

Monroe Theatre Guild Pandemic, Infectious Disease and Public Safety Policy Adopted 12-15-20

The purpose of this Policy is to set standards of behavior and procedures for the safety and well-being of show participants, audiences and people or organizations entering the MTG building from this point forward.

To remain useful over the course of this pandemic and beyond, and to continually address the safety of people in the MTG building, this is a living document. Recommendations will continue to be informed by the evolving guidelines and/or mandates of governmental and scientific authorities. MTG will revise and redistribute this document as necessary to reflect changing circumstances and new information.

This policy sets the standards to be practiced at all times inside the MTG building to the full extent it is feasibly possible. **While participating in an MTG production, actors and production team members (show participants) must comply willingly with these guidelines and promise safe practices in their personal lives to protect the health and well-being of their fellow cast members, the production team and the good standing of Monroe Theatre Guild in the community.** People who refuse to cooperate, or pose a risk to the safety of others, may be asked to leave the building or to relinquish their role in a production. Documented medical exemptions for use of PPE from a physician will be considered.

The following recommended practices address the various phases of an MTG production. We call on our lead volunteer staff (defined as directors, producers, instructors, choreographers, musical directors) to use common sense and heightened concern for show participants and audiences during the course of a production in a pandemic or at other times of profound concern for public safety. Lead volunteers may be faced with a choice to proceed with, postpone or cancel such things as rehearsals, a planned event, a performance or an entire production. In all cases, recommendations from governmental and scientific authorities pertaining to social gatherings will be considered first and followed.

Should a government mandate be issued concerning public gatherings or maximum capacity limits in public buildings or entertainment venues, or if participants of a production fail to follow the board approved safety procedures of this policy, the Facilities Manager has the authority to stop all activities and deny access to the MTG building. The Facilities Manager will inform the Board President of his/her decision to close the building. The President will follow up with his/her decision as to the viability of moving forward with a production or when to allow activities in the MTG building to resume. If further input from the board is requested by lead volunteers of a production or other activities, a special meeting of the board of directors will be called at its earliest opportunity at which a final decision on the matter will be made.

First and foremost, all commonly accepted practices to reduce the spread of a pandemic, and other infectious diseases, are required practices inside the MTG building. Face masks covering the mouth and nose, frequent hand washing, use of hand sanitizers, physical distancing and staying home if ill (see section on “When to stay home”), are standard rules for all who wish to enter the MTG building.

General accommodations within the facility to reduce the spread of infectious disease

- Frequent sanitization of high touch points
- Disposable face masks available at the building’s entrance and in rehearsal room
- Hand sanitizing stations in plain sight throughout the building
- Sanitizing wipes readily available in restrooms and rehearsal room
- Daily sanitization of restrooms when the building is in use
- Posted recommendations for public restroom capacity
- Assigned seating arrangements for patrons
- General expectations for safety compliance posted throughout the building
- Receptacles for used PPE (face masks, sanitizing wipes, etc) will be placed strategically around the building
- Ventilation fans throughout the building
- Instructions for lead volunteer staff on the use of ventilation fans
- Markings on the floor in public spaces to designate 6’ of separation

When to stay home!

The CDC indicates symptoms of the pandemic, currently known as Covid-19, can include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, muscle or body aches, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat. This list is not all inclusive. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. A person should stay home when they have a fever (99.9° F or greater) and or feel ill.

The following guidelines on “*when to stay home*” reference Covid-19, however these guidelines may be applied to any infectious disease.

- All persons wishing to audition for an MTG production, or subsequently, all show participants should stay home when they do not feel well or have a fever over 99.9° F
 - Show participants include directors, all production team members and actors
- When a show participant is sick with symptoms of COVID, and has NOT yet been tested stay in touch with your doctor and stay home until all of the following apply:
 - Fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications), and other symptoms have improved, and it has been at least 10 days since the onset of symptoms.
 - Tell those within close contact with up to 48 hours prior to symptoms developing that they may have been exposed to COVID and to stay away from other people.
 - Notify your director or designee immediately upon developing symptoms to help avoid the potential of spreading COVID to others.

- A show participant is sick with symptoms of COVID, has been tested, and test results came back **negative**:
 - Adhere to standard illness protocols for returning to rehearsals. Examples include being fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications), 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea, or when on antibiotics for at least 24 hours, or as approved by a doctor.
- A show participant is sick with symptoms of COVID, has been tested, and test results came back **positive**:
 - Stay home until all of the following apply:
 - Fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medications), and other symptoms have improved, and it has been at least 10 days since onset of symptoms.
 - A medical provider or the health department has given you the all-clear to return to your regular routine.
- A show participant has been in close contact with someone who shows symptoms and is waiting on test results or tested positive for COVID,
 - Stay home until results are received. If in contact with someone who tested positive, notify your director or designee, and quarantine for 14 days from the date of close contact. If you develop symptoms, follow the guidelines above.
 - Notify your director or designee immediately upon learning of the potential exposure in order to avoid the potential of spreading COVID further.
 - Show participants should not wait for a contact's positive result before contacting their director or designee, but rather inform them of a pending test result and discuss how to proceed.

Auditions

- Educate the public through advertising, website, Facebook and signage that face masks are required inside the MTG building.
 - Include instructions for those who do not feel well the day of auditions or have a temperature over 99.9° F to stay home and to contact MTG at 608-324-6530 if they wish to make other arrangements within a defined time frame.
 - Auditionees are encouraged to come alone. Minors may be accompanied by one parent or one adult.
- Limit audition space capacity to maintain physical distancing guidelines.
 - Consider scheduled auditions
 - Consider virtual auditions
 - For in person auditions, a director will have no more than two other people as members of the audition team, wearing masks and socially distanced in the audition space.
 - The one addition may be for an accompanist if needed.
 - One person will audition at a time. If necessary to have 2 people read together both will wear masks and stay socially distanced in the audition space.
- Recruit one or two volunteers to help with traffic flow during auditions, i.e. open and close doors, control seating arrangements, give directions, wipe surfaces, etc.
- Either the rehearsal room or the theatre can be used by the director for auditions. Set a traffic flow, use one door to enter, another to exit.

- Allow 10-15 minutes between auditions to allow the room's ventilation to clear the air.
- Auditionees will enter through the front foyer doors, find a designated seat in the lobby where they will be provided with an Audition Application, a Production Calendar (they can keep), and a sanitized pen, and instructed to wait in their seat until called.
- Following an audition, the auditionee will be instructed to leave the building directly by the side or the rear door of the building.
- A recommendation to directors; ensure prospective actors are willing to comply with MTG's Pandemic policies and procedure throughout the production timeline. If not, a written exemption for the use of PPE from a physician must be submitted by the individual and kept on file by MTG.

Rehearsals

- Once rehearsals begin, actors and members of the production team should do their best to create a "bubble" with fellow show participants where safe practices within MTG and in their personal lives continually promote the safety and success of the production.
- Temperature monitoring and wellness checks are required when entering MTG.
- Establish an honor system with all members of the cast and production team to take their own temperature in a temperature-controlled space (i.e. their home) prior to arriving at MTG. If their temperature is over 99.9° F, they must stay home and immediately call the director or designee to determine how to proceed.
 - In the winter cold temperatures may result in an inaccurate temperature reading upon entering the building.
 - If individuals are unable, or forget, to do so before a rehearsal, they should not join the rehearsal until they have been inside for 10 minutes and obtained a reliable temperature reading.
- Directors should be prepared to switch rehearsals from in-person to virtual rehearsals (online) at any time during the production calendar for enhanced safety of the cast.
- Whenever possible, include virtual rehearsals as a regular option in the production schedule.
- Some scenarios for switching entirely to virtual rehearsals for a prescribed amount of time would be:
 - A sudden trend of increased illness within the cast or production team (Covid or other infectious disease) is noted
 - More than 10% of active participants are reporting illness
 - Pandemic level of spread is High in the region
 - Government mandates to stay home
 - At the recommendation of the Facilities Manager or the Board President
- During in-person rehearsals everyone, actors, directors, production staff, must properly wear face masks (mouth and nose covered) at all times, everywhere in the building unless they have a written exemption from a doctor on file with MTG.
- The director will inform actors to remove their masks at appropriate times during rehearsals.
- There will be no food, sharing of food, or eating in the rehearsal room or theatre.
 - Those eating on the run should find a low traffic area of the building to eat and clean up when done.
- Water bottles and travel mugs must be clearly labeled with the owner's name.

- Personal belongings, coats, hats, bags should stay closely situated to their owners and separate from others belongings.
- People will situate themselves around the room (or as directed) to practice physical distancing. While not actively rehearsing, people will remain masked, separated, quiet and attentive.
- Encourage routine hand washing or use of hand sanitizer while in the building.
- Recruit one or two production participants to do the following at each rehearsal:
 - Turn the ventilation fans on and off before and after rehearsals
 - Clean/disinfect high touch points before and after rehearsals
 - Disinfect all high-risk equipment after each use (props, radios, headsets, microphones, costumes, safety equipment, etc.)

Costumes, wigs and dressing rooms

- Actors may not freely enter the costume room. The lead costume designer or member of their team supervises the use of the costume room when it is open.
- Masks and social distancing are to be practiced at all times while inside the costume room. A maximum of 5 people, physically distanced, may be in the costume room at any given time.
- Encourage use of aerosol disinfectants and sanitizing wipes after each use of a dressing room, be it a dressing room or a restroom. It would be helpful and considerate for each actor to clean the space they have used when done with it.
- Minimize the number and the frequency of costume changes.
- Minimize sharing of costumes and if possible, have costumes and wigs used by one person only.
- Quarantine costumes for 48 hours between users by using a designated clearing rack. 70% alcohol, standard laundry wash cycle, dry cleaning, or UV light are all potential methods of sanitization, but manufacturer's instructions must be followed to avoid harm to people.
- Performers and costume fitters should wash their hands immediately before and after a fitting. If possible, a costume fitter should also wear a face shield in addition to a mask.
- Minimize physical touching between wardrobe and performers as much as possible. Performers should dress themselves as independently as possible during fittings and performances.
- To reduce the need for individual dressing rooms, performers should report to the theater for a performance in as much of their costume as possible (underclothes, stockings, socks, ladies' slips, camisoles, slacks, dress shirts, etc.).
- Each actors' costume and pieces should be stored in an assigned, separate location for the duration of a production.
- To the best of our ability, and according to the size and needs of the cast, barriers will be constructed for individual, assigned dressing stations.

Makeup room, hair and makeup

- If possible, hair styling and makeup should be applied at home, with final touches added at the theatre if needed.
- Personally owned hair and makeup supplies are recommended.

- The make-up room should have no more than 3 people in the room at a time, distanced at least 6 ft apart.
- Additional hair and makeup stations can be placed around the rehearsal room for individual use.
- Hair and makeup supplies should be cleaned and put away by the owner, and kept separate from others belongings, especially if more than one person is using the space.
- If using wigs, hair accessories, make up supplied by the theatre, it may not be shared with another person and should be stored at all times in a bag or container with the actor's name on it.
- People assisting with hair and or makeup must wear a mask and a face shield if available.
- People assisting with hair and or makeup will wash their hands thoroughly before and after assisting multiple actors.
- Each person is responsible for disposing of their own used hair and makeup applicators and supplies after each application.

Set Construction and painting

- For the duration of heightened concerns due to the spread of Pandemic and other infectious diseases, with consideration that it will be difficult to recruit volunteers for set construction, directors and set designers should strive for simple, efficient set designs.
- Set builders and painters will do their best to maintain physical distancing as much as possible.
- Workers should try to work independently when possible.
- Wearing masks while working on the set is requested at all times to the extent that it does not endanger a worker's safety, such as in the case of fogged glasses or safety goggles, step ladders, use of power tools, hammers, saws and so on.
- Workers will wash their hands as often as possible.
- Sharing of tools is discouraged, there are multiple drills and other tools available in the building, it would be best for each worker to have a set of tools for their own use.
- Wipe and sanitize MTG's tools and high touch points after each use.

Backstage and control booths

- Volunteer staff, i.e. backstage crew, dressing assistants and control booth techs must wear appropriate PPE at all times. PPE will be provided if needed.
- Volunteer staff should routinely disinfect touch points.
- Hand sanitizer should be available backstage and in control booths.
- Reduce backstage crew and techs as much as is feasible to enforce physical distancing.
- Discourage sharing of props, it may be necessary to have multiples of a specific prop to reduce handling by more than one person.
- Props and other backstage equipment should be sanitized frequently.
- Whenever possible, actors waiting backstage for their entrance should have their own assigned space that allows for distancing.
- Actors should not assemble in groups backstage!!

On Stage

- Whenever possible, during a time when infection rates are of highest concern, actors should try to keep their distance on stage.
- Actors should develop the habit of frequent hand washing between scenes.
- Volunteer staff should disinfect all on stage touch points, props and onstage equipment before, during (where possible), and after each rehearsal and performance.
- If glasses, cups and other tableware are used onstage, pieces should be thoroughly washed and sanitized between performances.

Public spaces before, during and after performances

In preparation for a performance, it is important to recruit sufficient volunteer staff to assist patrons with safe practices while attending a performance. All volunteer staff will wear masks at all times. They will also wear a tag that identifies them as Volunteer Staff so patrons will recognize their authority and respect their directions. The Facilities Manager (or designee) will direct all volunteer staff and front of house activities before, during and after performances. Patrons must wear masks the entire time they are in the building, or have made arrangements in advance for special circumstances.

As always, every attempt will be made to ensure the public feels they are welcome and appreciated as we practice safe behaviors to keep the community safe.

Tickets and Foyer

- The ticket window will provide a plexiglass barrier between the seller and the patron.
- All advertising for a production will strongly encourage tickets to be purchased in advance using the ticket buying procedures in place, and that a mask is required inside the MTG building.
 - Prior to a performance, tickets can be purchased by phone, online or in person at the MAC during their regular business hours.
 - Reduced capacity as mandated by federal and state officials, with reserved seating and a special seating chart will be in use during times of heightened concerns for public safety.
- All patrons arriving for a performance will be met by a volunteer in the foyer who will take temperatures and ask questions to ensure they have no symptoms of an illness. If they present with a temperature over **99.9° F** or report they are unwell, they will be asked to return home.
- From there patrons who have been screened will proceed to the will-call table to show their tickets purchased at an earlier date, or proof of will-call tickets.
- Patrons wishing to purchase tickets at the door will report to the ticket window and are encouraged to use a credit or debit card to make the purchase.
- Once proof of purchase is established, volunteers will direct patrons directly to their seats.
 - Congregating in the lobby will be highly discouraged at any time before, during and after performances.
- The ventilation fans will be on prior to a performance and may be turned off during the performance.

Theatre and Performances

- As stated earlier, reduced capacity seating as mandated by federal and state officials, reserved seating and a special seating chart that allows for physical distancing will be in place during times of heightened concerns for public safety.
- During these times, all patrons are required to wear a cloth or disposable face mask
- Hand sanitizer stations will be near each entrance to the theatre.
- Patrons will be encouraged to remain in their seats while in the theatre.
 - If they must depart to use the restroom or for their comfort, a volunteer will direct them.
- The printed program will inform patrons of theatre protocol under current conditions, and an announcement may be made prior to the start of the performance to review and encourage safe practices within the building.
- Actors and production staff will limit their movements in the building to the rehearsal room or control booth once the audience members begin to enter the building for the safety of the production.
- Non-production staff are not permitted to enter the rehearsal room.
- Once the performance begins, actors and production staff should limit their movements in the building to the rehearsal room and backstage to avoid physical contact with the public parts of the building.

Intermission and Concessions

- Intermission will last a full 20 minutes to allow for reduced traffic flow in the restrooms
 - The front of house manager will use their discretion and communicate with the Stage Manager when determining the proper time to resume the performance.
- Concessions will be open during intermission and allow only the sale of bottled water.
 - Ushers will have the ability to sell bottled water inside the theatre if a patron wishes to purchase from their seat.
- Physical distancing will be encouraged if there is a line for concessions.
- Patrons should return to their seats once they have made their purchase.
 - Bottled water is allowed in the theatre
- Congregating in the lobby is discouraged.
- Ventilation fans will be turned on at the start of intermission and off afterwards. The doors to the theatre will remain open during intermission to increase the flow of fresh air.

Public Restrooms during performances

- Before and during a performance actors and production staff should avoid use of the public restrooms to reduce their chances of infection. They should use the restrooms provided in the rehearsal room since that is part of their bubble.
- During intermission, one or two volunteers will be posted at the entrance to the restrooms to help regulate the number of people in the restrooms at any one time.
 - It is advisable to allow no more than three people in the public restrooms at one time.
- One volunteer will be posted near the handicap restroom on the main floor to encourage patrons, who are able, to use the public restrooms on the second-floor landing to allow exclusive access to patrons in need of special accommodations on the main level.

- The restrooms will be sanitized before each performance, and twice during a performance (before and after intermission).
- All restroom supplies will be checked prior to each performance.
 - Hand sanitizer, soap, toilet paper, paper towels

Following a performance or activity

- The practice of the “meet and greet” in the lobby following a performance must be suspended until a time when all danger of disease spread has passed. No exceptions, family and friends of performers should be informed of this policy.
- Audience members will be directed to leave the theatre in an orderly manner, with ushers thanking them for their attendance, dismissing them by rows and directing them to use one or two specified exits.
- Actors will return to the rehearsal room to store costumes as established earlier by the director and lead costumer, and follow the sanitizing routine for the costume and rehearsal rooms established after rehearsals.
- Backstage crew and control booth techs will follow their established sanitation routine.
- Following the performance, the theatre, restrooms, and public spaces will be thoroughly sanitized, including all touch points, and ventilation fans turned on for a prescribed time.

It is Monroe Theatre Guild’s aim to preserve an atmosphere of creativity, enrichment and service to the community in a safe and welcoming environment. As stated earlier in this document, recommendations will continue to be informed by the evolving guidelines and/or mandates of governmental and scientific authorities. It is important to remember that even though these policies are in response to current events, looking to the future and as we settle into a new normal, these practices may continue to have relevance. There will always be infectious diseases, other hazards, and an ongoing concern for the safety of our patrons and show participants.

Show participants; lead volunteers, production team members, and actors, please read and sign the final page of this document as a requirement for participation in an MTG production or activity. Thank you.

To participate in a Monroe Theatre Guild production or event, this agreement must be signed by each and every participant in the production or activity until a time when the spread of a pandemic has been deemed to no longer be a danger to public safety by the CDC, government authorities and the scientific community. No exceptions will be allowed.

I, (please print your name) _____ have read the **Monroe Theatre Guild Pandemic, Infectious Disease and Public Safety Policy** in its entirety and agree to follow the recommended practices and procedures that have been explained to me in this document. I understand that should I fail to comply with this policy I may be asked to leave the MTG building until I am able to comply with the policy. If I refuse to follow the policy I will be dismissed from the production and my role will be reassigned.

____ Check here if the participant is a minor (under the age of 18). Both the parent or legal guardian and the minor are required to sign this agreement.

____ Check here if I have produced a written exemption to wearing a face mask from a certified doctor of medicine.

____ I further agree to take my temperature at home (or in a climate controlled space) before attending all in-person rehearsals or performances to be sure I do not have a temperature over **99.9° F**. If my temperature does read over 99.9° F or if I do not feel well, I will contact the director (or a designee) immediately to discuss how to proceed.

Comments: _____

I agree to follow this policy in its entirety and to follow safe practices in my personal life to the best of my ability for the duration of this production.

Signature of participant

Date

If participant is a minor, signature of parent or legal guardian

Date

Upon completion of this agreement, it will be kept on file by the Facilities Manager.