

## COVID-19 Work & Safety Plan for Performances

### Guiding Principles:

- 1) This Work and Safety Plan is for performance activities under Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's MI Safe Start Plan.
- 2) Please note: under **Phase Four** of Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's MI Safe Start Plan, indoor theatres and performance venues are closed to the public.
- 3) Performance activities covered under this plan include:
  - \*performances, lectures, & panel discussions on a stage in a performance hall,
  - \*backstage spaces,
  - \*audience seating,
  - \*ingress and egress into lobbies and auditorium by audience members,
  - \*box office operations,
  - \*concessions.
- 4) SMTD has developed our work plans around activities rather than individual buildings because the spaces in our buildings are multi-use.
- 5) Safeguarding the health of students, faculty, staff, and audiences is of paramount importance.

## I. Workplace Requirements

### 1. Personnel Plan to reduce density

- A) In compliance with current State of Michigan Amended Safe Start plan, which covers occupancy limits in Phase 5 for other regions of the State of Michigan, SMTD shall limit the number of people in a venue to 25 % of its maximum capacity or to 250, whichever is smaller. This assumption is subject to change according to Executive Order. According to the current order, each separate auditorium or studio is a separate venue. SMTD interprets the capacity limit of each auditorium to include any persons in the auditorium, such as audience members, performers, onstage crew, and ushers. SMTD does not interpret the Executive Order to include lobby staff and backstage crew members who do not enter into the space of the auditorium. The end of this work plan lists our venues and their proposed occupancies under performance.
- B) Instrumental performances
  - (1) String players will be placed six feet apart.
  - (2) Wind and brass players will be placed 12 feet apart. The use of bell masks is required.
  - (3) Conductors, who remain in one place but who are breathing and using their arms vigorously, will be placed at least 12 feet away from any performer and separated from them with plexiglass screens.
- C) Choral, musical theatre, opera, and theatre performances
  - (1) Each performer will be placed in an inner square of 6 by 6 feet (also known as "the acting area"). This acting area shall be taped to the rehearsal room



floor. Each square will be 12 feet from each other. This way, each performer will be allowed to move within a playing area of 36 sq. ft. and still be 12 feet away from other performers moving within their squares.

- (2) Musicians and conductor playing in an orchestra pit will follow the same social-distancing criteria as in Section (A) above.
- (3) For choral, musical theatre, opera, or theatre performances without the need for movement, performers may be placed 12 feet apart.

D) Dance rehearsals-- Choreographers may choose Option A or B, depending upon their work needs for movement or for barre work.

Option A:

- (1) Each dancer will be placed in an inner square of 6 by 6 feet (also known as "the acting area"). This acting area shall be taped to the rehearsal room floor. Each square will be 12 feet from each other. This way, each dancer will be allowed to move within a playing area of 36 sq. ft. and still be 12 feet away from other dancers moving within their squares.
- (2) No contact or close dancing is permitted. Floor work is permitted.
- (3) Stage managers and accompanists, all who work seated, will be spaced at least 6 feet apart along the walls of each space.
- (4) Choreographers may move around the rehearsal space to direct movement but should maintain social distancing of 6 feet. Touching is not permitted.
- (5) Masks are required at all times. See II.1.A below.

Option B:

- (1) Each dancer will be placed 12 feet apart.
- (2) No contact or close dancing is permitted. Floor work is permitted.
- (3) Stage managers and accompanists, all who work seated, will be spaced at least 6 feet apart along the walls of each space.
- (4) Choreographers may move around the rehearsal space to direct movement but should maintain social distancing of 6 feet. Touching is not permitted.
- (5) Mask are required at all times. See ii.1.A below.

- E) See ground plans with social distancing drawings for our proposed occupancy limits of stages.
- F) Lecturers and members of panel discussions will be placed 6 feet apart.
- G) In order to prevent congregating or crowding in our lobbies (all but one of which are small), performances shall not have intermissions.
- H) In non-solo dressing rooms, locations 6 feet apart shall be marked at makeup counters so that each performer has a socially distant spot to place personal belongings and apply make-up.
- I) Performers shall not be allowed to congregate in common areas or in hallways when they are not actively performing onstage, but need to remain at their makeup stations until the call to stage.

- J) Members of the public will not be allowed backstage, nor shall they be allowed to greet performers after a performance on the stage. Family and friends of performers may wait six-feet apart in the lobbies for performers to exit from backstage, but upon the arrival of the performer, the group must exit the building immediately and not linger. The safety preference is for family and friends to wait outside of the building.
- K) Post-performance receptions in venue lobbies are discouraged under Phase Five, but should they occur, they must conform to current State of Michigan Amended Safe Start plan, which requires persons not of the same household to maintain 6 feet of distance from one another and no event exceeding 50 people. In no case, however, can the capacity of the room exceed the square footage of the room divided by 36. (1) Under Phase Four, according to current State of Michigan Amended Safe Start plan indoor social gatherings and events among persons not part of a single household may not exceed 10 people.
- L) Restrooms – Physical distancing of six feet should be maintained while waiting in lines for restrooms. Signage will be posted to reinforce personal hygiene recommendations. Signage will be posted at the entrance to every restroom informing audience members of the location(s) of additional restrooms in case one location is crowded.

## 2. Dedicated Entry Point

- A) For performers and crew members:
  - (1) There will be a dedicated entry point to each space, which is the backstage door. Stage managers will stagger the call times of each performer in order to eliminate congestion at this backstage door. In the case of musical ensembles, call times will be staggered by section. Weather permitting and to reduce congestion at the stage door, performers will be checked in outside. A staff member will open the door for each performer to mitigate the number of people touching the door handle.
- B) Ingress and Egress by Audience Members under Phase Five
  - (1) Instead of one entry point, multiple entry points should be opened in order to minimize lines for ticket scanning.
  - (2) Event organizers need to consider ways to schedule staggered and/or zoned ingress in order to minimize lines for ticket scanning. Some computerized ticketing systems can assign an arrival time.
  - (3) Weather permitting, ticket scanning in some venues could take place outside the main entry points. The staff who are scanning tickets will ask each audience member to hold their ticket in front of the ticket scanner, so that the lobby staff does not have to touch any tickets.
  - (4) Once admitted to a lobby, audience members will be asked to take their seats promptly in the auditorium so as to reduce crowding and congregating in the lobby. Lobby doors and auditorium doors should be scheduled to open at the same time.
  - (5) A waiting line to enter can be managed using common methods such as rope and stanchions, tape markings on the ground and signs.

- (6) At the end of a performance, audience members will be asked to exit from the rear of the auditorium to the front, similar to exiting from an airplane at the end of a flight.
- (7) According to current State of Michigan Amended Safe Start plan, the ingress, egress, use, and occupancy by members of the public is not permitted in indoor theaters and performance venues under Phase Four of Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's MI Safe Start Plan.

### 3. Daily Screening Protocol

- A) As part of normal company-management process, stage managers will remind cast members that if they are feeling unwell, for whatever reason, they should immediately contact the stage manager or the company manager, and not wait until they arrive at the performance hall.
- B) For audience members, signs shall be posted indicating that audience members are not to enter a performance hall if they are or have recently been sick.

### 4. Testing, Contact Tracing and Notification

- A) The names, addresses, and contact information of performers, crew members, lobby staff, ushers, and box-office staff are routinely collected.
- B) There is no requirement in the executive order for the collection of information about audience members at a performance venue.

### 5. On-site Supervisors

- A) As part of the stage preparations for a performance, an on-site public-health supervisor will give a safety briefing to performers and crew. As part of the front-of-house preparations for a performance, the on-site public-health supervisor will give a safety briefing to lobby staff and ushers.

## II. Health and Safety Measures

### 1. Masks

- A) Unless otherwise noted, every person involved in performances, lectures, and panel discussions must wear a face mask or face covering.
- B) String players – will wear masks at all times.
- C) Wind and brass players – will wear masks at all times except when actively playing. This means that they should go to their chairs wearing masks, play without, and then depart wearing masks.
- D) Actors, singers, & dancers – regarding the use of facial coverings, we realize that masks may inhibit a performer's vocal ability, as well as hide their full range of facial expression. On the other hand, the balance of scientific data supports the value of masks in reducing the risk of transmission in community settings. Reducing the risk of transmission is important not only to safeguard the health of the individuals involved in a production, but also to reduce the risk that a production may have

- to be cancelled due to community spread. With these considerations in mind, our plan requires that masks be worn in rehearsal and in performance at all times for all performers and crew members.
- E) Stage directors, stage managers, conductors in technical rehearsals – will wear masks at all times.
  - F) Conductors in front of musical ensembles – will wear masks at all times.
  - G) Lobby and box-office staff will be required to wear masks at all times.
  - H) Audience members will be asked to wear masks at all times, including during a performance.
2. Touching, whether among performers or by artistic staff to adjust blocking, will not be permitted.
  3. Floor work in dance is permitted.
  4. Everyone who participates in a performance (performers, stage crew, stage managers, lobby staff, box-office staff, etc.) will be required to wash their hands with soap and water before and after every performance, or to use hand sanitizer. In order to avoid congestion in the restrooms at call times, the washing may be staggered, or done at home for those who live within a short commuting distance of the theatre.
  5. Hand sanitizer with alcohol content greater than 60% will be available in a spot within each dressing room, at each door leading into the auditorium, in the box office, and any coat rooms for ushers/lobby staff. The hand-sanitizer stations in the lobby primarily intended for audience members will be on stand and touchless.
  6. Masks, safety glasses, and/or disposable gloves will be made available to any SMTD staff member who wishes to use these pieces of PPE. One pair of safety glasses will become the personal property and will be for the sole use of the requestor throughout the rehearsal and performance engagement. Safety glasses shall not be shared. The requestor will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting their glasses.
  7. Non-SMTD users of the venues should bring a supply of PPE for their own staff, crew, and performers.
  8. SMTD lobby supervisors, backstage operations managers, and student performance managers have the responsibility to notify upper management of any public-health concerns asap during or following a performance.
  9. Plexiglass Partitions
    - A) The box offices of Hill Auditorium, Power Center, Mendelssohn Theatre, and the Arthur Miller Theatre are already protected with Lexan safety shields. The ticket counter at Rackham Auditorium will be provided with a portable, tri-fold safety shield. The other venues are not ticketed.
    - B) Plexiglass shields shall be installed at any concessions stands in operation.

10. Given the short duration of rehearsals under this plan compared to traditional rehearsal times, breaks should not be necessary. However, if any breaks are granted, performers will not be allowed to congregate together in a clump but shall need to remain socially distanced at 6 feet.
11. Given the short duration of rehearsals under this plan compared to traditional rehearsal times, rehearsal refreshments should not be necessary. However, if the occasion arises, any rehearsal refreshments will be individually packaged or bottled. There will be no self-serve food or beverages.
12. For any brass or wind players who may have condensation accumulated in their instruments during playing, receptacles or absorbent pads will be placed next to each player's chair. Letting the condensation drop on the floor is prohibited. Players will remove their own receptacles or absorbent pads at the end of rehearsal and dispose in trash containers. Players will wash their hands or use hand sanitizer immediately after disposing of these materials.
13. Disinfection
  - A) As part of their normal, early morning cleaning routine, UM custodial staff will be asked to clean and disinfect any areas of the performance halls in use the evening before, as per routine facility-use calendars.
  - B) Because none of the performance halls have touchless faucets, soap dispensers, and flushing devices, whether in public areas or backstage, SMTD must rely on the custodial staff for disinfection before, during, and after performances. UM custodial staff will be asked to disinfect high touch surfaces, including:
    - (1) Public areas (lobbies, hallways, entrances) – door handles, handrails, push plates, light switches;
    - (2) Restrooms – door handles, push plates, sink faucets, sink counters, stall handles, toilet handles, sanitary-napkin dispensers and handles of paper-towel dispensers;
    - (3) Backstage – door handles, push plates, sink faucets, sink counters, stall handles, toilet handles, sanitary-napkin dispensers, and handles of paper-towel dispensers.
    - (4) Auditoria – SMTD shall consult with UM Custodial Services on the appropriate sanitary protocols for venue surfaces such as arm rests and seat cushions depending upon the interval between performances.
  - C) Disinfectant wipes will be available in dressing rooms. SMTD cast members participating in a performance must disinfect the items that have touched in their "personal zone," such as a chair, makeup counter, or music stand.
  - D) SMTD musicians will be asked to use a disinfectant wipe before and after performances on common instruments and equipment which are left in a performance hall, such as pianos and percussion instruments. Non-SMTD groups using a performance hall will be required to disinfect such instruments by means of musicians or staff that they assign.

- E) High touch areas on house equipment will be disinfected by SMTD house technical staff, whether by wipes or spray as appropriate, before and after each performance.
  - (1) Examples of such equipment (but not limited to) are: light-control consoles, headsets, microphones, sound consoles, walkie-talkies, house pianos, and lectern surfaces.
- F) Groups using a performance hall have the responsibility to disinfect the equipment that they bring into a space, such hand and furniture props, lighting control boards, sound consoles, etc. The equipment should be disinfected before and after each performance.
- G) Doors – weather permitting, SMTD can prop open the main doors to the performance halls, the doors into the auditoria (as we routinely do), and the doors to the restrooms in order to eliminate some high-touch surfaces while audience members enter the building. For fire safety, SMTD shall close them once the performance begins.

#### 14. Box Office and Ticketing

- A) At the minimum, the box-office staff shall seat ticket buyers not of the same household at least six feet of social distance from each other.
- B) Members of the same household or a self-identified group may sit together. This group must be six feet away from members not of the same household.
- C) In terms of safety measures for the box-office staffs, the box offices already are protected by plexiglass (or Lexan) partitions between the box office and the lobby in the major venues.
- D) The box-office space for patrons to buy tickets and to pick up pre-paid tickets is already very small in Hill Auditorium. Obtaining proper patron social distancing requirements will be a challenge. Weather permitting, SMTD can establish a Will Call booth (with plexiglass shield) outside the building where social-distance queuing is possible. In addition, ticket buyers shall be highly encouraged to print tickets at home.
- E) General Admission events are not permitted. Attendees, even for free events, must reserve a designated, socially distanced seat.
- F) COVID ticketing processes will need to updated in the terms and conditions sections of box-office policies and terms of sale.

#### 15. Concessions

- A) There are only three concessions stands in our performance halls, one at the lower level of Hill Auditorium and two in the lobby of Power Center. Quite often when capacity is low, SMTD opens up only one concession stand at Power Center. If SMTD decides to offer concessions, and given the reduced capacity of Power Center under this safety plan, SMTD will plan to open only one stand.
- B) Our range of food items at the concession stands is limited to candy and snacks, with all food items for sale already packaged individually.
- C) Water and soft drinks are already sold in individual bottles. For coffee and tea, SMTD will place our thermos pots behind the concession stands and have the

concessionaires pour out the drinks, then hand to customers along with any individual packets of sugar and cream.

- D) Socially distant lines will be established by ropes and stanchions as well as taped markings on the floor.

#### 16. Program books and Playbills

- A) SMTD shall suggest to user groups of the performance halls that they eliminate paper copies of program books so that there is less person-to-person contact and faster cleanup for custodial services. Simplified program material could be distributed via PDFs electronically.
- B) For groups still wishing to distribute paper copies, or not able to distribute electronically, SMTD shall provide tables so that audience members may pick up a program without an usher handling it. SMTD shall also provide recycling bins for the end of the performance.

#### 17. Signage

- A) The CDC poster to Stop the Spread of Germs will be posted in each dressing room and at stage doors. In addition, production-specific signs with appropriate public-health advisories may also be posted as needed.
- B) Signs, stating that audience members are to wear face coverings and not to enter if they are or have recently been sick, shall be posted at the entrances to performance halls and in box offices.

#### 18. Building Considerations

- A) Public-health considerations want HVAC systems to increase the percentage of fresh air wherever possible during performances, yet maintain comfortable temperature and humidity. SMTD shall work with BAS to make these adjustments per the routine performance schedules that we send to them.

#### 19. Disability Accommodations

- A) With reduced capacity of venues, box-office staffs should confirm that they still offer accessible seating, including companion seats, to comply with disability laws.
- B) Patrons whose disability makes them unable to wait in a (long) line may need a more expedited access procedure.
- C) Accessible entrances should continue to be available to disabled audience members and performers.

### III. Exposure Determination

SMTD has gleaned as much of the latest scientific and medical advice as we can regarding how people in the performing arts can return to work safely. The School has surveyed emerging safety practices in both professional and educational performing arts. However, there is much that remains unclear about how COVID-19 may or not be transmitted by various activities in



the performing arts. Anecdotally, there is more and more indication that airborne respiratory particles are a likely means of transmission of COVID-19. Since there is not enough scientific evidence to develop a safety plan that would bring the risk to zero, this plan culls safety points from various sources in order to mitigate risks in as many ways as can be imagined. In instances where clear consensus on best practice has not been reached, SMTD has decided to err on the side of caution with the safety of our students, faculty, staff, and audiences held as first priority.

Performance spaces:

- Hill Auditorium (3,530 seats) – 250 people is smaller than 25% (882).
- Power Center (1,342 seats) – 250 people is smaller than 25% (335).
- Rackham Auditorium (1,054 seats) – 250 people is smaller than 25% (263).
- Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre (620 seats) – 25% of 620 is 155 seats.
- Stamps Auditorium (450 seats) – 25% of 450 is 112 seats.
- Arthur Miller Theatre (245 seats) – 25% of 245 is 61 seats.
- Britton Recital Hall (211 seats) – 25% of 211 is 52 seats.
- McIntosh Theatre (144 seats) – 25% of 144 is 36 seats.
- Newman Studio (120 seats) – 25% of 120 is 30 seats.
- Betty Pease Studio Theatre (Studio A) – 25% of 100 seats is 25 seats.

Please note:

1. Calculations still need to be done to obtain actual capacity with 6 feet of social distancing throughout the auditorium.
2. Some of these spaces are used for multiple activities such as classes and public performances. Different work plans will address these different safety considerations.