



May 5, 2020

PRELIMINARY GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING ART MUSEUMS¹

BACKGROUND

In preparation for the reopening of museums and their return to public activities, this preliminary plan outlines measures that can be taken to follow Public Health guidelines, thereby contributing to community efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This plan for the resumption of professional and public activity is designed to protect the employees and visitors, as well as collaborators and contractors, of our museum institutions. It should be adapted for each museum and space, in consultation with appropriate Public Health representatives.

These preliminary guidelines were developed by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, the Musée de la civilisation de Québec and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, in collaboration with the Musée d'art de Joliette (MAJ). The plan was conceived in collaboration with our heads of communications, education, visitor services, security, and events management, as well as with the advice of Dr. Marie-France Raynault and Dr. Geoffroy Denis of Public Health (Québec).

Restrictions on the number of visitors in order to respect social distancing will have a major impact on revenues. Therefore, we will have to ensure financial support, commensurate with need, through federal, provincial, or municipal programs.

¹ English translation by CAMDO-ODMAC of “Pistes de solutions pour le déconfinement des musées d’art”.

GOALS

- Prevent the spread of COVID-19, and protect and reassure museum employees, visitors, and contractors by taking into consideration:
 - the layout of public spaces;
 - the management of crowd size and a ban on large gatherings;
 - the implementation of hygiene and social distancing standards;
 - compliance with guidelines and with evolving directives from government agencies;
 - associated costs and, if necessary, financial compensation through federal, provincial, or municipal programs.
- Ensure a smooth and coordinated start up of museum operations and public activities, in accordance with government's reopening strategies (particularly with respect to regions and age groups).
- Train employees and inform visitors through clear communication of the guidelines put in place.
- Position museums as agents of social change, as sites of well-being, and as indicators of a progressive return to normality.
- Establish museums as agents of economic recovery within their respective community.

MEASURES

- 1. Quantified and monitored management of visitor capacity in museum spaces:**
 - a. If the museum's technological capacity allows for this, use timed-entry ticketing with a maximum capacity of predetermined duration (for example, every 15 or 30 minutes) to avoid crowds at doors and admission points.
 - b. If timed-entry ticketing is not possible, use onsite capacity management (outdoor line up with ground markers to respect social distancing) to avoid crowds inside the building.
 - c. Adapt the ticket desk and admissions counter (installation of plexiglass or other material) to minimize the risk of physical contact between staff and visitors.
 - d. Determine and manage maximum capacity for exhibition spaces, service areas (shops, washrooms, restaurants, etc.), and guided tours.
 - e. Manage space capacity by controlling access to exhibition halls and other public areas.
 - f. Provide indoor and/or outdoor monitored waiting areas.
 - g. Extend opening hours/days to spread out visitor traffic (to be evaluated).
 - h. Reserve time slots for certain clienteles (children, special needs clients, community partners, and eventually, seniors).
 - i. Evaluate the feasibility of holding group activities such as guided tours and group visits (schools, day camps, etc.) in accordance with Public Health guidelines.

2. **Health standards** (to be applied in accordance with Public Health standards and guidelines, in consultation with a Public Health representative for each museum):
- a. Dispensers for hand sanitizer gel and disinfectant wipes:
 - at each public and administrative entrance to the museum;
 - at the entrance to each exhibition space and service area (shops, restaurants and cafes, washrooms, nursing areas, elevators, etc.);
 - at each ticket vending machine and at visitor feedback and donation counters (disinfectant wipes);
 - at each interactive display or listening device (with pre- and post-use cleaning instructions) (disinfectant wipes);
 - in order to limit the use of gel or wipes, keep interior doors to all spaces open to avoid contamination from handling.
 - b. Hygiene, cleaning, and disinfection:
 - increase the number of cleaning staff and the frequency of cleaning in public spaces;
 - use products that meet disinfectant standards;
 - clean electronic devices (terminals, POS, etc.) after each use;
 - disinfect educational and hands-on materials.
 - c. Provide personal protective equipment to:
 - employees;
 - visitors;
 - contractors.
 - d. Infrastructure for reception and service areas:
 - Install plexiglass protection for service counters (information, ticketing, shop).
 - Provide cloakrooms designed for independent use.
 - Apply current safety standards to food service areas.
 - Comply with universal accessibility standards.
 - Promote online ticket purchases and contactless credit/debit card payments.
 - Guide the flow of visitors and use appropriate cordoning measures (stanchions and barrier systems).
 - e. Management of symptomatic cases:
 - Set up dedicated spaces to deal with symptomatic cases.
 - Establish a protocol to follow in the event that COVID-19 symptoms are observed.
 - f. Management of visitor services staff:
 - Organize work according to the following factors: division of tasks, varied and staggered schedules, telework, workspace considerations, right of

refusal, etc.). Ensure coordination between museums and unions, if applicable;

- Adopt guidelines for employees who fall into high risk categories (age, immunodeficiency, other);
- Plan for the gradual return of volunteers (according to age).
- Develop plans for training, information sharing, and psychological support for staff;
- Have a health care advisor available to the museum.

3. Wayfinding:

- a. Design routes with directional, one-way signage on the floor, and framed, posted signage in public spaces, exhibition spaces, and service areas.
- b. Provide separate entrances and exits to avoid encounters.
- c. Remove seating in public areas and exhibition spaces.
- d. Install floor markers to indicate waiting or stopping areas (outside main entrances, at admission points, in lobby areas, in exhibitions, in restaurants, etc.).
- e. Encourage outdoor field trips for groups and day camps.
- f. Manage the disinfection of accessibility-related devices (benches, wheelchairs, etc.).

4. Communicate clearly in a reassuring and caring way:

- a. Be sure to carefully manage public communications before and during the reopening.
- b. Make sure that instructions and guidelines are visible onsite.
- c. Adapt visitor guides (tailor digital displays and add more information in public spaces).
- d. Have staff onsite (security and reception desk) to remind visitors of hygiene and safety procedures.
- e. Regularly communicate hygiene and public health measures.
- f. Communicate measures and guidelines on various websites, through public relations activities, and to local and national bodies (municipal, tourism, cultural organizations).
- g. Exchange best practices with professional networks at local, national, and international levels (tourism, SMQ, CAMDO-ODMAC, CMA, AAMD, etc.).

GUIDES AND REFERENCES (for Québec museums):

Ensure good ventilation indoors (see INSPQ recommendations: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/environnement/air-interieur-ventilation>)

Maintain and clean surfaces: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/environnement/nettoyage-surfaces>

WORKPLACE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Consult the standards and recommendations of the ISQP guide: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/sante-au-travail>