

Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for the Performing Arts Sector, Performance Halls and Movie Theatres – COVID-19

OHS is everyone's business!



The purpose of this guide is to support the performing arts sector (music, theatre, dance, comedy, circus, etc.), performance halls and movie theatres for management of occupational health and safety (OHS) in their work environment. The information contained in this guide is taken from the interim recommendations produced by the Réseau de santé publique en santé au travail (RSPSAT) and the Institut national de santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) and specifies the CNESST's expectations in relation to [these recommendations](#). It seeks to guarantee that the activities can resume or continue under the safest and healthiest conditions in the context of COVID-19.

In a crisis period, it is important that workers, employers and artists collaborate to have healthy and safe work environments for all! Dialogue and cooperation are essential to achieve this.

For the [measures](#) applicable to their clientele and the capacity limits in their establishment, workplaces should refer to the Direction générale de la santé publique.



Management of occupational health and safety

Management means implementing the necessary measures to honour the employer's legal obligations, namely identify, correct and control the risks and encourage the workers' participation in this preventive approach.

Good cooperation between the employer and the staff is essential to encourage management of OHS.



The employer must **proceed with identification of the risks of transmission of COVID-19 in the work environment**. If the risks of contamination cannot be eliminated, the employer must seek to reduce and control them. The employer must identify the tasks during which workers and artists may be exposed to the virus. The suppliers, subcontractors and partners have been informed of the preventive measures implemented in the company in compliance with the guidelines issued by the public health authorities to control the risks associated with COVID-19 and make them aware of the importance of complying with these measures.

The preventive measures that may be applied are based on the principles of exclusion of symptomatic persons from the workplace, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and maintenance of hygiene measures for the tools, equipment and frequently touched surfaces.

The COVID-19 context can be a major stress factor, whether for the employer or for the workers, artists, suppliers, subcontractors and partners, due to the upheaval it causes in the different spheres of society. Special attention must therefore be paid to the psychosocial health of personnel.



Exclusion of symptomatic workers from the workplace

Persons exhibiting symptoms are part of the COVID-19 transmission chain in the workplace. Procedures accounting for the following factors can avoid transmission of the disease:

- Identification of workers and artists with COVID-19 symptoms before they enter the workplace, by means such as:
 - the INSPQ's [questionnaire](#),
 - [self-evaluation](#) by the workers;

The answers to these questions are confidential information. The employer must take the necessary measures to protect the confidentiality of this information;

- Posters are installed as reminders of the importance of hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and physical distancing at key locations and locations conducive to contamination (entrance, rooms, washrooms, checkrooms, exterior doors, etc.);
- The suppliers, subcontractors, partners, workers and artists have been informed of the preventive measures implemented in the business to reduce and control the risks associated with COVID-19 and make them aware of the importance of complying with these measures;
- Every person exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms is informed of their obligation to stop participating in professional activities until they are able to resume them in compliance with the established sanitary standards;
- The spectators are informed that if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms, they have the obligation not to attend the event in a performing arts venue, a performance hall or a movie theatre;
- The workers or artists who test positive for COVID-19 must notify their employer according to the instructions received from the Direction générale de la santé publique;
- When a person exhibits symptoms associated with COVID-19, as indicated on the [government website](#), that person must be isolated immediately. Since this person must be removed from the environment, a call to 1-877-644-4545 will provide him/her with directions;

- The results of the public health investigation make it possible to determine if the people who have been in contact with the symptomatic person may return to work or must self-isolate;
- Once the person exhibiting symptoms has left, prohibit access to these locations by waiting to clean the room and disinfect the surfaces and objects touched by the person.



Physical distancing

- Whenever possible, a minimum of 2 metres of distancing between people must be maintained at work, from arrival to departure;
- This distance must also be maintained during breaks and lunch hour;
- The organization of work and activities has been reviewed to respect at least 2 metres of physical distancing between workers or artists;
- Proximity traffic and interactions between people are limited;
- Sharing objects is to be avoided. If this is impossible, strict hygiene measures are deployed;
- If possible, the smallest and most stable possible teams are preferred to encourage physical distancing and reduction of contacts, particularly in the different closed locations with restricted space where several people may be grouped;
- Holding meetings that require a physical gathering is to be avoided;
- Non-essential common areas must be closed;
- Handshakes and hugs must be avoided;
- For the meal areas, avoid service tables or party platters (buffet style). When the employer must provide the meal, individual service (individual serving provided on an individual dish) is offered (including for beverages) and, whenever possible, "lunch box" services are encouraged.

Adjustments must be made to limit the risk of transmission when the principles of physical distancing cannot be respected. For example:

- Use of technological means (telework, videoconference, etc.) is preferred (e.g. audition, approval of proofs, etc.);
- Physical barriers (full partitions) have been installed between the different workstations that are too close to each other or that cannot be spaced (e.g. sound console and lighting console);
- Physical barriers (transparent full partitions) have been installed at the ticket booths, cash registers or service counters;

- The organization of work has been reviewed. For example:
 - reduce the number of workers present at the same time and job rotations at the workplace,
 - changes to the schedules of activities that can minimize contacts between workers or artists have been planned;
- The number of spectators in the performing arts venues, performance halls and movie theatres is limited according to the public health (Santé publique) directives. Moreover, the spectators are encouraged to apply physical distancing between them in the lobby, the lineups, the halls and the other common areas. This measure is specifically applied by floor markings, various visual communications and the increased presence of staff members, particularly for queue management;
- Whenever possible, one-way traffic has been established to prevent people from encountering each other;
- Special attention must be paid to areas acting as bottlenecks (e.g. hall entrance, service counter, stairways, etc.) to avoid lineups with persons close to each other;
- The hall entrance schedules for shows or performances have been adjusted to minimize peak periods, both during arrival and departure of the spectators;
- Signage (e.g. floor markings) has been deployed to establish at least 2 metres of physical distancing near the waiting areas, ticket booths, cash registers, checkrooms and service counters;
- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to workers and artists who perform a task requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person and in the absence of physical barriers.

Special measures for the performance arts and performance halls authorised from June 7, 2021

- The artists¹ may be at least one metre from other persons, without a procedure mask or protective eyewear, if they are working on a single number or show and form a stable cast of fewer than 10 people. If all the artists in a stable crew have been vaccinated (one week after their second dose), the limit of fewer than 10 people is lifted;
- For a cumulative period of no more than 15 minutes a day, these artists may be less than one metre apart, without a procedure mask or protective eyewear. For stable crews where all the performing artists have been vaccinated (one week after receiving their 2 doses), physical contact and kissing during a scene are allowed, without the one-metre distance restriction and the 15-minute restriction;

1. For artists who have been vaccinated (2 weeks after receiving the first dose of vaccine), the 7-day period to be part of a stable crew is lifted. For artists over 70 years of age who have been vaccinated (3 weeks after receiving the first dose of vaccine), the restriction is lifted.

- For stable crews where all the artists have been vaccinated (one week after receiving their 2 doses), physical contact and kissing during a scene are allowed, without the one-metre distance restriction and the 15-minute restriction;
- Persons at risk of [serious complications](#) and workers on unstable crews or working on more than one number or show must stay at least 2 metres away from each other if they are not separated by a physical barrier or they are not wearing a procedure mask or protective glasses;
- For numbers and shows in which the artists are less than one metre from another person for less than 15 minutes without protection, the employer must keep a register containing the following information: dates and places of the numbers or shows, names of the workers concerned;
- For physical training of artists in halls, refer to the CNESST's *Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for the Indoor and Outdoor Sports, Recreation and Open Air Activities Sector – COVID-19*;
- The number of people in the practice studio, in the rehearsal hall, on stage and in the dressing rooms must be reduced to maintain the minimum 2-metre distance between people, unless each person is separated from the others by physical barriers (full partitions);
- The technical crews (e.g.: lighting technicians, stagehands, etc.) are reduced whenever possible, and the work schedule is adapted to allow the fewest possible personnel on the stage at the same time to facilitate compliance with the minimum 2-metre distancing;
- If possible, the operators in the hall are separated from the spectators by physical barriers (transparent full partitions);
- Whenever possible, limit the number of equipment units, objects or props that may be handled on stage;
- The equipment units, objects or props that will be used during a performance are cleaned and disinfected before and after their use;
- Shared microphones, earphones, technical equipment or musical instruments are disinfected after each use;
- The workers and artists who must handle sets, equipment objects or props during a performance must wash their hands frequently;
- The workers in the checkrooms who must handle clothing must wash their hands frequently;
- If a practice studio, a rehearsal hall or a dressing room is used by more than one group of learners, one after the other, these premises must be cleaned and disinfected between uses by each group of people.

Special measures for singers and musicians

- Each singer and each wind musician must maintain a minimum distance of 2 metres from other people or be separated by a physical barrier (full partition). The other musicians may be seated 1.5 metres from each other, while remaining 2 metres from the conductor;
- After each performance, the floor of the work area of a singer or a wind musician is cleaned.

Special measures for circus arts

- In case of handling or work at heights, if the material cannot be unhooked for disinfection, the workers and artists who handle it must wash their hands before and after each use.

Special measures for personnel assigned to hairdressing and makeup

- Refer to the *CNESST Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for the Personal Care and Esthetic Services Sector – COVID-19*;
- The makeup artist uses an individual makeup kit for each person (artist, singer, musician, dancer, etc.).

Special measures for personnel assigned to sewing or costumes

- New clothes must be washed or set aside for 3 hours before a fitting;
- Fittings are done in isolated areas with the fewest number of people at a time;
- Clothes and costumes that have been fitted are washed in water or steam cleaned or set aside for 3 hours before being fitted for another artist or made available again to production;
- Couturiers, costume designers and artists who must handle clothes or costumes must wash their hands frequently;
- Physical contacts must be reduced to the minimum;
- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to personnel assigned to sewing or costumes and artists who perform a task requiring them to be within 2 metres of another person;
- Clothes or costumes must be kept in individual plastic covers;
- The clothes or costumes worn are washed with the usual laundry soap or dry-cleaned.

Measures for transporting people during a tour

- Refer to the *CNESST Workplace Sanitary Standards Guide for the Public Transportation Sector – COVID-19*;
- Encourage individual transportation.

If transportation is organized by the employer:

- Physical barriers (transparent full partitions in compliance with the standards in force) are installed between the driver and the workers or artists; For more information, consult the [Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec website](#);
- In transport vehicles, when the physical barrier is not installed behind the driver's station, prohibit access to the first benches to respect the 2-metre distance from the driver;
- The workers or artists in the vehicle must be separated by a physical barrier or be seated alone on a bench with free benches between them to respect the 2-metre distance between people;
- A procedure mask and protective eyewear (protective glasses or visor covering the face down to the chin) are supplied to the driver, workers and artists when it is impossible to be at least 2 metres from another person, without a physical barrier. In addition, the vehicle is filled to only 50% of its capacity;
- Suitable ventilation in the vehicle is ensured by avoiding air recirculation and encouraging opening of windows whenever possible, for example;
- The driver's station is cleaned and disinfected at least after 8 hours or during a change of driver (e.g. steering wheel, interior and exterior door handles, interior mirror, seat belts, doors, seat);
- The frequently touched surfaces in the vehicles (e.g. seat belts, doors, seats) are cleaned and disinfected between trips.

Special measures for movie theatres

- If possible, the food counter is reorganized to maintain the minimum 2-metre distance between people or physical barriers (full partitions) are installed.



Hand hygiene

Frequent hand washing with soap and water or with a hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60% for at least 20 seconds limits the risks of transmission in the work environment, particularly:

- before touching the face (eyes, nose, mouth);
- after coughing, sneezing or wiping the nose;
- before and after eating;
- when entering and leaving rooms and, whenever possible, after each use of collective equipment;
- when entering and leaving the job site;
- after handling something that is frequently touched;
- before putting on and removing protective equipment.

When a hand washing facility is unavailable nearby, provide a no-rinse cleanser (hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60%).

Contactless payment (e.g. bank card or contactless terminals) is preferred to prevent customers from touching the terminals. If customers pay with cash, the cashiers disinfect their hands immediately afterwards with a no-rinse cleanser (hydroalcoholic solution with an alcohol concentration of at least 60%).



Respiratory etiquette

Respecting respiratory etiquette consists of:

- covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and using tissues or the crook of your elbow;
- using single-use tissues;
- immediately discarding used tissues in the trash can;
- frequent hand washing;
- not touching your mouth or eyes with your gloved or bare hands.



Maintenance of hygiene measures for tools, equipment and frequently touched surfaces

Given that the virus responsible for COVID-19 can live on surfaces, application of hygiene measures is essential.

- Ensure efficient operation and maintenance of the ventilation systems, according to the regulatory requirements for the type of facility and the tasks performed;
- Clean the sanitary facilities at least after each shift and disinfect them daily;
- Clean the meal areas before each meal and disinfect them daily. For example:
 - refrigerator door handle,
 - chair backs,
 - microwaves;
- Clean and disinfect the frequently touched surfaces after each shift and when they are visibly soiled. For example:
 - physical barriers,
 - tables,
 - doorknobs,
 - faucets,
 - toilets,
 - telephones,
 - computer accessories;

- Clean and disinfect the tools and equipment used at least after each shift or when they must be shared;
- Use the appropriate cleaning products or disinfectants (see the manufacturer's recommendations and do not mix cleansers);
- Remove non-essential objects (magazines, newspapers and knickknacks) from the common areas.

Resources are available online for more information concerning [cleaning of surfaces](#) or the [recommended disinfectants](#).



Legal obligations

The legal obligations in occupational health and safety, both for the employer and the workers, must be applied in the context of COVID-19. Here is a summary.

Employer

Every employer has the obligation to protect the health and ensure the safety and physical well-being of their workers. The [Act respecting occupational health and safety](#) (AOHS) requires every employer to take the necessary measures to achieve this ([section 51](#)). To do this, the employer, in particular, must implement methods for the identification, correction and control of risks.

In the context of COVID-19, the employer must ensure that the preventive measures usually implemented are always adapted. Otherwise, he must modify them to protect the workers against the risks of contamination.

The employer must also inform the workers about the risks related to their work, including those related to COVID-19. The employer must also assure the workers of the appropriate training, supervision and coaching so that everyone has the skills and knowledge required to perform the work assigned to them safely.

Worker

Every worker has the obligation to protect their health, safety or physical well-being, and to ensure that they do not endanger the health, safety or physical well-being of other persons found in the workplace ([section 49](#) of the AOHS). To do this, they must comply with the rules and measures implemented in the context of COVID-19 on the same basis as the other rules applied in the work environment. The workers must also participate in the identification and elimination of risks. If they see risks or have suggestions in this regard, they must inform the health and safety committee (if there is one), their superior or a representative of the employer.



Acknowledgments:

- Association des professionnels de l'industrie de l'humour
- Association des propriétaires de cinéma du Québec
- Association québécoise de l'industrie du disque, du spectacle et de la vidéo
- Cinémas Guzzo
- Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec
- Conseil québécois de la musique
- Conseil québécois du théâtre
- Corporation des salles de cinéma du Québec
- Direction de la santé publique
- En Piste Compétence Culture
- Evenko
- Grand Théâtre
- Guilde des musiciens et musiciennes du Québec
- Institut national de santé publique du Québec
- La Tohu
- Les scènes de musique alternative du Québec
- Ministère de la Culture et des Communications
- Objectif Scène
- Partenariat du Quartier des spectacles
- Place des arts
- Québécor
- Regroupement des événements majeurs internationaux
- Regroupement des organisateurs de spectacles de l'Est du Québec
- Regroupement québécois de la danse
- Réseau Centre
- Réseau Scènes
- Rideau
- Société de développement des entreprises culturelles
- Spectour Abitibi-Témiscamingue inc.
- Union des artistes



The guide and the kit result from a reflective process intended to support the work environments in management of occupational health and safety in the context of COVID-19. The project is scalable and will harmonize with the preventive measures ordered by the Direction de la santé publique (public health authorities).

For more information, we invite you to consult the recommendations of the Réseau de santé publique en santé au travail published on the [Institut national de santé publique website](#).

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COVID-19 Hotline: 1-877-644-4545

To contact a CNESST inspector: 1-844-838-0808