and Safety -**
- a. Minimum distances of six feet shall surround each individual at all times. Six feet for everyone (except wind and brass players while they are on the

stand), including string players, percussionists, harpists, pianists, conductors, music prep professionals, and crew.

- b. Musicians shall adhere to social distancing practices while entering and exiting the building, entering and exiting the restrooms, as well as the backstage area.
 - c. Floor plans shall be created for each stage and backstage/wings, with layouts that will in every case provide for the following.
 - d. Elevator capacity should be limited to the number of people that can be accommodated while maintaining a six-foot physical distance between riders; face wall if possible, do not speak, use elbow/pen/etc to push buttons. Stairwells should be opened for up or down traffic with increased cleaning of stairwells.
 - e. The number of musicians and other participants per service will be strictly limited by the parameters of social distancing for each facility.
 - f. Musicians shall wear masks at all times during rehearsals and performances with the exception of wind and brass players while playing. At all other times, wind and brass players shall wear masks.
 - g. Brass instruments will require accommodation for condensation that is typically left on the floor surface; A sanitary receptacle/paper towels shall be provided and disposed of safely.
 - h. All non-musician personnel working on site in close proximity to musicians shall wear masks and gloves at all times.
3. **Sheet Music and Other Paper Materials -**
- a. Music prep professionals (librarians, orchestrators, and copyists) shall follow all mask and glove protocols for handling, passing out, and collecting sheet music.
 - b. Contractors shall accept tax forms and other required forms digitally, or via mail, not in person.
 - c. Musicians shall conclude rehearsals or performances with sheet music either left on the stand or collected by designated personnel.
4. **Illness-related issues -** All employees must be informed by their employer regarding steps to take if they develop symptoms or feel ill.
- a. Any musician/employee who exhibits COVID 19 symptoms as defined by the CDC shall not attend work.
 - b. Any musician/employee who exhibits or feels the onset of such symptoms during a rehearsal or performance shall leave immediately.
 - c. In either case, testing and tracking shall be undertaken immediately. Whenever possible, musicians shall be tested on an appropriate schedule prior to upcoming performances. The tests shall be provided by the Employer.

- d. Musicians who report symptoms shortly before or during the workday shall not be deprived of wages or benefits but should immediately notify management to ensure that a substitute musician may be secured to perform the service or remainder of the service.
 - e. Under the Families First Corona Virus Relief Act (FFCVRRL), full time employees who work for an employer with less than 500 employees who cannot work because they have to quarantine or have contracted the illness may receive up to 80 hours of paid sick time (10 eight hour days-essentially 2 weeks). Part time employees may receive a proportional amount of pay based upon the average number of hours worked in a two-week period. Daily pay maxes out at \$511.00 per day.
 - f. Employees who worked for an employer with more than 500 employees and who thus do not qualify to receive FFCVRRL may apply for New York State Emergency Leave, which provides up to five days of sick pay.
 - g. Employees who work within NYC or Westchester may receive up to 40 hours of sick time in a year (earned at a rate of one hour for every forty hours worked).
 - h. Protocols must be established for contact tracing of the people who test positive (note: in some states this will also be done by local agencies). All protocols for privacy with regard to HIPAA will need to be established prior to tracking.
 - i. Musicians or music personnel who report symptoms either shortly before or during a scheduled work period shall not be deprived of wages or benefits.
5. **Screening of Personnel** – Details regarding how testing and tracking will occur, who will do the tracking, how records will be kept, how to deal with privacy and HIPAA concerns, and other issues need to be established in advance of services. (See Appendix B)
- a. Contact-free, infrared temperature checks before the musicians and staff can enter the workplace.
 - b. If working in an environment where musicians cannot distance and wear masks most of the time, a nasal swab polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test must be done at least three times a week. If working in an environment where musicians have the ability to distance full time, testing may be reduced to once a week.
 - c. Records should be kept of all health checks, but these records must be kept private and secure at all times

6. **Daily Transportation** - The employer plan must contain precautions/guidelines for transportation from employee's home to the place of work (e.g., a short walk, an individual car, buses, trains, etc.).

7. **Ventilation** - All indoor facilities must have appropriate heating and/or air-conditioning ventilation. (See Appendix C)

8. **Outdoor Venues** - Distancing and wearing masks when rehearsing or performing is required.

9. **Masks** - The employer shall provide N95 masks whenever possible. If N95 masks are not available or practical, multiple cloth masks or surgical masks shall be provided to employees so that masks may be layered for additional protection and safety. The employer must also provide paper bags to store masks in when removed at work. All musicians will wear masks at all times during rehearsals and performances with the exception of wind and brass players who may remove masks only while playing. (See Appendix D)

10. **Food and Water** - Catering and water must be planned. Touchless or foot pedal water dispensers for refilling are acceptable. Catering is either individually boxed, brought from home or prohibited. Single use containers are encouraged, and prompt trash removal must be available.

11. **The Public** – The procedures/guidelines for non-employees (audience) will vary and must be planned in advance since their presence puts workers at risk. These procedures must be outlined in a document that is sent to the union 60 days in advance of any scheduled service.

12. **Employer Protocols** - In no case shall medical or health protocols be implemented unilaterally or in violation of existing State or Federal law.

APPENDIX A - Sanitation/Cleaning

Hand Cleaning - Hand sanitizer stations and hand washing facilities must be provided by the Employer.

- a) Hand washing facilities must be available with approved hand sanitizers
- b) Paper towels must be available (*there shall be no use of electric hand dryers).
- c) Hand Sanitizers must be EPA registered N-List hand sanitizers available preferably in touchless dispensers.

Sanitation of Bathrooms - It is now known that the virus is excreted, and bathroom air has been found to contain high levels of the virus under certain conditions. Appropriate precautions must be taken.

- a) Toilet seats should have covers that can be put down during flushing to limit spray.
- b) Paper towels must be provided. There shall be no use of hand dryers.
- c) Ventilation rates should be to ASHRAE standards (details in APPENDIX A) and exhausted to the outside.

Sanitation of Buildings – Surfaces and frequently touched areas must be sanitized daily at a minimum.

- a) The sanitizers must be EPA registered N-List for SARS-CoV-2 products and used as directed.
- b) Not acceptable practices: Disinfecting with “pesticide devices” that do not require EPA registration such as electrostatic sprayers, electrolytic units, water ionization, negative ion systems, ozone generators, foggers that emit fog and biocide, ultraviolet light units, etc.

Sanitation of Musical Equipment - In addition to building surfaces, items must be sanitized after each session, rehearsal, or performance.

- a) Outside equipment/gear (i.e. equipment/gear brought in by musicians, engineers, music librarians etc.)
- b) Equipment and instruments provided by the employer, including but not limited to:
 - * Headphones and mics
 - * Chairs/baffles/music stands
 - * Pianos, keyboards, and other large instruments, e.g., organs; mallet, symphonic and hand percussion; guitar/bass/keyboard amplifiers
 - * Recording gear and equipment
 - * Mixing console surfaces, computer keyboards, and other equipment surfaces commonly operated by hand.
- c) Music prep professionals (librarians, orchestrators and copyists) shall follow mask and glove protocols for handling, passing out, and collecting sheet music.
- d) Sheet music and other paper materials may be “quarantined” for a day after which it can be assumed the live virus on this soft surface is no longer viable.

Sanitary Measures for Cartage Companies - Ensure encased instruments are handled by a cartage company that ensure sanitary handling and delivery.

APPENDIX B – SCREENING OF PERSONNEL

There are many methods of identifying infected people but only one has the sensitivity and specificity needed to be effective – the nasal swab test using polymerase chain reaction (PCR). NOTE: sensitivity is the percentage of people with the disease who test positive and specificity is the ability of the test to correctly identify those without the disease.

- a) Other types of screening that are not proven to be sufficiently effective and are not approved:
 - Rapid saliva test, pooled saliva,
 - Antibody test (doesn't detect infected people at all)
 - Temperature – cannot identify asymptomatic individuals (can be used in addition to testing)
 - Symptom and activity questionnaires (can be used in addition to testing)
- b) The plan must identify the person(s) who administer the test.
 - medic, Covid Supervisor, or another qualified person on site – preferred
 - outside medical clinic or service
 - each individual at home
- c) The plan must identify who reports the results and to whom.
 - medic, Covid Supervisor, or other qualified person who tests and reports – preferred
 - report from medical clinic or service
 - self-reporting
- d) Frequency of screening test(s)
 - Three times a week for musician/employees whose workspace does not permit distance, e.g., during rehearsals or performances in rehearsal rooms, onstage, and in orchestra pits
 - Once a week for people who have the ability and workspace to distance at all times.
- e) Provisions for contact tracking if someone tests positive and confidentiality must be made. Note: the state/city may do this automatically in some locations
- f) Cast and crew must be informed if they have been exposed to a person testing positive
- g) All musicians and other personnel should have up-to-date flu vaccinations

APPENDIX C – Ventilation Requirements

Handwashing, mask-wearing, and distancing are ineffective in any room in which the air is not regularly exchanged with outside or filtered air. There are now many studies indicating that recirculating ventilation systems can transmit the aerosol virus throughout a facility. The employer plan must identify which options will be adopted by management prior to the plan's acceptance.

DETERMINE THE TYPE OF VENTILATION IN THE VENUE

A. RECIRCULATING VENTILATION SYSTEMS:

(Diffusers and return grilles commonly found in the ceilings of buildings built after 1980).

- 1. Air exchanges per hour:** The ASHRAE 62 standard for indoor air quality in buildings requires about 6 exchanges per hour depending on use. Rooms with 10 to 12 exchanges per hour are ideal.
- 2. Grade of the filter in the air handling unit:** MERV 13 will effectively capture COVID-19 droplets at between 5 and 30 microns. No filter lower than this rating should be used. It has been proven that fine aerosol virus-containing particles are a transmission route and the MERV 17, a HEPA filter, is recommended.
- 3. Percentage of fresh air vs recycled air:**
If a lower grade filter must be used, increasing the percentage of outside air may mitigate some risks by diluting the virus particles.

Utilization of portable HEPA filter units may be helpful in cleansing air in smaller rooms. These units may also provide additional protection when used near wind and brass instruments and singers.

B. NATURAL VENTILATION:

(Relies on building leakage, open windows, etc., found in many older buildings).

Buildings without central ventilation systems require careful consideration of the following:

- 1. Engineering reports:** The calculated ventilation rates from open windows and other related data should be requested from building owners or operators.
- 2. Portable air filters.** Small areas of naturally vented buildings may be made acceptable with portable HEPA filter units, but the specifications for the units must be noted. The units contain specific recommendations for the square footage of rooms they have the capability to clean. Recalculation may be needed for buildings with ceilings higher than 8 feet.

C. INDUSTRIAL VENTILATION (SHOPS):

1. Floor plans and specifications:

- a) placement of exhaust fans in the space and their elevation
- b) cubic feet per minute (cfm) the fans exhaust

c) location of air units and their cfm, both supply and exhaust.

Unlike recirculating ventilation systems, these systems are almost always unique and each must be evaluated based on the location of the various elements and equipment.

The standards for this kind of ventilation are those of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH). Their Committee on Industrial Ventilation issued a White Paper on “Ventilation for Industrial Settings During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” August 2020. This document can be used to explain these principles to building managers and operators to properly use these systems for mitigation of the COVID-19 risk.*

D. ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Physical barriers, enclosures, and guards
2. Automatic door openers and sensors whenever possible
3. Devices that inactivate or kill infectious organisms

The following methods are unacceptable:

Pesticide devices that do not require EPA registration such as Electrostatic sprayers, electrolytic units, air ionization units, negative ion generators, ozone generators, foggers that emit fog and biocide, ultraviolet light units, etc., until/unless the manufacturer can provide peer reviewed proof that they successfully prevent COVID 19. This data must be reviewed first since none currently meet the proper standard.

APPENDIX D – MASKS

The recommendation from most governmental agencies at this time is for workers to wear cloth face coverings (mask) consisting of at least two layers of fabric. The following is a list of all types of masks in order of most effective to least effective:

- a) Any NIOSH-certified mask/respirator with a particulate filter from N95 to N100 *without exhalation valves (emit unfiltered breath). These require an OSHA program.
- b) Surgical masks (ASTM-certified)
- c) Single-strap pollen and carpentry dust masks (not NIOSH-certified)
- d) Non-NIOSH certified cloth masks without exhalation valves and at least two layers of cloth that cover nose and mouth – recommended by most agencies.
- e) Face shields – worn only over a mask to protect primarily eyes from direct droplet spray. The shield alone is not effective.
- f) A plan must be in place for washing the cloth masks.
- g) Gaiters are not acceptable as the loose weave appears to separate larger droplets from coughing and sneezing into smaller aerosols that remain airborne.

* These NIOSH-certified masks are the only ones that protect the wearer from the aerosol form of virus. Ideally the general safety plan should include a few personnel

who are medically certified, fit tested and trained to use these masks as OSHA requires (e.g., medics or shop workers). These individuals could reasonably be called on to do tasks that would put the wearers of the other masks and shields at great risk. For example, if room had to be accessed in which someone known or suspected to be a carrier, or had recently been a carrier, this properly masked person could enter without being at risk for airborne exposure. (They will still have to be careful about surface contamination.)

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