REOPENING
IRISH MUSEUMS
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UPDATED 19 JANUARY 2020
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Coróinvíreas COVID-19
Scaradh Fisiciúil Lasmuigh
Déanfaidh aír ur mathais de do shíáinte. Caithfadh GACH DUINE freagrácht shóisialta a ghalach ar mhaithte lenár sláinte.

Ná beagadh do dhíonóireachta
Colmigh ar bith trí mheán a thabhairt ar a phoiblí nó ar fhíor-phoiblí sláite.
Gríomh na scríbhnesí nó ar an duine nó ar an duine eile.
Ná bheas bhearnach.
Seachrán díonna ar ghríomhán éipilte agus padhrach.

Le haghaidh Na hathruithe Laethúil Taobhchair cuírte ar son na go deas as COVID-19 www.hse.ie

Coronavirus COVID-19

If you have fever and/or cough you should stay at home regardless of your travel or contact history.
If you have travelled an are subject to travel restrictions during COVID-19 you should isolate for 14 days.
Check the list of affected areas on www.gov.ie

How to Prevent

Wash your hands well. Always wash your hands.
Cover your nose and mouth if you sneeze or cough.
Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes.
Clean your hands to disinfect.
Stop spreading. Keep 2 metres away.

All people are advised to:
> Reduce social interactions
> Keep a distance of 2m between you and other people
> Disinfect hands or make close contact where possible

If you have symptoms visit hse.ie

Symptoms
> Fever (High Temperature) > A Cough > Shortness of Breath > Breathing Difficulties

For daily updates visit
www.gov.ie/health/covid-19
www.hse.ie

Image: Coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and prevention posters, HSE - Government of Ireland
This document aims to provide an overview of key actions and considerations. Government directives in each jurisdiction must take precedence and all plans reviewed and updated accordingly.

Reopening Irish Museums lays out general sectoral guidance relating to the reopening of museums and is informed by current public health and government measures and advice in the Republic of Ireland (RoI) and Northern Ireland (NI). This information may change at short notice and, as the advice issued continues to evolve, the measures employers and staff need to address may also change.

The reopening of museums to staff and public in each jurisdiction is outlined in the tiered recovery approaches by the Government of Ireland and the NI Executive. It is possible for some regions and counties to be subject to a different level of restrictions than others. Museums must ensure that that they keep up to date with restrictive measures within their county or region.

Reopening is to be carried out in strict adherence to government guidelines and current and revised workplace and occupational health and safety measures to reduce the risk of the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and the community.

It is envisioned that provision of access and delivery of services by museums will be delivered in accordance with the individual environment of each museum and regular internal risk assessments, not to exceed the level of restrictions allowed by government. This will not only vary between museums but also within areas of the museum, as each institution assesses their circumstances: location, staff profile, audience profile, operational concerns, financial capabilities, capacity, collection management requirements, and similar considerations.

It is crucial that clear and regular lines of communication be put in place both in advance and during each stage to establish regular engagement and consultation with staff and stakeholders alike and provide information and guidance relating to preventative measures and monitoring.

**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERSION</th>
<th>DATE OF CHANGES</th>
<th>AMENDMENTS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20 May 2020</td>
<td>Document published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>16 June 2020</td>
<td>Updated guidance (NI Executive) and inclusion of travel advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>14 August 2020</td>
<td>Updated guidance in line with current Government Health and Safety advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>12 December 2020</td>
<td>Comprehensive update in line with current Government Health and Safety advice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Plan for Living with COVID-19

The Government of Ireland’s Resilience and Recovery 2020-2021 Plan for Living with COVID-19 (September 2020) puts in place a five level framework to manage the risk of spread of the virus.

Click on the images below for further information on each Level:

Each numbered level sets out the restrictive measures in place at any given time. Either national or county level restrictions can be applied.

Relevant restrictive measures relating to museum practice:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Museums, Galleries and other Cultural Attractions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Museums, Galleries and other Cultural Attractions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Museums and galleries can open with protective measures in place</strong></td>
<td><strong>All Venues Closed</strong></td>
<td><strong>All venues closed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open with protective measures in place (for example: a maximum capacity to allow 2 metres social distancing, one-way traffic within the venue). Maximum numbers are linked to capacity, taking account of public health advice</td>
<td>Open with protective measures in place (for example: a maximum capacity to allow 2 metres social distancing, one-way traffic within the venue). Maximum numbers are linked to capacity, taking account of public health advice</td>
<td>Museums and galleries can open with protective measures in place*</td>
<td>All Venues Closed</td>
<td>All venues closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organised Events (Controlled Environments with a named event organiser owner or manager)</strong>, e.g. business, training events, conferences, events in theatres and cinemas or other arts events (excluding sport).</td>
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<td><strong>Organised Indoor events</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Organised Indoor events</strong></td>
<td><strong>Organised Indoor events</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For most venues, a maximum of 100 patrons can attend. Up to 200 patrons are allowed for larger venues where strict 2 metre seated social distancing and one-way controls for entry and exit can be implemented</td>
<td>For most venues, a maximum of 50 patrons can attend in pods of up to 6 people</td>
<td>No organised indoor gatherings should take place</td>
<td>No organised indoor gatherings should take place</td>
<td>No organised indoor gatherings should take place</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Guided Tours, workshops, and similar events)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>For most venues, a maximum of 100 patrons can participate/attend guided tours, workshops or similar organised indoor events. Up to 200 patrons are allowed for larger venues where strict 2 metre seated social distancing and one-way controls for entry and exit can be implemented</td>
<td>For most venues, a maximum of 50 patrons can participate/attend guided tours, workshops or similar organised indoor events in pods of up to 6 people</td>
<td>No guided tours, workshops, or similar organised indoor events should take place</td>
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<td>No guided tours, workshops, or similar organised indoor events should take place</td>
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<td>Click on the images below for further information on each Level:</td>
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<td>Click on the images below for further information on each Level:</td>
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*Under special easing of restrictions in place from 1 December 2020 – 6 January 2021
| Organised outdoor events | For most venues, a maximum of 200 patrons can attend. | For most venues, a maximum of 100 patrons can attend. | Gatherings or events of up to 15 people can take place. Face coverings are recommended in busy or crowded areas. | Gatherings or events of up to 15 people can take place. Face coverings are recommended in busy or crowded areas. | Outdoor gatherings or events are not permitted.

| Working arrangements | Work from home if possible. Attendance at work for specific business requirements and on a staggered attendance basis. | Work from home if possible. If you can work from home, you are advised to only attend work for essential on-site meetings, inductions and training. | Work from home unless absolutely necessary to attend in person. Face coverings are recommended in crowded workplaces. | Only essential or other designated staff should go to work. | Work from home unless providing an essential service for which physical presence is required.

| Business- and work-related meetings | Business or Work related meetings should take place in line with the Work Safely Protocol. | Business or Work related meetings should take place in line with the Work Safely Protocol. | Business or Work meetings can only take place when considered an essential service in line with the Work Safely Protocol. | Business or Work meetings can only take place when considered an essential service in line with the Work Safely Protocol. | Business or Work meetings can only take place when considered an essential service in line with the Work Safely Protocol.

| Domestic Travel | No restrictions | No restrictions | Stay in your county apart from work, education, medical and other essential purposes, if appropriate | Stay in your county apart from work, education, medical and other essential purposes, if appropriate | Stay at home. Exercise permitted within 5km.

**Work Safely Protocol**


**Resources:**

The HSA Return to Work Safely online courses includes a course to help understand the requirements under the Protocol and a course for those appointed Lead Worker Representative.

The HSA COVID-19 templates and checklists, based on the Protocol, have been prepared to help employers, business owners and managers to get their business up and running again and to inform staff about what they need to do to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.

**Stay Safe Guidelines**


**Further guidance for museums**

Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media Guidance on the latest Covid-19 protocols for Cultural Events.

Fáilte Ireland Guidelines for Reopening Visitor Attractions.

Theatre Forum Guidance for Arts Centres and Performing Arts Venues.
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Recovery Plan

The NI Executive’s Coronavirus: Covid-19 Recovery Plan (12 May 2020) puts in place a five step framework outlining the recovery plan for Northern Ireland, with updated information against that original position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guidance for reopening museums (incl. art museums and open-air museums)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Open air museum can reopen with protective measures in place</td>
<td>Open with protective measures in place</td>
<td>Open with protective measures in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor and Indoor Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor activities (work and leisure) during which social distancing can be maintained for individuals who do not share a household contact and where there is no shared contact with hard surfaces.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indoor activities involving limited contacts of less than 10 mins and interactions of only 2-4 people that maintain social distancing and prevent congregating in places for any extended period. Outdoor activities involving small groups of less than 10 people during which it may be difficult to maintain social distancing but where contacts are brief (less than 10 minutes).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indoor activities involving larger number of individuals where social distancing can be maintained for individuals who do not share a household connection. Outdoor activities involving larger groups of less than 30 people during which it may be difficult to maintain social distancing but where contacts are brief (less than 10 minutes).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indoor activities involving larger numbers of individuals where social distancing cannot be consistently maintained but contacts are limited and last less than 10 minutes or longer if effective mitigation is possible. Outdoor gatherings involving larger numbers of individuals where social distancing cannot be easily maintained and multiple contacts of less than 10 minutes are likely.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encouragement to those unable to work from home to return to workplace on phased basis subject to legal requirements and best practice arrangements being in place.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phased return to office and onsite working subject to risk assessment. Work that can be done from home should be done from home.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phased return to office and onsite working subject to risk assessment. Work that can be done from home should be done from home.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>All able to return to work subject to mitigations. Remote working still strongly encouraged and maintained where possible.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Working through this together

Working through this together: a practical guide to making workplaces safe sets out principles and practical steps that are vital for employers and employees to keep themselves and their workplaces safe. It also sets out necessary steps to be followed if employers and employees are concerned about safety.
Resources:

Additional advice for workers is available on https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-COVID-19-advice-staff:
- nibusinessinfo - working safely in different business settings
- nibusinessinfo - guide to making workplaces safer
- nibusinessinfo - workplace safety guidelines and social distancing
- HSENI - advice and guidance for places of work
- Invest NI: coronavirus (COVID-19) operational excellence checklists
- COVID-19 in a business setting - a quick guide for employers

Further guidance for museums

Department for Communities: Culture and Heritage Destinations Venues: Guidance for a phased Return

National Museums Directors Council: Good Practice Guidance for Reopening Museums

Association of Independent Museums and the Museum Development Network: checklist to be used in conjunction with the Guidelines national guidance for museums

Image: Coronavirus (Covid-19) prevention measures poster, Northern Ireland Executive
Working Together to Suppress COVID-19 in the Workplace

Occupational Safety

The responsibility to ensure a safe place of work is that of senior management and these overall responsibilities cannot be passed on to individual staff roles. The organisation is responsible for the health and safety for staff and others under Safety Health and Welfare at Work 2005 Act. Staff consultation and an inclusive approach is integral to the successful operation of the museum. Creating and maintaining a safe space for staff and audience requires strong communication and a shared collaborative approach between employers and staff and is essential to achieve success and maximum buy-in.

Underpinning all Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures is that the BEST way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a workplace or any setting is to practice physical distancing, adopt proper hand hygiene and follow respiratory etiquette.

The Government of Ireland’s Work Safely Protocol sets out the minimum COVID-19 control measures needed in every workplace including:

- Developing/updating a COVID-19 Response Plan including a COVID-19 risk assessment.
- Developing procedures for prompt identification and isolation of workers who may have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Implementing COVID-19 prevention and control measures to minimise risk to workers including Hand hygiene, Respiratory hygiene, Social distancing o Enhanced cleaning procedures.
- Help people to work from home where practical.
- Manage transmission risk where social distancing is not possible.
- Protect people who are at higher risk.

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 can cause illness, ranging from mild to severe, and, in some cases, can be fatal. It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to show. They can be similar to symptoms of cold and flu.

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature - 38 degrees Celsius or above).
- a new cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss or change in your sense of smell or taste – this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Anyone who develops the symptoms of COVID-19 is advised immediately to contact their doctor (RoI) or book a test (NI) and isolate until the results are known.

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the HSE Website (RoI) or the HSC Website (NI)

How COVID-19 spreads

COVID-19 is mainly spread through:

- Close contact with someone who has the virus and droplets that come from nose and mouth. Keeping a 2-metre distance from other people is very effective in reducing the spread of the virus.
- Surfaces. Common household disinfectants will kill the virus on surfaces. COVID-19 (coronavirus) can survive:
- up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel.
- less than 4 hours on copper.
- less than 24 hours on cardboard.

- Airborne transmission can happen in some situations. Keep indoor spaces well ventilated (aired out) by opening windows and doors if possible.

Current information suggests that infected people can transmit the virus both when they are symptomatic (showing symptoms) and asymptomatic (showing no symptoms).

A close contact is anyone who has spent more than 15 minutes, face-to-face, within two meters of a person with coronavirus in any setting, including a workplace, or someone who has shared a closed space with a confirmed case for more than two hours.

Further information on the spread of COVID-19 is available on Work Safely Protocol, Page 2 (Rol) and HSC (NI).

**Hand and respiratory hygiene and physical distancing**

The best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in a workplace or any setting is to practice physical distancing, adopt proper hand hygiene and follow respiratory etiquette.

Image: Physical Distancing poster, Office of Public Works - Heritage Services

**Handwashing**

Regular hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of COVID-19. Museums must:

- ensure that appropriate hygiene facilities and materials are in place to accommodate staff adhering to hand hygiene measures.
- make available advice and training on how to perform hand hygiene effectively.
- display posters on how to wash hands in appropriate locations throughout the museum.
- provide hand sanitisers (alcohol or non-alcohol based) where washing facilities cannot be accessed. In choosing an alcohol-based sanitiser, a minimum of 60% alcohol is required. Note: alcohol-based hand sanitisers are highly flammable and must not be stored or used near heat or a naked flame. Museums should update fire procedures accordingly.
Museum staff must ensure they are familiar with and follow hand hygiene guidance and advice and wash their hands with soap and water or with hand sanitiser (with a minimum of 60% alcohol and/or non-alcohol based) for at least 20 seconds should they be exposed to any droplets (their own or another person’s), shared surfaces, or other contact considered of risk.

Further information on the selection of hand sanitiser is available on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine register (ROI).

Respiratory Hygiene

In addition to hand hygiene, good respiratory hygiene and etiquette is also necessary. Museums must provide tissues as well as bins/bags for their disposal and empty these regularly. They must also provide advice on good respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette and good respiratory practice including the safe use, storage and disposal of face masks/coverings and the safe cleaning of reusable face coverings.

Physical Distancing

Physical distancing is one of the most important measures in reducing the spread of COVID19. The current recommended distance to be maintained between people to minimise risk of transmission is 2 metres.

Museums must provide for physical distancing across all work activities and staff working arrangements must reflect this.

- Implement a no handshake policy.
- Provide one-way systems for access and egress routes where practicable.
- Adapt existing sign-in/sign-out measures and systems.
- In settings where 2-metre worker separation cannot be ensured by organisational means, alternative protective measures should be put in place, for example:
  - Maintain a distance of at least 1 metre or as much distance as is reasonably practicable.
  - Minimise as much as possible the time spent on the activity.
  - Minimise any direct worker contact and provide hand washing facilities, and other hand hygiene aids, such as hand sanitisers, wipes etc. that are readily accessible throughout the museum site so staff can perform hand hygiene as soon as the work task is complete.
  - Install physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards between staff.
  - Provide PPE and face coverings in line with public health advice.

Further information on each of these measures is available on Work Safely Protocol, Pages 8-12.

Cleaning routines and waste disposal

Cleaning of work areas must be conducted at regular intervals. Further information on cleaning in non-healthcare settings is available from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

Employers must:

- Assign a member of staff with responsibility for ensuring cleaning protocols are in place and records of cleaning are retained.
- Implement thorough and regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces. If disinfection of an area is required, it must be performed in addition to cleaning, never as a substitute for cleaning.
- Ensure contact/touch surfaces such as table tops, work equipment, door handles and handrails are visibly clean at all times and are cleaned at least twice daily.
- Implement modified cleaning intervals for rooms and work areas. This applies especially for washroom facilities, lockers and communal spaces. Cleaning should be performed at least twice per day and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.
- Provide staff with essential cleaning materials to keep their own workspace clean (for example wipes/disinfection products, paper towels and waste bins/bags).
Increase number of waste collection points and ensure these are emptied regularly throughout and at the end of each day.

Modify use of hot desks to ensure that these are made available to identified staff and have appropriate cleaning materials in place for staff to clean the area before and after using.

Note: In relation to routine disposal of waste in the workplace, waste such as used tissues, wipes and cleaning material should be disposed of in the regular domestic waste stream. Hands should be cleaned immediately after disposal of these items. In relation to disposal of waste from a worker who becomes symptomatic while at work, this waste should be disposed of in a disposable refuse bag. When the waste bag is three quarters full, it should be tied securely and placed into a second refuse bag and tied again. The bag should then be left in a safe location for three days (72 hours) before putting out for collection. For further advice, please contact your relevant Local Authority or Council.

Further information on cleaning measures is available on Work Safely Protocol section D10, Pages 20-21.

Personal protective Equipment – PPE

Correct use of PPE can help prevent some exposures; however, it should not take the place of other preventative measures such as physical distancing or good hygiene and cleaning protocols.

Examples of PPE include gloves, goggles and respiratory protection.

In the context of COVID-19 risk, employers should check the relevant health authority website regularly for updates regarding use of recommended PPE.

- All Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures and hygiene compliance should be applied and maintained in all circumstances.
- PPE must be selected based on the hazard and risk to the worker.
- The museum must provide PPE and protective clothing to staff in accordance with identified COVID-19 exposure risks and in line with public health advice. In the museum context, particular consideration should be given to installation teams and front of house staff.
- Museum staff should be trained in the proper use, cleaning, storing and disposal of PPE.
- Gloves are generally not required for IPC purposes. Where gloves are necessary, they must not be considered a substitute for hand hygiene and hands must be cleaned whenever gloves are removed. Gloves should not create an additional occupational hazard and imitations on wearing time and staff individual susceptibilities (allergies, etc.) must also be considered.
- PPE needs to be consistently and properly worn when required. In addition, it must be regularly inspected, cleaned, maintained, and replaced as necessary. Hands should be sanitised before donning and after doffing PPE.

Note: Face Shields designed and authorised as PPE against respiratory droplets should not be mistaken or used as a substitute for impact protection PPE in the workplace, for example, where standard CE marked Face Visor/Face protection PPE is required for work activities such as may be used in museums by installations teams or during conservation activity.

Further information on PPE is available from the HSA (RoI) and HSC (NI).
Face coverings

A face covering is a material you wear that covers the nose and mouth.

Mandatory face coverings must be used in museums by staff and visitors, unless exempt due to underlying health conditions or similar.

Children under 13 are not required to wear a face covering. There are also some exemptions for staff where there is a protective screen separating the worker from other persons.

The wearing of face coverings or masks is not a substitute for other measures (physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory contacts, minimising contacts) but they may be used in addition to these protective measures, especially where maintaining physical/social distancing is difficult.

Face coverings or masks should be clean and should not be shared or handled by other colleagues.

**Visors:**

Expert opinion and international guidance indicate that cloth face coverings or masks are more effective than visors as a measure for prevention of transmission of COVID-19.

Visors should only be worn by individuals who have an illness or impairment that makes wearing a face covering difficult or if dealing with people with particular needs (e.g., hard of hearing). Where visors are used, they should cover the entire face (above the eyes to below the chin and wrap around from ear to ear) and be correctly applied. Reusable visors should be cleaned after each use and then stored in a clean place until needed.

Further advice on face coverings and visors can be found on the HSE Website (ROI) and the NIDirect website (NI).

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC)

Ventilation refers to the movement of outdoor air into a building, and the circulation of that air within the building or room. This can be achieved through natural means (e.g. opening a window) or mechanical means (e.g. a central heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) unit).

Lack of appropriate ventilation within healthcare settings has been associated with increased rates of infection with airborne diseases. Similarly, inadequate ventilation in nonhealthcare settings has been shown as a contributing factor in outbreaks of highly infectious airborne diseases like measles and TB (2). COVID-19 is a new disease, and the effect of ventilation on the transmissibility of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) is still unclear.

The Work Safely Protocol and the HSPC Guidance on Non-Healthcare Building Ventilation during COVID-19 document provide an overview of the current literature examining the association between ventilation and COVID-19, and recommendations based on the literature, specifically for non-healthcare settings:
• Ensure that any mechanical ventilation systems are adequately maintained as per manufacturer’s instructions.
• Where filters are used in the central HVAC system, ensure that these are replaced regularly as per manufacturer’s instructions.
• If filters are used as part of a central ventilation system, consideration should be given to installing the most efficient filter for the system (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value-MERV 13 to 16; ISO 16890 ePM1 rating 60-90%). HEPA filtration should be considered where air is re-circulated.
• Increase the outdoor air fraction of air inside buildings as much as possible. This can be done by fully opening outside air dampers in mechanical systems or opening windows where possible.
• Increase total airflow supply to occupied spaces by increasing number of air exchanges per hour.
• Mechanical fans should only be used where there is a single occupant in a room. If this is not possible, then fans should be directed to exhaust directly to the exterior environment (e.g. open window), to minimise potential spread of pathogens.
• Disable demand controlled mechanical ventilation if possible or set the threshold to the lowest possible setting (e.g. 400ppm or less of CO2) so that the system remains ventilating at a nominal speed. These types of HVAC systems are set to only circulate air when a certain threshold is passed, usually the amount of CO2 build-up in the room, or the ambient room temperature.
• Keep ventilation running at all times, regardless of building occupancy. When unoccupied, ventilation can be reduced to the lowest setting.
• Extend the hours of nominal HVAC operations to begin two hours before the building is occupied, and to only reduce to lowest setting 2 hours after the building has emptied. This ensures that rooms are well ventilated before occupancy each day.
• Ensure extractor fans in bathrooms are functional and running at all times. When the building is occupied, they should operate at full capacity. They can be set to the lowest speed 2 hours after the building is emptied and ramped up again 2 hours before occupancy if the system allows.
• Avoid directing air flow directly onto individuals or across groups of individuals, as this may facilitate transmission of pathogens between individuals.
• Avoid the use of air-recirculation systems in HVACs as much as possible. Use 100% outdoor air if supported by the HVAC system and compatible with outdoor/indoor air quality considerations. If it is not possible to disable the air recirculation system, then HEPA filtration or the highest efficiency filter possible according to the HVAC manufacturer’s specifications should be considered.
• Maintain a relative air humidity of 20-60% if feasible.
• Create “clean” ventilation zones for staff that do not include high-risk areas (e.g. reception areas). This can be done by re-evaluating the positioning of the supply and exhaust air diffusers and adjusting flow rates to establish measurable pressure differentials.

Legionella

Museums will need to put in place control measures to avoid the potential for Legionnaires’ disease before reopening after a period of closure or of restricted access to the building due to the increased risk of Legionella growth in the water systems and associated equipment. See HSA Website for further information.
Introduction

The Museum’s COVID-19 management team must develop or update their COVID-19 response plan, in consultation with staff, detailing the policies and practices necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace and for the employer to meet the Government of Ireland’s ‘Work Safely Protocol’ and the NI Executive’s ‘Working through this together’.

This plan will be living, working document, giving an overview of areas that museums must assess to ensure compliance with the protocol and to minimise the risk to staff and others. Accompanying checklists will provide further guidance on monitoring and implementation. It is important to keep the plan under review to ensure it is kept up to date with public advice in each jurisdiction and to follow up on all actions identified on each checklist to make sure that they are completed as soon as possible. The COVID-19 Response Plan should be regularly tested and discussed with staff.

The policy must be signed and dated by the Museum’s Director (or equivalent) or the Chair of the Board of Directors/Trustees of the museum.

The HSA Website contains a useful COVID-19 Response Plan template for museums, with focus on:

- Checklist No. 1 - Planning and Preparing
- Checklist No. 2 - Control Measures
- Checklist No. 3 - COVID-19 Induction
- Checklist No. 4 - Dealing with a Suspected Case of COVID-19
- Checklist No. 5 - Cleaning and Disinfection
- Checklist No. 6 - Staff
- Checklist No. 7 - Worker Representative(s)

Lead Worker Representative

Each museum will appoint at least one competent Lead Worker Representative (LWR), charged with ensuring that COVID-19 measures are strictly adhered to in their place of work and to monitor staff wellbeing and the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace. The number of LWR(s) should be proportionate to staff numbers and visitor capacity.

The identity of the person(s) appointed should be clearly communicated to staff and a clear reporting system put in place. The museum should also ensure they receive the relevant and necessary training.

Further information and a short online course on the role of Lead Worker Representative(s) in the ROI can be found on the HSA website.

Key Considerations

Functions
Museums should carry out an internal audit and risk assessment of activities of the museum and the impact of COVID-19 on these, taking into consideration statutory requirements, collections management and preservation, security, and other critical functions. Identify high and low risk programming and prioritise activity in line with risk.

Facilities
A risk assessment of physical areas and activity within the museum with regards the spread of COVID-19 should be carried out before the return to the workplace of both staff and visitors.
Areas to consider:

- Office areas
- Storage and Collection management areas
- Shared facilities: toilets, kitchen, cloakroom/locker areas, meeting rooms
- Access points: entrance and reception area, lifts, stairwells
- Exhibition rooms
- Education rooms or designated areas
- Research libraries and/or archives
- Cafés and/or retail areas. Note these areas are not covered by these guidelines, please see relevant hospitality guidance such as The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) COVID-19 Advice (RoI)

Operations: The Museum’s management team must review and update:

- Occupational health and safety (OSH) risk assessments
- Safety statements
- Insurance cover
- Standard operational procedures
- Emergency and medical procedures
- Security measures
- Business plan

Ensure that where work practices have been changed or modified to prevent the spread of COVID-19, staff are not inadvertently exposed to additional occupational health and safety hazards and risks.

HR: Museums should plan for remote working: removing non-critical teams from onsite working and assessing the effect of staff absenteeism. Existing sick leave policies should be reviewed and amended as appropriate and in line with normal procedures.

It is the responsibility of the museum to ensure that conditions, including the employment of staff via agency contracts, support the prevention and spread of COVID-19.

Resources: Each museum should assess and identify the necessary resources to ensure compliance and monitoring of restrictive measures. They will need to produce a cost benefit analysis of the financial outlay required to reopen while securing the safety of staff and visitors. Individual circumstances will necessitate different levels of investment to guarantee the safe implementation of measures.

Dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

Museums need to have procedures in place for what happens in the event of a suspected/confirmed case on the premises. This should include:

- A defined response structure that identifies the team(s) responsible for responding to a suspected case in the COVID-19 response plan.
- A case manager/designated contact person(s) responsible for dealing with suspected cases.

The museum should have a designated isolation area(s). The designated area(s) and the route to the designated area(s) should:

- Be easily accessible and as far as is reasonable and practicable should be accessible by people with disabilities.
- Consider the possibility of one or more persons displaying signs of COVID19 and have additional isolation areas available or another contingency plan for dealing with same.
- Consider the access route to the designated isolation area(s) from across the museum site.
• Ensure the designated area(s) can isolate the person behind a closed door. Where a closed-door area is not possible, the employer must provide for an area away from other staff and/or visitors.
• Provide as is reasonably practicable: ventilation, tissues, hand sanitiser, disinfectant and/or wipes, PPE in the form of gloves and masks, and waste bags/bins.

If a member of staff or visitor displays symptoms of COVID-19 during work, the case manager/designated contact person and the response team must:

• Isolate the symptomatic person and have a procedure in place to accompany the individual to the designated isolation area via the isolation route, ensuring that they and others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic person at all times.
• Provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms, if not already wearing one. The symptomatic person should wear the mask if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises.
• Assess whether the unwell individual can immediately be directed to go home to call their family doctor and continue treatment and self-isolation at home.
• Facilitate the person presenting with symptoms remaining in isolation if they cannot immediately go home and facilitate them calling their family doctor. The symptomatic person should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. Advice should be given to the person presenting with symptoms to cover their mouth and nose with the disposable tissue provided when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided. arrange transport home or to hospital for medical assessment if required. Public transport of any kind should not be used.
• Carry out an assessment of the incident, which will form part of determining follow-up actions.
• Arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and work areas involved, including shared facilities such as washroom facilities, lockers and communal spaces.
• Provide advice and assistance if contacted by the Department of Public Health or HSE in relation to contact tracing.

Outbreaks which are not managed and brought under control quickly, can rapidly spread among the museum staff and/or the wider community. Continuous and effective communication between all parties is essential.

There is no requirement for an employer to notify the health authorities if a staff member contracts COVID-19. However, the museum must cooperate with the relevant Department of Public Health if a case of COVID-19 and/or an outbreak (considered to be two or more cases of COVID-19) is confirmed in their museum and implement any follow up actions required.

For further information, see HSA Website, Checklist No. 4 – Dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19

Cleaning guidelines after a suspected case of COVID-19

When cleaning a room after the presence of a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19:

• Keep the door closed for 1 hour once the person with the suspected case has left the room.
• Clean all surfaces and furniture in the room with a neutral detergent, followed by decontamination of surfaces using a disinfectant effective against viruses. Disposable cleaning cloths are recommended.
• Ventilate the room while cleaning is in progress.
• Disposable single use non-sterile nitrile gloves and a disposable plastic apron should be used by the person cleaning the room. Care should be taken to avoid touching their face during the cleaning procedure. If an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with COVID-19, use protection for the eyes, mouth and nose, as well as wearing gloves and an apron. Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.
• Do not allow anyone to use a potentially contaminated room until it has been cleaned/disinfected, and all surfaces are dry.

Further information on cleaning in non-healthcare settings is available from the ECDC website.
First Aid

Staff with a specific role in acting as first responders should be provided with updated training on infection prevention and control principles including performance of hand hygiene and appropriate use of personal protective equipment when delivering first aid.

Further advice on first aid is available from the Pre Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC), who have provided advice in relation to return to work and first aid (Update on FAR Responder Recertification).

Protective measures

A spatial audit should be carried out throughout all areas of the museum to determine potential pinch-points and areas with high footfall. The following measures should be taken:

- Recommended physical distancing of 2 metres to be maintained between all present in the museum.
- Layout of workstations and common areas to reflect the recommended physical distancing to be maintained between staff.
- Maximum capacity for rooms to be assessed and clearly signed.
- Install fixed or mobile screens where physical distancing is not possible.
- Use back-to-back or side-to-side positioning (rather than face-to-face) where possible.
- Discourage non-essential trips within the museum by restricting access to certain areas and/or implementing zoning across the site.
- Identify potential pinch-points and develop new circulation routes, such as one-way systems, for access around the building to manage flow of people.
- Physical barriers and markings to be installed at points of interaction and transited routes throughout the museum site.
- Controlled access to areas of common usage, including canteens, lifts, stairs, and toilets.
- Additional hygiene precautions: disinfectants and hand sanitisers to be made available throughout the museum site: pedal-bins for waste disposal, disposable supplies, and increased cleaning measures put in place along with provision of guidance regarding use of shared facilities.
- Multiple language signage should be placed in prominent and relevant positions, reinforcing key messaging around physical distancing, face coverings, capacity, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, entry requirements, symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if symptoms are experienced while in the museum, and directional signage including one-way systems and entry and exit points.
- Consider communication of measures for vision-impaired staff members. See NCBI website.

*Image: One-way system signs, EPIC The Museum of Irish Emigration*
Museum staff should continue to work from home to the greatest extent possible.

The museum’s COVID-19 response team should assess different areas of activity and staff profile/requirements and develop online systems that allow for remote working where possible.

**Transitioning to work on-site and reopening**

It is envisioned the return to work of museum staff and reopening of the museum be carried out in phases:

1. Preparing for reopening and transitioning from remote to on-site working: core operational personnel to commence working on site to prepare for reopening to staff.

2. Return of staff to the workplace and preparing for delivery of public facing services: museum staff incrementally transition to work on site, where remote working is not possible, for the delivery of non-public facing services and in preparation for reopening areas of activity to the public.

3. Reopening to visitors and provision of museum services and activities: public access restored in accordance to regulations around maximum capacity and restrictions and with limited access to some of the museum’s services and any of the areas within the site per internal risk assessments.

**Remote working**

The responsibility for health and safety at work under the ROI’s Safety Health and Welfare at Work 2005 Act (SHWW) rests with the employer regardless of whether an employee works from home/remotely. Information should be provided to each member of staff working from home on:

- Employers’ duties
- Employee responsibilities
- Annual leave during COVID-19 restrictions
- Data protection and cybersecurity when working from home
- E-working and tax relief
- Returning to work on-site

Further information and guidance on working from home is available on the [HSA website](http://www.hsa.ie) and the [Citizens Information Website](https://www.citizensinformation.ie) (RoI) and the NI [Department of Finance Website](http://www.dof.dergsi.gsi.ie)

**Return to Work form**

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, museum staff must complete and sign a ‘Return to Work’ form before returning to work. Each member of staff must confirm to the best of their ability that they:

- Have no symptoms of COVID-19
- Have you been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection in the last 14 days
- Are not a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- Have not been advised by a doctor to self-isolate or cocoon at this time

Museum staff should be asked to confirm this information remains the same following an extended period of absence from the museum. A template can be downloaded from the [HSA website](http://www.hsa.ie) (RoI)
All museum staff and staff on site (direct and indirect employees, volunteers and contractors) must be informed of the need to stay at home if sick or if they have any symptoms of COVID-19. They should also be informed of their entitlements if they are sick or need to quarantine.

Information on Government COVID-19 benefits and supports can be viewed on the Government of Ireland’s website and the NI Executive’s Website.

**COVID-19 Induction Training**

COVID-19 induction training must be provided to all staff and contractors after the re-opening of the museum following a closure. This should include:

- The latest COVID-19 advice from Government and health agencies.
- Identification of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and how it is spread.
- Control measures in place to minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19, including cleaning regime, physical distancing, good hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and correct use of PPE.
- Who to contact, what to do and what to expect if they (or someone else) display symptoms of COVID-19 in the workplace, including location and use of the isolation area(s).
- Any relevant changes to the business COVID-19 response plan, including risk assessments, safety statements, emergency and medical response plans, and changes to work practice.
- Individual responsibilities, including the importance of not going to work if displaying signs or symptoms of COVID-19 or feeling unwell.
- Procedures around contact tracing.

Further information on what to include in the induction training is available on the HSA Website.

**High-risk staff**

Staff in higher risk and/or vulnerable groups should be allowed work from home wherever possible.

Before returning to work, they should seek advice from a relevant healthcare professional. Should they return to working on-site, museum management should be advised of any concerns and supported accordingly following a risk assessment.

**Community settings**

Outside of work, staff should be encouraged to practice the same IPC measures, physical distancing, hand washing and respiratory etiquette and adhere to the specific recommendations and requirements of government and health authorities in each jurisdiction.

For further information, see Work Safely protocol, page 23

**Mental Health & Wellbeing**

Staff, when they return to work or as they continue to work from home, may go through traumatic events or be experiencing personal difficulties. They are also likely to have concerns about the risk of infection or changes to their job due to the implementation of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Employers should:

- provide staff with information on publicly available sources of support and advice and information about the prevention and control measures taken in the museum to reduce the risk of infection.
- ensure staff are made aware of and have access to any business provided Employee Assistance Programmes or Occupational Health service.
The HSA (RoI) has a range of supports, resources and advice, including a free online risk assessment tool for addressing work related stress: WorkPositive

Staff arrangements

Emphasis should be placed on reducing contact between staff to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Actions to be taken, in addition to the protective measures already outlined, include:

- Keep a record of all staff working on the premises and shift times on a given day and their contact details.
- Temporary restructuring of work patterns with staggered access and rota systems to be put in place and clearly communicated.
- Establish staff ‘pods’ or working teams where possible to minimise contact between staff and protect business continuity. Cross-training of staff may be required.
- Reduced hotdesking and personal use of office and facilities equipment and materials, and tools where possible. Rigorous cleaning of these during and between use.
- Access passes to be held next to pass readers rather than touching them.
- Protocols for activities that require close contact to be assessed and expanded accordingly (production teams, housekeeping, and similar) and alternative protective measure identified where 2m physical distancing not possible.
- Review volunteer capacity and implement protocols around internships and volunteer programmes.
- General advice in relation to measures the worker should follow, including safe travel to and from work, should be provided.

Work Meetings

The museum should encourage and facilitate use of telephone, radio or online communication in place of in person meetings.

Where physical meetings are necessary, these must be arranged in line with the Government advice that is in place at the time of holding the meeting. Furthermore, the length of the meeting and the numbers attending should be kept to a minimum and participants must always maintain physical distancing protocols. Proper ventilation, for example open windows, should also be in place.

Attendance in a meeting room for a prolonged period may result in attendees being considered close contacts should an outbreak occur.

Refer to Business Travel/Site Visits section regarding requirements for travel.
Contact Tracing Log

As part of the museum’s COVID-19 response plan, museums must have a system in place to request and record contact details of their visitors, staff, and contractors to help break the chains of transmission of coronavirus, managed by a designated contact person/case manager. Every effort should be made to explain the importance of collecting this information to staff and visitors.

Information to be collected in the contact tracing log and retained by the museum for 28 days (Roi)/21 days (NI):

**Staff**
- names of staff who work at the premises.
- a contact phone number for each member of staff.
- the dates and times that staff are at work.
- a record of close contact/group work.

**Visitors (via booking/ticketing system or at point of entry) and contractors:**
- name of the visitor. If there is more than one person, then you can record the name of the ‘lead member’ of the group and the number of people in the group.
- a contact phone number for the lead member of a group of people.
- date of visit, arrival time and, where possible, departure time.
- if a customer will interact with only one member of staff the name of the assigned staff member should be recorded alongside the name of the visitor.

Should a member of staff or visitor become COVID-19 positive, public health officials may request the log as part of the contact tracing process.

**NI Executive**

The Department for the Economy (DfE) has published guidance on maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors in the hospitality industry to help support coronavirus contact tracing efforts in Northern Ireland. When recording customer details, businesses should also follow the specific guidance on data security for collecting customer and visitor details which the ICO has produced.

Use of the STOPCovidNI app is encouraged for staff and visitors through display of the STOPCovidNI poster.

There are ‘Test, Trace and Protect’ posters that you can display in your hospitality setting that explain the details you need to record to protect the health and safety of the customers and staff.

**Government of Ireland**

Use of the COVID-19 Tracker app should be encouraged for staff and visitors.

Museums should consider completing the Fáilte Ireland COVID-19 Safety Charter and displaying this both on site and on their website.

**General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)**

The data that you collect is personal data and must be handled in accordance with GDPR to protect the privacy of your staff and visitors. It is recommended to display the museum’s GDPR policy on the museum’s website and have a printed copy at reception.

Further information on GDPR and Coronavirus is provided by the Data Protection Commission (Roi) and ICO (NI)
Clear and consistent communication is crucial to the success of the COVID-19 Response plan and the successful operation of the museum, building trust and confidence with staff and visitors. This should be provided at regular intervals and through the right mediums.

**Internal**

- A clear communication framework is to be established, allowing for consultation with staff, advise of the response plan, and inform of any workplace changes or policies.
- Specific communication measures required for staff whose first language may not be English must be included in the COVID-19 Response Plan. The HSE have provided translations of their COVID-19 resources.
- Ensure that up-to-date contact information for all staff, including emergency contact numbers, is readily available to the LWR(s) and COVID-19 management team.
- Giving guidelines to employees on how they must provide the action plan to visitors will ensure everyone receives the same message and there is no inconsistency.
- Regularly review all COVID-19 related signage and notices throughout the premises to ensure they display the latest Government recommendations.
- Signs must be placed in prominent and relevant positions, be legible and, where appropriate, be offered in multiple languages.

**External**

Providing information on measures to combat COVID-19 will inform and reassure visitors that they are entering a safe environment. This should be shared via the museum’s website, social media platforms, and on any relevant marketing material.

Visitors should be advised in advance of their visit that they should not attend if they are feeling unwell, are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, have been diagnosed with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in the last 10 days, have been at risk of contagion through a close contact in the last 14 days, or been advised by a doctor to isolate or cocoon.

*Image: Visitor signage, National Museums NI*
Information should also be provided to visitors in advance of their visit at point of booking and/or entry on:

- Opening/closures and any changes to visiting hours.
- Hygiene, cleaning and ventilation measures.
- Requirement of face mask.
- Admission terms.
- Queuing or entry procedures (timed entry, contactless payments, capacity, length of visit).
- Advance booking requirements or on-site bookings.
- Collection of personal data for contact tracing.
- Any special arrangements for vulnerable or disabled visitors.
- Any special arrangements for groups (subject to restrictions on these visits).
- Information relating to availability of facilities such as cafés, retail areas.

![Image: Floor sign, EPIC Museum of Irish Emigration](image)

Clear guidance should be given at point of entry on what to do if the visitor is feeling unwell during their visit to the museum and/or after their visit should they suspect this a result of their visit.

Travel advice should be provided to visitors via the museum’s website and social media, reminding them of public transport capacity and, for international visitors, the quarantine requirements in line with EU 'traffic light' travel system.
Public access and full museum services should be delivered in incremental steps, allowing for continued risk assessments and revision of protective measures. All staff should continue to work from home to the extent that this is possible and museum activity should be assessed accordingly.

Measures should consider the diverse range of people who access museum services and the requirements of visitors. Provisions should be put in place for visitors and staff with access difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure protective measures are communicated clearly and guarantee secure access to the museum, both in advance and during their visit.

The gradual return to various forms of social interactions will also be a period of ‘acclimatising’ audiences to the safety measures and regulations. It is crucial that museums remain inclusive and welcoming while maintaining strict controls and monitoring behaviours via a continued assessment by the COVID-19 response team and staff.

In addition to the measures already outlined, museums must consider the following:

### Front of House and Exhibition rooms

- Information on travelling to/from and accessing the museum should be advised at point of booking, on the museum’s website, and at point of entry.
- Introduce a cap on the physical number of visitors on site in accordance with physical distancing regulations and introduce systems to manage flow and dwell times throughout the museum.

*Image: Visitor Map indicating colour-coded one-way systems, National Museums NI*

- Controlled access via reservation systems and/or dedicated visiting hours is highly recommended.
- Clear communication of measures in place to be provided at physical access points and across the site in multiple languages and using various methods (verbal and written).
- Contactless or online payments to be encouraged.
- Queuing systems to be clearly marked and signed to ensure physical distancing.
- Entrance doors should be automated or manually operated by an employee. Internal doors should be left open if fire or preservation/security regulations allow.
- Rooms across the site to be clearly marked with maximum capacity numbers at point of entry to each.
- Increase staff presence and/or monitoring equipment.
- Provision of protective equipment in the form of hand sanitisers, tissues, and disposal bins at main points of interaction and main points of entry to rooms.
- The reception/admissions areas should be equipped with a fixed or mobile transparent screens and must always have a medical kit available that includes germicidal disinfectant/wipes for surface, cleaning tissues, face/eye mask, disposable gloves and protective apron, and biohazard disposable waste bag.
- It is advisable that cloakrooms and/or locker areas should remain closed
- Consideration should be given to creating dedicated times for visitors in high-risk groups
- Consideration should be given to access and additional protective measures for visitors with a disability

**Exhibition and Education equipment**

COVID-19 (coronavirus) can survive:
- up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel
- less than 4 hours on copper
- less than 24 hours on cardboard

- Limited or controlled access, subject to robust cleaning regime, to exhibition and learning equipment and materials, including drawers, touch screens and similar interactives
- Consider the use of a personal or sole-use stylus for touch screens or providing temporary substitutes
- Audio guides and other mobile devices should be quarantined or thoroughly cleaned between use.
- Museums should consider creating audio files that visitors can download to their smartphones
- Re-enactment material for visitor use should be removed
- Museums will need to review whether and how they use handling collections (quarantine resources for 72 hours between use, implement robust cleaning regime aligned with visitor use) or consider other methods of sharing information or delivering activities

**Collection management and Loans**

Pest control measures must be reviewed, updated and implemented to allow for periods of restricted access to the museum and impact of Covid-19 measures.

Exhibition and loan schedules are likely to be affected by ongoing travel restrictions, supply chains, conservation, and installation processes, along with other delays to working processes due to the impact of COVID-19. These will need to be monitored and planned for by the museum.

Loan or donation policies should be updated to include COVID-19 responses to quarantining material for 72 hours before processing.
The museum should consider whether it is necessary for artefacts on loan to be accompanied by a member of staff and review and update policies and insurance accordingly.

Exhibitions may need to be adapted to allow for IPC measures, including alternatives to interactives and the ability for these to be presented online.

Museum research libraries and/or archives

Museum research libraries and/or archives should practice all measures extended across the museum site. Additional consideration must be given to access to these facilities in the form of:

- Measuring maximum occupancy levels to allow for 2m social distancing between each reader space. It is preferable for readers to be positioned side to side rather than face to face.
- Identify which reader spaces are not accessible while social distancing measures are in place and label these accordingly.
- Decide whether Library/Archive visitors are permitted to browse the shelves and provide clear signposting indicating that only one person can access each stack at a time.
- Follow government guidelines regarding the quarantine of Library/Archive materials.
- Decide whether self-service terminals remain operational and put in place measures for cleaning between each use.

Further information is available from the Library Association of Ireland and The National Archives (UK).

Events and Tours

Current advice from the Government of Ireland and from the NI Executive on indoor gatherings should be followed by the museum and provision of tours and other events updated accordingly.

Where the visitor experience is predominantly guided, or where live / costumed elements are essential and expected, consideration will need to be given to how these can be adapted.

Should events, including tours, be permitted under the level of restrictions, all procedures relating to visitors to the museum apply and should also include:

- A named event organiser, appointed by the museum.
- Maximum numbers for groups should be strictly adhered to and allow for 2m physical distancing for the duration of the event, including entry/exit to and from the event.
- Sufficient staffing with appropriate briefing and training to implement event specific safety plans.
- Increased provision of hand hygiene stations and environmental waste disposal units.
In adherence with WHO evidence, recent Public Health advice states that there must be a restriction on noise levels within the museum to prevent transmission of COVID-19, due to high risk of transmission during activities associated with shouting or singing in indoor settings.

**Live Streaming, Arts and Culture performances**

The Health Act 1947 (Section 31A - Temporary Restrictions) (COVID-19) (No. 8) Regulations 2020 (ROI) give effect to the level 5 restrictions set out in the Government of Ireland’s Plan for Living with COVID-19. Under these regulations, the following activity is permitted:

- the filming, or other recording of performances in a theatre, concert hall, museum or art gallery, without an audience present, for the purposes of broadcasting such performances on the internet, radio or television.
- the production of television and radio programmes, video, sound, digital or other electronic content and the broadcast or publication of the same to the public or a portion of the public.

Under the Broadcasting Act 2009, broadcast is defined as the transmission, relaying or distribution by electronic communications network.

Any activity under either of these provisions should only proceed with strict adherence to the Work Safely Protocols as published by Government. As such, these workplaces should be controlled environments with a named event organiser, owner or manager and with full protective measures in place.

**Business travel / site visits**

Non-essential work travel should be minimised within the permitted geographical area.

For necessary work-related trips, staff should be encouraged to travel alone to/from and for work. If using their personal cars for work related trips, they should be accompanied by a maximum of one passenger who shall be seated in adherence with physical distancing guidance. A face covering or mask should be worn in line with public health advice.

International Travellers may be required to provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test result taken up to 72 hours before departure/arrival, provide journey and contact details, and self-isolate in both country of departure and destination.

From 9 November, the Government of Ireland is implementing the new EU “traffic lights” approach to travel, which applies to countries in the EU/EEA (+UK). The advice for travel to these countries remains “exercise a high degree of caution.” The general advice for any other overseas travel remains “avoid nonessential travel” or some cases, “do not travel.” Staff who have travelled abroad – only in certain defined circumstances – may be able to return to work after their arrival back in Ireland. You can view this traffic light system [here](#).

For further travel advice, see [NiDirect website](#) (NI) or the [Department of Foreign Affairs guidance](#) (ROI)
There is a wide range of supports available to assist businesses that have been required to close or have had business activities at their premises directly curtailed by current health protection regulations.

For a comprehensive list of business supports in the Republic of Ireland, see the [Enterprise Ireland website](https://www.enterprise-ireland.com).

For a comprehensive list of business supports in Northern Ireland, see the [NIDirect website](https://www nidirect com).

### KEY REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

**Government of Ireland:**

- The Department of Health’s COVID-19 (Coronavirus) [Stay Safe Guidelines](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/health-prevention/coronavirus-safety-guidelines/index.html)
- All relevant and recent COVID-19 advice from the [HSE](https://www.hse.ie), [HSA](https://www.hsa.ie), [HIQA](https://www.hiqa.ie) and [HPSC](https://www.hpsc.ie)
- Fáilte Ireland [Operational Guidelines for Visitor Attractions](https://www.failteireland.ie/)

**NI Executive:**

- NI Executive [Covid-19 Advice Staff](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/covid-19)
- Department for Communities: [Culture and Heritage Destinations Venues: Guidance for a phased Return](https://www.culture-ni.gov.uk)
- All relevant and recent COVID-19 advice from the [HSENI](https://www.hsenal.gov.uk)
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