Arkansas Department of Health
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Governor Asa Hutchinson
José R. Romero, MD, Secretary of Health

Effective: August 5, 2020
Amended: August 14, 2020

Directive for Community and School Sponsored Music and Theater

The Secretary of Health, in consultation with the Governor, has sole authority over all instances of quarantine, isolation, and restrictions on commerce and travel throughout Arkansas, as necessary and appropriate to control disease in the state of Arkansas as authorized by Ark. Code Ann. §20-7-109--110. Based on available scientific evidence, it is necessary and appropriate to take further action to ensure that COVID-19 remains controlled and that residents and visitors in Arkansas remain safe.

On March 26, 2020, the Secretary of Health in consultation with the Governor placed limitations on public gatherings. This directive provides requirements for lifting limitations to community and school-based music practicing and performing. The medical and scientific evidence concerning these recommendations is incomplete. Accordingly, this recommendation may require revision as scientific and medical evidence evolves. We refer school district and school leaders to The Performing Arts Aerosol Study, both first and second preliminary reports[1,2] for specific guidelines on how to limit spread in the school music setting. One consideration in districts with widespread community COVID-19 spread is to cancel these activities for the autumn of 2020.

The wearing of face coverings must comply with Executive Order 20-37 and the Face Coverings Directive. Face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth are required for everyone 10 years of age or older. Children between ages of 2 years and 9 years are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering.

School and community theater groups must follow the choral requirements.

This directive is not applicable to intercollegiate or professional music rehearsals, performances or competitions.

General Requirements

- Maintain minimum physical distancing of 6 feet between participants at all times.
- Musicians, Directors and All Staff must be screened prior to any activity by asking the following questions and excluded if the answer is yes.
    - Have had a fever of 100.4°F in the last 2 days.
    - Have a cough, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle aches (myalgias), sore throat, headache, recent loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

    - Had contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days.
- In addition, Directors and All Staff must have temperature checked by digital thermometer prior to entry, and those whose temperature is 100.4°F or greater must be excluded.
- Face coverings (masks) that completely cover the nose and mouth are required for everyone 10 years of age or older. Children between ages of 2 years and 9 years are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering.
    - Mask fit is important. The mask should have no gaps on the sides, the nose must be covered and there should be a reasonably good fit around the edges.[2]
    - Musicians, singers, and all participating students must wear a face covering at all times. All participants must maintain appropriate 6-foot distancing.
    - Directors and Staff must wear a face covering. Appropriate 6-foot distancing must be maintained.
    - Neck gaiters, a form of mask usually made out of a stretchy and moisture-wicking fabric that can be pulled down over your head and worn over your nose and mouth as a face covering, are not acceptable.[7]
    - Masks with exhalation valves as well as bandana-type masks that are not fitted around the chin also are not acceptable.[7]
- Storage rooms may only be used for storage of personal items. Physical distancing of 6 feet must be maintained in the storage rooms.
- Individual practice participants should use their own equipment if possible. School instruments may be assigned to a single student.
- Participants will arrive dressed for rehearsal with their equipment and water for their personal hydration. Participants should leave as soon as the rehearsals are complete. Directors and staff may meet before and after rehearsals to appropriately plan. Appropriate distance should be maintained.
- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer or adequate handwashing facilities are provided for use by all attendees.
- Equipment, restrooms, storage rooms, water fountains and other high touch surfaces should be sanitized frequently during each event and between each use. For a list of cleaning products that will eliminate the Covid-19 virus, visit https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n- disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2.
- Avoid personal contact at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, high-fives, hand shaking, and fist bumping.
- For performances, competitions, and other music events held in a facility, the facility hosting the event must follow the current Directive for Large Outdoor Venues or Large Indoor Venues. Spectators are covered under these Directives.
- Concession Stands may operate but must follow all applicable sections of the Directive for Resuming Restaurant Dine-In Operations.
- Group size should be sufficiently limited to maintain 6 feet between each person, including staff.
- Practice and performance is allowed for participants of any age. However, participants should refrain if:
    - They are 65 years of age or older.
    - They have underlying health conditions including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, severe obesity, asthma or weakened immunity

In addition to the General Requirements[1,2]:

- Woodwinds and Brass must use a mask while playing which includes a small straight slit in a surgical style mask.[2] Do not use the woodwind/brass mask with a slit outside of rehearsal or performance.[2] Flutists and piccoloists can slide the instrument in the side of the mask.
- Bell covers are required as "masks" for wind instruments. Bell covers can be made of multi-layered high denier nylon material and provide a barrier for aerosols.[1,2,5]
- Trombones must have an additional three feet of distancing making their space 9 feet by 6 feet.[1,2,5]
- Choral musicians must be arranged in straight formations rather than curved and keep their face coverings on at all times.
- Theater must follow the choral requirements except alignment of performers does not have to be in a straight formation.
- Practice and performance including woodwind and brass instruments and choirs are preferred to be held outdoors at this time.
    - Outdoor practicing and playing must cease after 30 minutes for approximately five minutes to allow aerosols to disperse.
    - Swabbing and removal of water from wind instruments should use a disposable product (such as paper towels or puppy pad) which is placed in a plastic bag and thrown away.
    - Masks may be removed when outdoors when actively marching and the mask is inhibitory to practice and performing. Distancing of 6 feet shall be maintained at all times.
- Practice and performance may be held indoors if the following can be attained:
    - A 6 foot by 6 foot area maintained around all, with a 9 foot by 6 foot area around the trombone.
    - Teachers are recommended to use a portable amplifier to keep their voices at a low conversational volume.
    - Swabbing and removal of water from wind instruments must use a disposable product (such as paper towels or puppy pad) which is placed in a plastic bag and thrown away.
    - Indoor rehearsal and playing times must be limited to 30 minutes, with a minimum of 20-minute break before that room is used again. A minimum of one air exchange (which 20 minutes will generally achieve) prior to the next use of the room is required, with three air exchanges preferable.
    - HEPA filters appropriate for the size of the room are strongly recommended.
- These requirements will continue to be updated as new information is released and it becomes necessary.

References:

1. Performing Arts Aerosol Study Preliminary Report Round One
2. Performing Arts Aerosol Study Preliminary Report Round Two
3. Singing demonstration with mask
4. Face mask with flap for wind instrument
5. Bell covers
6. Trombone air flow
7. Facemask Efficacy Study