



# Fringe Communicable Disease Prevention Plan

In an effort to protect our staff, patrons and clients from the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the Fringe is establishing policies and practices to provide a safe working environment for all productions.

Please find our new mandatory guidelines below. Ensure proper dissemination to all groups involved so they have fully read and understood the policies below before entering any Fringe Venue.

The Fringe production team has experience producing events during the COVID-19 pandemic and have robust operations and communication plans. We welcome feedbacks from all patrons, artists, volunteers, and staff, and will continue to update our plans as the Festival proceeds.

Note: This document will be updated and maintained regularly to meet new guidelines, and recommendations from officials, along with future Public Health Orders.

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## BROAD STEPS FOR SUCCESS:

**We recognize our responsibility to follow the requirements of all Provincial Health Orders, including:**

- No more than 50 patrons or up to 50% of the venue’s capacity, whichever is greater.
- Beginning on September 13, all attendees must be able to verify that they have received at least one vaccine dose. No exemptions will be permitted.
- There must be sufficient time between events during which there are no patrons present on the premises or the area of the premises to permit cleaning and sanitizing, and the premises or area of the premises must be cleaned and sanitized once no patrons are present and before patrons are permitted to enter the premises or area of the premises for another event.
- Patrons will be asked to come with a mask and will be required to wear it while moving around the venue and while seated. Masks may be removed temporarily while eating or drinking, but must be replaced after. Masks will be available for purchase by donation if a patron does not bring their own mask. No exemptions will be permitted.

*\*Masks must cover nose and mouth. Alternative face coverings such as scarves/bandanas are*



*not accepted. Face shield can be worn in addition to a mask but will not be accepted in place of a mask.*

- Liquor may only be served to patrons who are seated (where applicable).
- Measures, such as selling tickets for an event in advance, will be implemented in order to prevent the occurrence of line-ups and the congregation of patrons.
- As theatre is a live performance, at least a three metre separation will be maintained between performers and patrons to prevent transmission of droplets produced by performers.
- Hand sanitation supplies will be readily available to patrons, staff, volunteers, artists, and crew.
- Artists will wear masks at all times while in the venue, except when they are performing on stage or if they need to apply makeup right before getting on stage.

#### **Safety Procedures in Advance of Event:**

- Advance sales online will be prioritized and promoted. Phone support will be an available option to decrease in-person transactions.
- Patrons will have the ability to purchase no more than 6 tickets per event to prevent large groups from gathering.
- Safety policies and procedures will be outlined clearly on the website, and will also be included in ticket confirmation, and event reminder communications. A comprehensive FAQ will be provided online to describe the event experience prior to patrons arriving.
- Contact information of the purchaser will be collected at the time of ticket purchase (online in advance, or at box office). At the event, all patrons' names will be registered to verify who is present.

#### **Safety Procedures During Event:**

- Safety procedures will be displayed on signage at the entrances as well as projected within the theatre (where applicable).
- Processing points (including box office sales, entry and patron sign-in) will be cleaned on schedule and especially between performances.
- Patrons will not be required to bring a physical ticket. Ticket purchases will be verified using a guest-list, monitored by a socially distanced Fringe team member.
- Processing points will encourage contactless transactions ie. tap payments and no paper-tickets.
- A Fringe staff member will be present at each performance, and will be responsible for ensuring safety procedures are followed and policies are met.



- Staff and volunteer positions will be scheduled to avoid congestion. All staff will be positioned to maintain social distance.
- Entrance and exit will be marked and designed to encourage social distancing in venues.
- Hand sanitation supplies will be readily available to patrons, staff, artists, and crew.

#### **Distance:**

- Whenever possible, increase physical space between anyone not in your “bubble” and maintain 2 metres apart.
- All should be masked when in the venue and while seated, except when actively eating/drinking or performing onstage.
- Avoid any unnecessary physical contact and touching your face.

#### **Sanitation:**

- Sanitation Stations: Hand sanitizer should be visible & available at all points of ingress and throughout performance spaces, and common areas like dressing rooms and staff offices (where applicable).
- Crew, cast and staff are required to frequently wash their hands with soap and water.
- Provide disposable, disinfecting wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down before each use.
- Provide gloves and masks for crew, clients and patrons who did not bring their own.
- Disinfect workstations, sets, gear frequently.

#### **Enforcement / Compliance:**

- If any working member (staff, crew, artist, volunteer) is feeling sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, they must stay home and immediately inform their supervisor.
- No admittance for anyone who acknowledges symptoms of respiratory illness, including fever or cough or other conditions listed on our Health & Safety signage at the venue/site entrance.
- All staff, volunteers and crew will know that they have the right to refuse work they do not feel is safe, and that they will be required to stay or go home if experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19.
- While all staff and volunteers will help remind patrons and crew of health and safety protocols, the Fringe Operations Manager, along with the Venue Front of House Staff (in established venues), will be in charge of enforcing the **Fringe Communicable Disease Prevention Plan** listed herein. A person who appears to be in contravention will get a courteous reminder by staff, the second time will be final warning issued by either the Venue Manager or the Fringe



Operations Manager, and if the situation arises once again, the patron will be asked to leave the venue immediately.

- If the offending patron still does not comply, then security should be called, and if deemed necessary, the Police as well. The show may need to be held, or stopped altogether, if the situation escalates (see security below).

### **Security:**

- Immediate and low-level security concerns should be addressed by Fringe staff, and where applicable the venue Front of House Manager and/or Venue Technician.
- CMHC and Venue Security Policies should be adhered to for matters that escalate that Fringe staff do not feel comfortable dealing with.
- For very serious matters, 911 should be called immediately.
- In the case of imminent and serious danger, the show must be stopped, and patrons may be told to either wait until the show resumes, or be told to evacuate / exit. This decision should be made by Fringe Staff and where applicable, with the Venue Front of House Manager.

### **Accessibility:**

- The Fringe acknowledges that communicating information in multiple ways with consideration of patrons who may be low vision/blind, Deaf/Hard of Hearing or living with disability that needs repetition and recognizes different learning styles (auditory/visual) is important.
- It paramount to maintain an accessible and inclusive environment at all Fringe events, and COVID-19 related precautions should impact accessibility as little as possible.

### **Change:**

- The Fringe, Artists and Crew need to be flexible in adapting to new health and safety guidelines and recommendations when necessary. Health and safety are paramount, and shall supersede any previously held customs or practices.
- We are entering into a new era in Live Theatre production in which flexibility and compassion need to be at the forefront of everything.

## **1. STAFF HEALTH AND HYGIENE**

Because COVID-19 is a highly contagious virus, staff and volunteers must diligently address the health risks of working in the close confines of many event spaces.



## **Staff and Health & Safety :**

A member(s) of The Fringe Staff will be present at all performances/events/venues, acting as the "Operations Manager". They will have appropriate medical and risk management knowledge. This role will be incorporated into health and safety plans and training. The Operations Manager will have the following functions pertaining to health and safety:

- Coordinate with, communicate, and help implement public health guidelines.
- Work closely with the event producer or venue operator to develop and implement event health plans.
- Ensure that existing safety plans are modified for compatibility with new health plans and unique circumstances of each show, venue and location.
- Help create staff training that applies current information about hazards and infection control measures, including social distancing, handwashing, and disinfecting high-touch surfaces.
- Determine, in conjunction with the venue or event organizer, if staff or patron may safely enter the event space when there is a health concern.

## **Practices for Healthy Staff and Volunteers**

- **Social Distancing:** Whenever possible, staff and volunteers will maintain 2 metres between each other when working with anyone not in their "bubbles".
- **Hand Washing:** Frequent handwashing with soap is vital to help combat the spread of any virus. When a sink is available, staff should wash their hands for twenty seconds at least every 60 minutes, and dry thoroughly with a disposable towel or dryer. As a backup, staff may use sanitizer containing at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol when a sink is not available. Staff should also wash their hands at the beginning and end of each shift and break, after using the restroom, sneezing, touching their faces, blowing their nose, cleaning, sweeping, mopping, smoking, eating, or drinking.
- **Gloves:** Gloves are not a substitute for regular hand washing. Gloves made of vinyl or similar non-absorbent material that allows fine motor function without the possibility of contaminating the wearer's hands should be worn when assisting/attending to potentially sick staff or patrons, when handling food (all pre-packaged, if at all), tickets, or any items on which infection can be transmitted, and when using cleaning or disinfecting products. Staff should be trained on the proper use of gloves, including frequency of disposal and hand-washing based on the staff's specific duties, to avoid spreading the virus in high-touch areas.
- **Masks:** Physical respiratory protection such as a medical mask or cloth mask must be worn whenever people are within six feet (two meters) of each other because (a) COVID-19 is spread through respiratory droplets and (b) a significant number of infected people will show no outward symptoms of illness. In order to ensure maximum comprehension and compliance, signage posted throughout the venue should show how to wear and use a face covering, including these points.
  - Wash your hands before putting on a face covering.

- Put the same side against your face each time to avoid wearing the “contaminated side” against your nose and mouth.
- Remove your face covering using the straps to avoid touching the part that protects your face.
- Wash cloth face coverings after each use, and wear other masks only according to the manufacturer’s specifications.

● **Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”):** For staff, PPE to minimize the risk of exposure to coronavirus is as necessary as it is for patrons. Employers should ensure that in addition to face coverings and gloves, staff and volunteers have PPE appropriate for their work and that vendors and independent contractors provide and use their own.

● **Touching Your Face:** Staff and Volunteers should avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth. Microphones, headphones, and other personal equipment should not be shared and should be sanitized before and after each use.

● **Cough and Sneeze Etiquette:** Staff and Volunteers should cover their cough or sneeze with a tissue, or an elbow or shoulder if no tissue is available, followed by thorough handwashing.

### **Practices for Sick Staff, Cast and Volunteers**

Staff, Volunteers, and Artists must notify their supervisor/coordinator and stay home from work if they have symptoms of acute respiratory illness consistent with COVID-19 – such as fever, coughs, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, shortness of breath – that is not explained by another medical or allergic condition.

● **Symptomatic Staff:** If staff or volunteer exhibits symptoms of acute respiratory illness upon arrival to their shift, or becomes sick during the day, their supervisor must separate them from other staff and patrons and send them home or to a designated isolation area immediately.

● **Documentation:** The supervisor should document the circumstances of the staff’s illness to help with contact tracing, as applicable.

● **Contact with Symptomatic Staff/ Cast /Volunteers:** Because people can carry COVID-19 with no symptoms at all, anyone who has been in close contact with a person known to have had the virus, or whose family or friends show signs of exposure, should behave as if they are infected, isolate themselves, and contact their physician.

● **Returning to Work:** Staff with symptoms of acute respiratory illness associated with COVID-19 may return to work after (a) home isolation for 14 days since their first symptoms or receiving a negative test, and (b) medical authorization.



## Responding to Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

If a staff or cast member is confirmed to be infected with COVID-19, their supervisor or group leader should immediately notify the local public health authority, the venue (and CMHC if applicable), as well as the Fringe Operations Manager, who should do the following:

*Legal Warning: It may be illegal to provide the infected staff's name or other information that could be used to determine their identity. Consult your local health department and human resources policy regarding reporting protocols.*

- Determine what areas of the venue were visited, used, or impacted by the infected staff (the "Impacted Areas").
- Assess whether the person's role put them within six feet (two meters) of other staff, cast, volunteers, or patrons, including whether their duties create specific transmission risks such as food handling, bartending, or ticket checking.
- Work with the local health department to determine which other staff had close contact with the infected staff (the "Impacted Crew").
- Notify the Impacted Crew that they may have had contact with an infected staff and encourage them to monitor their health and report any concerns to their healthcare provider.
- Any staff who tests positive for COVID-19 should remain in home isolation for not less than 14 days after symptoms begin. The staff should follow health authority guidance and their company policy.
- Impacted Crew who have been in close contact with a person who tests positive, but who are not presently symptomatic or suffering a fever greater than 38.0 C, should not come to work for 14 days after their last close contact, and quarantine themselves. During quarantine, they should watch for symptoms of COVID-19.

## 2. SANITIZING THE VENUE / SITE

**Sanitizing High-Touch Areas.** As soon as Crew, Staff and Artists begin to load in, surfaces and objects that are touched frequently, such as the ones listed below, should be regularly disinfected using products approved by the Provincial and Federal Government.

- **Public Areas** (lobby, hallways, box office, food service areas)
  - Door handles, handrails, push-plates
  - Handrails for stairs
  - Elevator buttons - inside and out.
  - Reception desks and ticket counters
  - Telephones, Point of Sale terminals and keypads



- Tables and chairs, including booster seats
- Water fountains and ice machines
- Trash receptacle touchpoints
- **Restrooms** (front and back of house)
  - Door handles and push-plates
  - Sink faucets and counters, and toilet handles
  - Lids of containers for disposal of women's sanitary products
  - Soap dispensers and towel dispenser handles
  - Trash receptacle touchpoints
- **Back of House, Offices, Dressing Rooms, Green Rooms, Production Areas**
  - Individual office and other room furniture
  - Door handles, push plates, doorways, railings
  - Light switches and thermostats
  - Cabinet handles
  - Telephones, computers, other keypads, mouse
  - Microphones
  - Backstage and technical equipment
  - Trash receptacle touchpoints
- **Back of House Server and Bar**
  - Handles of all doors and cabinets
  - Counter surfaces
  - Light switches
  - Towel dispensers
  - Handles of sinks, including hand washing sink and mop sink
  - Cleaning tools and buckets
  - Trash receptacle touchpoints

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

- **Cleaning** removes dirt and impurities from surfaces and objects and may lower germ counts by removing but not necessarily killing them.



- **Disinfecting** reduces and kills germs on surfaces and objects. Because disinfecting does not necessarily clean the surface, cleaning and disinfecting are both essential.
- **Cleaning Technique.** Clean high-touch areas by using water and soap or cleaning solution to remove dirt and impurities from surfaces and objects and reduce germ counts.
- **Disinfecting Technique.** High-touch areas should be disinfected using materials effective against COVID-19. Disinfectant sprays and surface sanitizers will be used on all surfaces touched by staff and patrons, including chair handles and sides, tables, handles, knobs, railings, etc.
- **Following the Manufacturer's Instructions.** In all instances, including technical and production equipment such as microphones and headphones, it is important that cleaning procedures follow the manufacturer's instructions. This will increase the likelihood of a thorough cleaning while not damaging the equipment or voiding a warranty.
- **Disposal.** Place gloves and other disposable items used for cleaning and disinfecting in a bag that can be tied before disposing of them with other waste.
- **Frequency.** The frequency of cleaning high-touch areas should be determined based on the surface or object and how it is used.
- **Documentation.** Documenting that health and safety practices were followed at the correct intervals can help a business show that it behaved reasonably under its circumstances, which would be a key issue in a lawsuit. The supervisor should ensure that cleaning is done on a planned schedule, and ideally logs are entered and preserved for reference. At a minimum (for one show schedules), all public surfaces will be sterilized before audiences enter the venue/site, and after they leave.

### **Air Circulation**

- The venue lobby glass doors will remain propped open to keep fresh air circulating through the lobby at all times
- The in-house sliding glass walls on both sides of the venue will be slid open a few feet for 10-15 minutes between shows

## **3. INGRESS AND EGRESS**

Patrons' experience at the venue (or on site) should match the health guidelines they consistently receive beginning with their first ticketing or social media engagement.

**Handwashing Stations.** Stations with either soap and water or sanitizer containing at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol must be provided at all points of ingress and other well-marked and illuminated locations throughout the venue. Supervisors must regularly confirm there are adequate supplies.



**Will Call and Box Office.** Patron distancing will be preserved by marking appropriate queuing space, and Site-Specific Shows ticket purchases will be reduced by having tickets available online in advance and up to the performance start.

**Space Requirements.** Additional space may be required to accommodate longer but less densely packed lines waiting to enter the venue.

- **Where to Queue.** It is important to separate pedestrians from vehicle traffic and to preserve room for other pedestrians to pass.

- **How to Queue.** The line waiting to enter can be managed using common methods such as lines marked on the ground, rope and stanchions, in combination with staff who provide information about the anticipated wait time and ingress procedure and also enforce social distancing. Fringe signage will be present showing the health rules, including social distancing guidelines and face-covering requirements.

**Ingress and Egress.** Ingress and Egress, (or entrances and exits) for patrons will be clearly marked. Where possible, exit pathways will take an alternate route to the entrance.

**Screening.** Once patrons reach the front of the line outside the event:

- **Health Screening.** The Operations Manager will ensure Health & Safety signage is outside and around the venue/site, and staff will confirm with all patrons that they have read and understand the information therein.

- **Ticket Scanning.** Avoid paper tickets and cash handling as much as possible. Make tickets available in advance and online as much as possible.

- **Mask and Glove Requirement.** Patrons are required to wear masks while in a venue and seated, except for temporarily while eating or drinking. Patrons should put on their own masks (and gloves if necessary). Masks will be available for purchase from the venue if needed.

**Sanitizer Stations.** Once a patron has presented their ticket and entered the venue / site location, there will be hand sanitizer or options for handwashing immediately in front of them. The Operations Manager should appoint hand sanitizer monitors at points of ingress to ensure that all patrons enter with clean hands.

**Accommodations.** New preventative measures may require new accommodations for persons with living with disabilities. For example, d/Deaf patrons who read lips may require screening from a worker wearing a clear face covering or one with a see-through window over their mouth. With reduced points of ingress or egress, we must ensure continued accessibility. The Fringe will still offer enough accessible seating, including companion seats, to comply with disability laws. Patrons whose disability makes them unable to wait in a long line may need a more expedited access procedure and have access to special seating while waiting.



**Scheduled Egress from Back to Front.** Patrons nearest the exits should leave first, by row or section, in order to clear space for patrons further inside to follow. This will require staff and volunteers to ensure that patrons understand the procedure and comply with social distancing requirements until they are in their vehicles or otherwise outside the venue / site location.

**Emergency Egress.** The need for social distancing creates significant challenges when planning to evacuate a crowd during an emergency. Where patrons might be told to take refuge, the area of refuge must be able to accommodate the crowd while maintaining six feet (two meters) between unrelated groups. Likewise, if patrons will be instructed to leave the location in an emergency, staff and volunteers will need training to manage the exiting crowd to avoid the risk of contagion while they flee from some other hazard. These may not be significant obstacles for the smaller crowds that will initially return to events, but The Fringe will have to coordinate with all stakeholders, including public health and public safety officials, to reevaluate their emergency plans as larger crowds gradually return.

**NOTE:** The goal of maintaining six feet (two meters) between people would become a secondary consideration if there is a clear and imminent danger requiring emergency evacuation. Even during this pandemic, emergency egress plans should reflect that moving patrons away from the most urgent hazard is the first order of business.

## 4. FRONT OF HOUSE CIRCULATION, FOOD AND BEVERAGE AND MERCHANDISE

**Restrooms (in venues).** Occupancy may be limited to ensure social distancing. This can result in patrons waiting outside the restroom doors. The area where they are waiting will require monitoring to preserve (a) appropriate space between patrons and (b) an easily discernible line to avoid conflict about where the line begins. NOTE for Site Specific Shows / Outdoor Events - public washrooms are provided by CMHC. The location of these washrooms will be made obvious to patrons.

**Intermission.** In the unlikely event of an intermission, for everyone who chooses to get up, they will have to be led out from back to front, and patrons will not be allowed to congregate inside or outside the restrooms or lobby.

### **Food and Beverage Service (in specific venues only).**

- **Ordering.** When possible, patrons will be encouraged to pre-purchase menu items.
- **Point of Sale Terminals.** POS terminals should be assigned to one staff/volunteer where possible, and they should be sanitized between each user and before and after each shift. If multiple staff/volunteers are assigned to a terminal, then they should sanitize their hands after each use. Staff who handle money should wear gloves and should not serve food or beverages. NOTE: There will be no cash floats at the venue or bar.



- **Bar Hygiene.** Bartenders should model safe behaviour by wearing a face covering and gloves when they are behind the bar. Garnishes should be eliminated entirely. Patrons should hold their own identification for bartender inspection. If staff must handle a patron's ID, the staff should then dispose of their gloves and wash their hands before resuming service.
- **Tables and Chairs.** Dining tables, bar tops, stools and chairs should be sanitized after each use.
- **Note: Additional Waste.** A likely consequence of more sanitary food and beverage practices is additional trash and recyclable material. It will be important to dispose of trash more regularly and to consult the board about sanitary recycling options.

**High-Touch Items Related to Food and Beverage Service.** Safe service of food and beverages will require frequent sanitization of many small items, such as the following.

- Bottle openers
- Tongs
- Tabletops
- Wine pump

## **Deliveries**

Delivery truck drivers should not leave their cab during offloading unless they receive the same screening and follow the same health procedures as other staff. To the extent possible, deliveries should be scheduled in shifts to minimize the time staff load or unload close together. Staff unloading deliveries should change their gloves and wash their hands between each delivery.

## **Merchandise** (when applicable)

- **Queuing.** Mark merchandise sales lines on the floor, with barricade, or rope and stanchion, patrolled by staff to provide information and enforce social distancing.
- **Contactless Payment.** Use Square or similar point of sale systems to eliminate the need to touch patron credit cards/cash.

# 5. PRODUCTION

## **Materials Handling**

- **Production equipment** and cargo should be sanitized when loaded and unloaded at the venue. In addition to face coverings, staff should consider wearing gloves when handling equipment and cargo to prevent surface contamination



- **Social distancing** applies to production crew working in confined spaces. Staff should always wear face coverings and gloves when those do not interfere with essential work functions, particularly when they cannot maintain social distance. The general need for distancing should not cause other unsafe working conditions for technical and construction crew. For example, if a piece of equipment takes four people to lift, then each staff member should protect themselves from infection to the best of their ability while lifting the load together.
- **High-touch equipment** such as monitors, microphones, mic stands, remotes, and audio/video cable should be sanitized frequently, and equipment should be dedicated to individual users where possible.
- **Heavy equipment** such as forklifts, boom lifts, and scissor lifts should minimize the number of operators of each piece of equipment where feasible.

#### **Additional Backstage / Dressing Room Policies for Fringe Artists (in venues):**

- Artists will not go into others dressing rooms
- Artists will wear masks while they are not performing.
- Artists will bring what they need and won't share items with anyone.
- Limit touching handles, use paper and gloves as needed.
- Whenever possible, maintain 2m from someone unless they are in your bubble.
- Stay 3m away from in front of a performer who is breathing heavily.
- Unless artists are within each others' "bubble", they must stay minimum 2m away from other performers / actors on stage, and should not breathe heavily in the other's direction
- Sanitizing of dressing rooms will occur upon entry and departure.
- No guests should be invited backstage.
- Food to be kept to dressing rooms, and use of common green room area will be limited.
- Where accessibility needs are not a consideration, minimize touching hand railings while going up and down stairs.
- Whenever possible, as much open space will be made available backstage to reduce proximity of artists

## **6. SITE SPECIFIC SHOWS / OUTDOOR EVENTS**

Note that site specific shows and outdoor events will adhere to all of the above protocols, and that additional conditions unique to each event will also be planned and made available. These additional protocols will be clearly listed for patrons and staff to see.